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HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

(FORMED BY MR. JAMES RAMSAY MACDONALD, NOVEMBER, 1931)

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Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury, and Leader of the House of Commons—Rt. Hon. JAMES RAMSAY MACDONALD, M.P.
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Chancellor of the Exchequer—Rt. Hon. NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.
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Secretary of State for War—Rt. Hon. Viscount HAILSHAM.
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs—Rt. Hon. Sir JOHN SIMON, G.C.S.I., K.C.V.O., K.C., M.P.
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Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs—Rt. Hon. JAMES HENRY THOMAS, M.P.
Secretary of State for the Colonies—Rt. Hon. Sir PHILIP CUNLIFFE-LISTER, G.B.E., M.C., M.P.
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Minister of Labour—Rt. Hon. OLIVER FREDERICK GEORGE STANLEY, M.C., M.P.
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Refreshment Department Manager—Mr. R. J. BRADLEY.

Revised, 10th December, 1934.

THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT

IN THE

FOURTH SESSION OF THE *THIRTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *NORTHERN IRELAND*

TWENTY-FIFTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE V

FIFTH SERIES—VOLUME 296

SECOND VOLUME OF SESSION 1934-35

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 10*th December*, 1934.

The House met at a Quarter before Three of the Clock, Mr. SPEAKER *in the Chair.*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Hamilton Burgh Order Confirmation Bill,

Read the Third time, and passed.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

INDIA.

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU.

1. **Mr. HALES** asked the Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the serious illness of Mrs. Kamala Nehru, the wife of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, he will reconsider his decision and direct the liberation of the Pandit as an act of grace?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Butler): Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was released in the summer for a period in order that he might be with his wife and he has been recently transfered to a jail near to the sanatorium, where she now is, so that he may see her once or twice weekly in accordance with the advice of the doctors. These are very considerable concessions and my right hon. Friend is not prepared to recommend to the Government of India that they should go beyond them.

Mr. HALES: Having regard to the fact that the Indian elections are over and having consideration of the serious illness of Mrs. Nehru, does not my hon. Friend consider that the time is opportune for the exercise of that clemency which would give widespread satisfaction in India?

Mr. BUTLER: I have nothing to add to what I have said.

Mr. HALES: Would it remove the difficulty if Pandit Nehru gave an undertaking not to interfere with politics until the expiration of his sentence?

3. **Colonel WEDGWOOD** asked the Secretary of State for India whether he can say how long Pandit Nehru had been free when he was sentenced last February; what court and what judge sentenced him to two years' imprisonment; and whether he has read the inflammatory speeches which were the subject of the charge?

Mr. BUTLER: Nehru had been at liberty for five and a-half months when he was sentenced by the Chief Presidency Magistrate, Calcutta, last February. I have not read the full text

[Mr. Butler.]

of the speeches in question but the summary contained in the magistrate's judgment leaves me in no doubt as to their seditious and inflammatory character.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: The hon. Gentleman has not answered the second part of my question as to what court and what judge sentenced him.

Mr. BUTLER: In my original answer I said the Chief Presidency Magistrate of Calcutta sentenced him.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: Is he the same judge who criticised my hon. Friend the Member for Hanley (Mr. Hales)?

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM.

2. **Mr. ANNESLEY SOMERVILLE** asked the Secretary of State for India whether he will give an assurance that, notwithstanding any change that may be made in the Government of India, no community of British citizens will be transferred to Native rule without their consent?

Mr. BUTLER: In any question of the cession of British territory or of jurisdiction previously exercised the wishes of the population affected are given the utmost possible weight in accordance with the circumstances of the case.

Mr. SOMERVILLE: If the decision is against their wishes, will they have a right of appeal to Parliament?

Mr. BUTLER: I am afraid everything must depend on the circumstances of the particular case in question.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: Does "the utmost possible weight" include a free vote of the inhabitants, or is that not considered a matter of importance?

Mr. BUTLER: The best possible method of finding out the wishes of the inhabitants would be taken if such a case arose.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: Would it be by a free vote?

Duchess of ATHOLL: Is it not the case that there have already been emphatic protests on the part of the citizens of Bangalore and Tangasseri against their proposed transfer respectively to the States of Mysore and Travancore?

Mr. BUTLER: I understand that that question is to be raised later to-night, and that would be a more suitable time to go into it.

8. **Sir WILLIAM DAVISON** asked the Secretary of State for India whether he was informed by the Viceroy of the communication sent to him in April by the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes on behalf of himself and other Indian princes stating that it was clear that the White Paper could not satisfy the demands persistently made by the Chamber of Princes; for what reason has the letter in question been kept secret; and whether either the Viceroy or the Secretary of State have had any subsequent correspondence to indicate whether the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes and the other princes referred to in the above letter have changed the opinion above expressed?

Mr. BUTLER: My right hon. Friend received a copy of the communication from His Highness the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes to the Viceroy enclosing a copy of the letter to which my hon. Friend refers. This letter was marked "personal and confidential." As the context shows, the letter did not purport to convey any new view and was intended to be read in the light of the proceedings of the Chamber of Princes, dated 25th March, 1933, which are on record in the Library. I would invite my hon. Friend's attention to the speech of His Highness the Maharaja of Patiala at that meeting. His Highness, after drawing attention to the safeguards which the Princes considered necessary, stated that these would in due course be placed before the Joint Select Committee by the witnesses who would appear on their behalf and by their representatives among the Indian Delegates to the Committee. My hon. Friend may rest assured that the recommendations of the Joint Committee have been framed with full regard to the points of view expressed by the Princes' witnesses and delegates. A meeting of the Chamber of Princes has been convened for the 21st January next.

Sir W. DAVISON: Can my hon. Friend say whether his right hon. Friend is now convinced that the proposals of the Joint Select Committee fully satisfy the demands made persistently by the Chamber of Princes?

Mr. BUTLER: I think that in general the report of the Joint Select Committee may be said to have met the points put forward by the Princes. If my hon. Friend will refer to the recommendations of the Committee and the points laid down by the Princes, he will be able to form his own judgment.

Brigadier-General Sir HENRY CROFT: Can the hon. Gentleman give an undertaking that the Bill will not be introduced until the Chamber of Princes has stated that the Princes are prepared to go into the Federation?

Mr. BUTLER: I am obviously not in a position to answer that question.

PENSIONERS.

4. **Mr. T. SMITH** asked the Secretary of State for India the number of persons in this country drawing pensions from each of the gazetted Indian Services in the year ended 31st March, 1934, and the cost of these pensions to the Indian revenues?

Mr. BUTLER: In view of the large number of figures involved in the reply to the hon. Member's question, I am circulating the answer in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following is the answer:

The number of pensions issued in this country to retired members of the Indian Services (Civil), and the net amounts paid, in the year ended 31st March, 1934, in respect of those pensions, were as follow:

——	Number.	Amount.
		£
Indian Civil Service ...	789	681,743
Judges of the High Courts	50	51,902
Bengal Pilot Service ...	75	15,092
Bishops of Madras and Bombay.	2	1,602
Uncovenanted Services ...	2,862	1,067,939
	3,778	1,818,278

COAL MINING INDUSTRY.

5. **Mr. T. SMITH** asked the Secretary of State for India the number of mines at work; the average number of persons employed; and the total production of coal in British India during 1932 and 1933?

Mr. BUTLER: As the reply involves a number of figures, I am having them circulated in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following is the reply:

COAL MINES IN BRITISH INDIA.

—	1932.	1933.
Number at work ...	515	*
Average number of persons employed.	148,489	144,707
Total production of Coal (Tons).	18,719,587	18,160,681

* Figures for 1933 not yet available.

TERRORISM.

10. **Duchess of ATHOLL** asked the Secretary of State for India the number of murderous outrages and offences, terrorist and otherwise, which have occurred in British India since the date on which he last gave such returns to the latest date for which such figures are available?

Mr. BUTLER: I am circulating statements in continuation of those supplied to the Noble Lady on the 9th July.

Following are the statements:

TERRORIST OFFENCES in Bengal from January to July, 1934.

Murders	Nil.
Attempted assassinations ...	2
Assaults on private persons—murderous	2
Dacoities	5
Dacoities with murder	1
Attempted dacoities	2
Robberies	1
Bomb throwing	1
Recovery of explosives	1
Thefts	2
	17

TERRORIST OFFENCES in provinces other than Bengal from January to September, 1934.

Province.	Number of offences.
Bombay	9
United Provinces	3
Bihar and Orissa	1
Assam	5

There were no terrorist offences during this period in Madras, the Punjab, Burma, the Central Provinces and the North-West Frontier Province.

11. **Duchess of ATHOLL** asked the Secretary of State for India whether he will state the number of terrorist conspiracies discovered in any provinces of British India; the number of persons charged in regard to each of these from the date in regard to which information relating to terrorist conspiracies was last given by him to the latest date for which figures are available?

Mr. BUTLER: I have asked the Government of India for this information and will communicate with the Noble Lady when I receive their reply.

Duchess of ATHOLL: Are we to understand that the India Office has no information as to terrorist conspiracy in British India later than to October last year, the figures for which the hon. Gentleman gave to the House?

Mr. BUTLER: The India Office is naturally in touch with the situation, but for greater accuracy it was thought wise to communicate with the Government of India so that the Noble Lady may be completely satisfied with the information given.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

9. **Mr. DONNER** asked the Secretary of State for India whether the revised estimates of last spring of the revenue receipts of the Government of India during 1933-34 fall below the estimates set forth in the report of the Joint Select Committee, paragraph 243, page 160, for that year; and, if so, by what amount?

Mr. BUTLER: The revenue and expenditure of the Government of India in 1933-34, according to the revised estimate prepared last spring, were each about £4,000,000 less than the figures to which my hon. Friend refers.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (MR. SARAT BOSE).

12. **Mr. MORGAN JONES** asked the Secretary of State for India whether he proposes to afford facilities for Mr. Sarat Bose, who has recently been elected unopposed to the legislative assembly, to discharge his duty as an elected representative?

Mr. BUTLER: So long as Sarat Bose is a State prisoner under Regulation III it will not be possible to allow him to attend the Assembly.

Mr. JONES: Do I understand that a member of the Assembly who has been duly elected will be prevented from exercising his function as a member of the Assembly?

Mr. BUTLER: I have stated that so long as he is a State prisoner under Regulation III it will not be possbile to enable him to attend.

Mr. JONES: Do the Government contemplate releasing him so that he may be permitted to exercise his function as a Member of Parliament in India?

Mr. BUTLER: I would remind the hon. Gentleman that the detention of Mr. Bose was in the interests of securing the country from internal commotion.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that Mr. Bose is opposed to the report of the Joint Select Committee?

BANGALORE.

13. **Duchess of ATHOLL** asked the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that in March last a deputation from the mercantile community of Bangalore was received by the Prime Minister of Mysore and obtained assurances that, after the proposed retrocession to Mysore, citizens of Bangalore would have representation in the Mysore legislature and would have no reason to regret becoming subjects of Mysore; and whether, as this proves that the inhabitants of Bangalore would become subjects of Mysore, he will give an assurance that the proposed retrocession will not be allowed to take place?

Mr. BUTLER: Through the courtesy of my Noble Friend I have seen a newspaper report of the deputation, but I cannot find in it any suggestion that the retrocession of an area in which British subjects reside at Bangalore would in itself make them subjects of Mysore State.

Duchess of ATHOLL: Has the hon. Gentleman seen the document in question, from which it appears that the Prime Minister of Mysore, receiving a deputation from the mercantile community of Bangalore, said that they need have no fear about their future as citizens of the Mysore State?

Mr. BUTLER: I agree that there is a tendency to some confusion in this matter. As my right hon. Friend informed the Noble Lady on the 30th July, Mysore State claims that a very large proportion of the inhabitants of Bangalore are already Mysore subjects. There is therefore no question of their becoming Mysore subjects. In the case of British subjects, there is nothing we can see which would alter their status as British subjects.

Duchess of ATHOLL: May I further ask the hon. Gentleman whether he has not observed that on the same occasion the Prime Minister of Mysore assured the deputation from the mercantile community of Bangalore that they would have both representation as citizens in the Mysore Legislative Council and representation of their trade organisations?

PORT OF CALCUTTA (DISPUTE).

6. **Mr. McGOVERN** (*for* **Mr. MAXTON**) asked the Secretary of State for India whether he can give the House information regarding the strike of labourers in the port of Calcutta; how long the strike has lasted; whether any vessels have been able to leave the port; what are the grievances of the port labourers; and what is the attitude of the Government of India in the matter?

Mr. BUTLER: The strike of stevedore labourers in the port of Calcutta began without notice on 26th November and still continues. On the first day of the strike loading and unloading ceased completely, but since then the work has been carried on with the aid of imported and locally recruited labourers and there is no serious hold-up at present. The principal demands of the port labourers are a reduction of hours and an increase in wages. The Government of Bengal are watching the situation closely but up to date neither party has approached the Government.

Mr. THORNE: Is there any kind of conciliation board established in India to deal with these questions similar to that which we have in this country?

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

INDIA.

7. **Captain PETER MACDONALD** asked the Secretary of State for India what is the nature of the representations which have been made to the Indian Government as to the desirability of reaching a new agreement with regard to commercial relations between India and this country at an early date and, if possible, before the introduction of the India Bill; and whether any reply has yet been received?

Mr. BUTLER: These matters are at the moment the subject of active telegraphic correspondence between His Majesty's Government and the Government of India and my right hon. Friend hopes to be in a position to make a statement at a very early date.

MANCHURIA.

16. **Captain P. MACDONALD** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will instruct the appropriate British representative in the Far East to compile and forward for the information of the commercial interests in this country the extent to which the principle of the open door is still observed in international trade in Manchuria?

The SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir John Simon): Reports upon the economic conditions prevailing in Manchuria and the opportunities which exist for British trade there are regularly received from His Majesty's representatives there, and are normally made available from time to time to interested British firms in this country. I hardly think in the circumstances that a special report is called for.

Captain MACDONALD: Is the right hon. Gentleman satisfied that the principle of the open door is being observed in Manchuria?

Sir J. SIMON: That is a matter I could hardly deal with in reply to a supplementary question. I have shown that the position is being watched.

JAPAN.

21. **Mr. MORGAN JONES** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can give the House any information as to a committee for the study of questions relating to Japanese trade set up recently in Tokyo; and whether any attaché of the British Embassy is a member of such committee?

Sir J. SIMON: A report appeared in the Japanese Press on the 24th October of an agreement between Japanese industrial and commercial leaders and the members of the Federation of British Industries Mission to set up if possible committees of the Japan Economic Federation and of the Federation of British Industries in Tokyo and London respectively to discuss questions affecting the industrial and commercial interests of the two countries with a view to arriving at a satisfactory solution. As far as I am aware the two committees have not yet been constituted, nor has any question of official participation been raised.

Mr. JONES: May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman has seen the report that the military attaché of the British Embassy is going to be attached to this committee?

Sir J. SIMON: I certainly have not observed that, but, if the hon. Gentleman would like me to inquire, I will certainly do so.

ARMS AND AMMUNITION (EXPORTS).

42. **Miss CAZALET** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he will consider issuing, in the Monthly and Annual Trade Accounts, particulars of the export of arms and munitions in such form as to differentiate between supplies for sporting and commercial use and those required for, or appropriate to, military purposes?

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (Dr. Burgin): Certain descriptions of fuses, powders, explosives, etc., included under the general heading "ammunition" are capable of use for either military or industrial purposes, and it is impossible, therefore, to make the precise distinction desired by my hon. Friend. Amendments of the form of the monthly accounts are made in respect of calendar years only, and I regret that it is now too late to introduce any further changes for next year. I may mention that particulars of the exports of sporting ammunition and of small arms intended for non-military use are already enumerated separately in the Annual Statement of Trade.

POLAND.

44. **Miss WARD** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he can make any statement as to the progress being made with the Polish trade agreement?

Lieut.-Colonel J. COLVILLE (Secretary, Overseas Trade Department): The negotiations with the Polish delegation now in this country are being actively pressed to a conclusion, but I am not able at the present stage to make any further statement as to the position.

Miss WARD: Will the hon. and gallant Gentleman say when the negotiations are likely to be concluded?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: I am afraid I cannot add to the answer, except to say that considerable progress has been made.

BACON IMPORTS.

43. **Sir GIFFORD FOX** asked the President of the Board of Trade which of the countries referred to in the schedule to the Bacon Importing Order have exceeded their quotas for the first 11 months of this year and by what amounts, respectively; and what amount, in consequence of these excesses, is still due to Denmark or any other importing country which has not exceeded her quota, by reason of any treaty commitment which enables them to import into this country a definite percentage of the actual total imports of bacon?

Dr. BURGIN: I will circulate in the OFFICIAL REPORT a statement of the excesses and deficiencies in shipments of bacon, hams, etc., from countries scheduled to the Bacon (Import Regulation) Order, 1934. The first 11 months of this year included portions of two quota periods, i.e., 10th November, 1933, to 28th February, 1934, and 1st March to 31st December, 1934, and figures have accordingly been given for both periods. With regard to the second part of the question, countries which have exceeded their allocations will be required to offset their excess shipments, and so far as those excesses are concerned, the question of an additional allocation to Denmark does not arise. Denmark is the only country entitled to a definite percentage of the total foreign imports of bacon into this country. There is a considerable amount due to her in respect of the period between the conclusion of the Trade Agreement and the making of the order, and in respect of shipments from unregulated countries. The exact amount cannot be stated till the figures for the current year are complete, but it is probably of the order of 250,000 cwt.

Following is the statement:

Country.	10th Nov., 1933, to 28th Feb., 1934.	1st Mar., 1934, to 20th Nov., 1934.
		(*a*)
Denmark ...	+ 9,306	+ 170,864
Estonia ...	+ 566	— 2,337
Finland ...	+ 1,772	— 945
Latvia ...	+ 1,411	+ 6,689
Lithuania ...	+ 13,324	+ 21,223
Netherlands...	+ 67	+ 13,747
Poland ...	+ 3,055	+ 1,023
Sweden ...	— 1,281	— 298
U.S.A. ...	+ 3,730	+ 18,988
U.S.S.R. ...	— 1,135	+ 1,342
Argentina ...	+ 2,763	— 374
	+ 33,577	+ 229,922

(*a*) Subject to a deduction in respect of re-exports during November, 1934.

Note.— + Excesses. — Under shipments.

BRITISH NORTH ATLANTIC SHIPPING INTERESTS.

48. **Lieut.-Colonel SANDEMAN ALLEN** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that a German firm has obtained the option of purchase of the Red Star Line; and whether there is any obstacle in the way of these ships being transferred from the British flag?

Dr. BURGIN: I have no information as to whether a German firm has obtained an option to purchase the vessels to which my hon. and gallant Friend refers, and there is, so far as I am aware, no obstacle to the transfer of these ships from the British flag.

Mr. BOOTHBY: Are we to take it as a precedent that, if the Government take a financial interest in an industry, they will subsequently do everything in their power to prevent competition arising in that industry?

Sir JOSEPH NALL: Is it not a fact that, while there is no obstacle in the way of transferring from the British flag, obstacles have been put in the way of this line coming under the British flag?

Mr. CHURCHILL: Could we have an answer to these questions?

Dr. BURGIN: I think that both are questions that might be put on the Order Paper.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Could an opportunity be given to discuss this important matter and the principles involved?

61. **Lieut.-Colonel SANDEMAN ALLEN** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the imminent danger of a German firm completing the purchase of the Red Star Line and competing with the White Star-Cunard Merger Company, he will reconsider the withdrawal of the ban from the proposed supplementary service?

Mr. COOPER: My right hon. Friend is of the opinion that the rationalisation of the British share in the North Atlantic trade is the most effective means of meeting foreign competition, and he is accordingly unable to modify the view he has already expressed on this matter.

Lieut.-Colonel SANDEMAN ALLEN: Will the hon. Gentleman consider using the same tactics to prevent foreign firms getting financial assistance as he does to prevent British firms?

Sir P. HARRIS: Does the hon. Gentleman feel that his policy of refusing to allow English trade to be extended without any authority from Parliament is justified?

Mr. COOPER: The matter has been already discussed in the House of Commons.

Mr. BOOTHBY: May we take it that it is the policy of the Government now to take steps to prevent any future competition arising within this country in the North Atlantic trade?

Sir ALFRED BEIT: Does the hon. Gentleman consider that foreign competition will be met by fortifying it?

Lieut.-Colonel SANDEMAN ALLEN: I beg to give notice that I shall raise the matter on the Adjournment on the earliest possible date.

EGYPT (ITALIAN SCHOOLS).

14. **Sir JOHN WARDLAW-MILNE** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that Italian schools in Egypt are accepting pupils of all nationalities under conditions as to fees and the provision of a midday meal materially more favourable to the parents than the conditions obtainable from

[Sir J. Wardlaw-Milne.]
schools of other nationalities; whether these schools are subsidised by the Italian Government; and, if so, to what extent?

Sir J. SIMON: While I am aware that Italian schools in Egypt are open to children of non-Italian nationality, and while I understand that Italian education in that country is subsidised by the Italian Government, I have no information either as to the amount of the financial assistance extended, nor as to the fees charged or the quality of the meals provided for the pupils.

Sir J. WARDLAW-MILNE: Does not my right hon. Friend think it very undesirable that the children of other nationalities should be educated in Italian schools in Egypt; and cannot he make representations to such authorities as may be necessary in Egypt or Italy to secure one standard of fees and education?

Sir J. SIMON: I do not think that I agree with my hon. Friend. I would remind him that the English school in Cairo receives the assistance of His Majesty's Government, and it is proposed to make provision in the Estimates to be laid before Parliament next year for a grant towards the formation of a British girls' school in Alexandria, the pupils of which will not be only of British nationality.

Sir J. WARDLAW-MILNE: Is it not the case that the grants of the Italian Government are much larger than that proposed by the British?

Sir J. SIMON: I do not know. I thought that the question was on a point of principle. I do not think that in the case of either the Italian or the English schools in Egypt it will be possible for us to represent that the doors should be shut to anybody.

Sir PERCY HARRIS: Should we not make the British schools as attractive as the Italian?

SAAR PLEBISCITE (MAINTENANCE OF ORDER).

15. **Captain P. MACDONALD** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what will be the composition of the international force used to maintain order during the Saar plebiscite; and whether other troops as well as British troops will be employed?

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Sir J. SIMON: On Saturday the Council of the League decided to invite contingents for the international force to assist in maintaining order during the Saar plebiscite from His Majesty's Government and the Governments of Italy, the Netherlands and Sweden. The second part of my hon. and gallant Friend's question does not therefore appear to arise. The House has already been informed that His Majesty's Government and the Government of Italy are prepared to participate. I am now in a position to say that both the Netherlands Government and the Swedish Government have intimated that they will also take part. We may therefore hope that a force composed of contingents from the four States I have named will be on duty in the Saar before Christmas.

Captain MACDONALD: Can the right hon. Gentleman say to what extent the other nations are prepared to co-operate, and who is to command this force?

Sir J. SIMON: With regard to the first part of the question, I could not make any statement to-day. As to the second part, I think the House may take it that the commander-in-chief of the international force will be British.

53. **Mr. PETHERICK** asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether, in the event of the despatch of British troops to the Saar territory, the Government will consider issuing orders that they shall wear full-dress uniform in order to emphasise their policing functions?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Douglas Hacking): I regret that for reasons of economy British troops, other than His Majesty's Household troops and regimental bands and drums, do not possess full-dress uniform. Any band or drums which may form part of the troops despatched to the Saar territory will take full-dress uniform.

ARGENTINA (PENSIONS BILL).

17. **Mr. JOEL** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the effect on British pensioners, actual and potential, of the new Argentine Pensions Bill; and whether His Majesty's Government will represent to the Argentine Government the desirability of protecting legitimate British interests?

Sir J. SIMON: In the autumn of last year a decree was discussed by the Argentine Congress and was passed by the Chamber of Deputies, the effect of which would have been to amend the Argentine Railway Pensions Act in such a way as to render it impossible in practice for pensioners of British nationality to reside in the United Kingdom. His Majesty's Ambassador at Buenos Aires, on the instructions of His Majesty's Government, pointed out this injustice to the Argentine Government and requested that certain of the provisions of the decree should be modified. The decree was not passed by the Argentine Senate last year, and the provision which most closely affected the interests of British subjects was subsequently deleted. I understand that the Bill in its amended form is now under consideration by the Chamber of Deputies. I can assure my hon. Friend that the position will continue to be carefully watched.

SUGAR INDUSTRY (COMMITTEE'S REPORT).

24. **Mr. T. SMITH** asked the Minister of Agriculture on what date he received the report of the committee of inquiry into the sugar industry, presided over by Mr. Wilfred Greene, K.C.; whether he proposes to publish this report; and when he proposes to make a statement regarding the future of the sugar industry and the contemplated marketing scheme?

The MINISTER of AGRICULTURE (Mr. Elliot): The report referred to has not been received, and I now understand that it is not likely to be submitted until early in the new year. It will be published and a statement regarding the future of the industry will be made as soon as the report has been considered.

Sir P. HARRIS: Will not the right hon. Gentleman, in the interests at any rate of the British Treasury, urge that this report should soon be published, so that next year we shall not have to pay a subsidy on account of the absence of the report?

Mr. ELLIOT: My hon. Friend heard my answer. He surely would not suggest that the report should be published before it has been received.

Sir P. HARRIS: No, but the right hon. Gentleman might make representations to the committee that they should expedite the report.

Mr. ELLIOT: I can assure the hon. Gentleman that, from the point of view of the British beet-growers, I am more anxious than anyone else that this committee should report promptly.

AGRICULTURE.

BARLEY (BREWERS' PURCHASES).

26. **Mr. HALES** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether he is aware that the brewers are not in all cases honouring their undertaking as to the proportion of home-grown barley used in the brewing of all classes of beer; and whether he will take steps to see that the undertaking is carried out?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Duff Cooper): I have been asked to reply. I would refer my hon. Friend to the reply which the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave on the 27th November to my hon. Friend the Member for the Henley Division (Sir G. Fox).

59. **Sir G. FOX** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will consider the introduction of legislation calling for a return to be made by maltsters and brewers of all malting barley used by them, such return to differentiate between English and foreign barley?

Mr. COOPER: The answer is in the negative.

Sir PERCY HURD: Would it be possible to obtain this differentiation without legislation by the voluntary co-operation of the brewers?

PIG INDUSTRY.

22. **Brigadier - General CLIFTON BROWN** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether the contract issued by the Bacon Board to curers includes porkers; if so, whether he is aware of the handicap to small mixed-trade curers in country towns imposed by their inclusion in the flat-rate scheme; and whether he will have this removed?

Mr. ELLIOT: The contract prescribed by the Pigs Marketing Board is for use only in cases where registered pig producers wish to contract with registered bacon curers for the sale of pigs for

[Mr. Elliot.]

manufacture into bacon. I understand that it is a term of the contract that all live pigs purchased by the registered curers who have contracts registered with the Pigs Board shall be transported by the railway companies at a flat rate as provided in the contract. My hon. and gallant Friend will appreciate that the application of a general principle of this nature, which is designed in the interests of the industry as a whole, may give rise to some difficulties in individual cases, and the Bacon Marketing Board have expressed their willingness to discuss any such difficulties with the curers concerned.

Brigadier-General BROWN: Are we to understand that a curer who buys porkers for which he has no contract with the Bacon Board is still liable for the flat rate?

Mr. ELLIOT: It covers all the things that have been put forward.

Brigadier-General BROWN: If there is no market for porkers, why should they be interfered with?

Mr. ELLIOT: Nothing is interfered with.

23. **Brigadier-General BROWN** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether his attention has been called to the complexities of the contract for bacon pigs issued by the Bacon Board; and whether he will intervene with the board to amend it and simplify it?

Mr. ELLIOT: The terms of the contract were prescribed by the Pigs Marketing Board after consultation with the Bacon Marketing Board, and are necessarily somewhat complicated owing to the range of detail the contract has to cover. The boards fully appreciated the necessity of ensuring that registered producers and curers should understand the agreement into which they were invited to enter, and explanatory notes were circulated with the contract forms for that purpose. The matter is mainly one between the boards and their constituents, and I have no power to intervene.

Brigadier-General BROWN: Does not the right hon. Gentleman think that his answer to the last question shows that this question is justified?

MILK MARKETING SCHEME.

25. **Brigadier-General BROWN** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether any agreement was reached at the meeting with the Milk Marketing Board, the County Councils Association, and the Ministry's representatives on the accredited milk scheme; and how long it will be before a scheme can be formulated?

Mr. ELLIOT: I am not in a position to add anything to the announcement which was issued to the Press after the meeting referred to by my hon. and gallant Friend to the effect that it had been decided that my right hon. Friend the Minister of Health should be asked to receive a deputation from the County Councils Association and the Association of Municipal Corporations.

POST OFFICE.

TELEPHONE SERVICE (RURAL AREAS).

27. **Mr. LLEWELLYN-JONES** asked the Postmaster-General whether, having regard to the success which has followed his campaign for the extension of the telephone service, he will now consider the desirability of reducing the charges demanded by his Department for giving telephone facilities in remote rural areas?

The ASSISTANT POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Sir Ernest Bennett): My right hon. Friend regrets that it is too early to consider any further reductions at present.

Mr. LLEWELLYN-JONES: Does not the hon. Gentleman realise that many rural districts are seriously prejudiced by the high cost of getting a telephone service, and, while the service is being extended to other parts of the country, might not some consideration be given to the remote rural areas?

WAGES.

28. **Mrs. WARD** asked the Postmaster-General the standard rate of pay of postal workers; whether any sections and, if so, how many receive less than 35s. per week; and whether their duties are the same as those who are receiving the standard rate?

Sir E. BENNETT: The Post Office staff is divided into a large number of classes according to the work on which it is engaged, and for each class a scale of pay is prescribed which generally provides for annual increments extending over a number of years. The scales in

many cases provide for commencing pay below 35s. a week, but, except in the case of juveniles, the pay is soon brought above this point by the operation of the incremental system. The total number of full-time employés 21 years of age or over who are in receipt of less than 35s. a week is about 800. These are practically all postmen 21 or 22 years of age in some smaller provincial centres.

Mrs. WARD: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that there are many men getting less than 35s. a week, and may we have an indication of when the position of these workers will be improved?

Sir E. BENNETT: Is my hon. Friend referring to those on the establishment or to those in auxiliary posts? If she is referring to auxiliary postmen, of course there are a great many—some 12,000—receiving under 35s. a week, but we never pretend that the wages paid to the auxiliary workers are full-time wages, and our policy is to find men for these posts who are already in receipt of money from some other sources of income, such as their pensions as ex-soldiers.

Sir J. NALL: Will the hon. Gentleman undertake to see that, whether they are established or not, these adult male workers are paid wages at rates comparable with those in other occupations in the urban areas?

Sir E. BENNETT: The auxiliary postmen are paid according to the scale settled by the Industrial Court.

Mr. T. SMITH: Can the hon. Gentleman say what the Department are doing to improve the position of these men, many of whom are suffering hardship, as has been brought out many times in debate in this House?

Sir E. BENNETT: We are doing our best to assist them by awarding a certain number of full-time posts to auxiliary postmen. Still, at best it is an unpleasant situation, which we have tried to get rid of, but at the moment we do not see our way to sweep away this body of 12,000 men who are, I think, receiving adequate pay for the work that they do in what is not a full-time job.

Mr. MORGAN JONES: May I ask how many increments these men must receive before they reach the 35s. a week standard?

Sir E. BENNETT: In the case of juveniles, four to five years. In the case of those who join at 20, one or two years.

TELEX SERVICE.

29. **Mr. JOEL** asked the Postmaster-General what increase, if any, there has been in the number of subscribers to the Telex Service in each of the past three years; and whether the charges for this service have been reduced during that period?

Sir E. BENNETT: The Telex Service was opened in August, 1932. The number of public subscribers at various dates is as follow:

August, 1932	10
December, 1932	55
December, 1933	118
December, 1934	149

The annual rent for the subscriber's apparatus was £65 at the opening of the service. This charge was reduced to £60 on the 1st October, 1934.

PARCELS (COMPENSATION FOR LOSS).

30. **Mr. HALES** asked the Postmaster-General whether the regulation requiring the sender of a parcel to obtain a certificate of posting, without which compensation for the loss of a parcel will not be paid even when reliable evidence of posting can be given, is strictly enforced; and, if so, will he cause to be placed in a prominent position in parcel-receiving offices notices to this effect in order to bring this regulation before the notice of the public?

Sir E. BENNETT: Reliable evidence of posting is accepted in lieu of a certificate of posting when compensation is claimed for the loss of a parcel, and under these circumstances I do not think that public notices of the kind suggested by my hon. Friend are required.

Mr. HALES: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that on a number of occasions it has been stated by the Department that no further claim would be considered without the production of the certificate of posting?

Sir E. BENNETT: I am not aware of that. I only know that accommodation is made for those who desire a certificate of posting.

MOTOR VEHICLES (ACCIDENTS).

32. **Sir G. FOX** asked the Postmaster-General the number of accidents that have occurred to postal motor vehicles during each of the last 12 months, indicating in each case how many of these have happened between sunset and sunrise and between sunrise and sunset?

Sir E. BENNETT: The information is not yet available, but I will write to my hon. Friend as soon as it is.

REGENT'S PARK.

33. **Mr. BURNETT** asked the First Commissioner of Works whether it will be possible during the coming year to restore to the general public as flower garden or pleasure gardens the now derelict portions of the old Botanical Gardens in Regent's Park and one or more of the tennis courts reserved for the use of a restricted number of persons?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Ormsby-Gore): As I informed my hon. Friend in reply to a similar question on the 5th November, I propose to make provision in next year's Estimates for the continuation of this work of restoration and improvement.

34. **Mr. BERNAYS** asked the First Commissioner of Works whether he will state the amount of the rent and profits that accrued from the lease this year of a portion of the Royal Botanical Gardens, Regent's Park, for an open-air theatre?

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE: From the examination of the accounts to date, the amount due to the Exchequer by the licencee of the open-air theatre this year is approximately £2,000.

Mr. BERNAYS: Would my right hon. Friend consider the possibility of making some grant out of this sum, which is an extraordinary receipt, for the encouragement of similar theatres in other parts of the country?

Mr. HOLFORD KNIGHT: Do the figures mentioned include any amount for the expenses of the director?

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE: No, I do not think it does. I am not exactly aware as to how the expenses of the theatre side of the work are arranged. I think that, under the contract, 10 per cent. of the receipts and 5 per cent. of the profits of the bar go to the Exchequer. The sum we have in hand is due to the fact that we have had two very fine summers. I feel that we ought not to begin dissipating money which has to go in other expenses—we have considerable expenses to meet in the park—because we cannot guaratee the same receipts in future years.

TRANSPORT.

HYDE PARK (VICTORIA GATE AND ALEXANDRA GATE).

35. **Mr. ALAN TODD** asked the First Commissioner of Works whether he will immediately consider the enlargement of Victoria Gate and Alexandra Gate, Hyde Park, with a view to relieving the traffic congestion in West London?

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE: I am fully aware of the increasing use of the traffic route between Alexandra and Victoria Gates, and the problem created will have my consideration in consultation with the traffic authorities.

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: When is the right hon. Gentleman likely to come to a decision in this matter, which has been going on for a very long time? Has not his attention been called before to the very serious congestion of traffic, in regard to which nothing has been done?

MOTOR VEHICLES (POLICE ARRESTMENT).

54. **Sir W. DAVISON** asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether policemen in plain clothes are being authorised to stop drivers of motor vehicles on the public highway?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Captain Crookshank): There has been no recent change in the law or practice in this matter. Police on traffic duty who may have to stop vehicles are in unform, and it is only in exceptional cases that police doing other duty in plain clothes may call upon a vehicle to stop.

PEDESTRIAN CROSSING-PLACES (BEACONS).

65. **Mr. PIKE** asked the Minister of Transport whether, in view of the large number of globe indicators which have been destroyed or damaged since their installation, he will recommend to all local authorities the use of globes of stainless

steel or staybright, in view of their durability and effectiveness?

Captain A. HUDSON: Experiments are being made with metal globes and my hon. Friend has asked the Committee on Road Safety to let him have their views on the efficacy of various types of metal globe.

UNAUTHORISED TRAFFIC SIGNS.

66. **Mr. LLEWELLYN-JONES** asked the Minister of Transport what steps he has taken to ensure that highway authorities shall exercise their powers and duties under Section 48 of the Road Traffic Act, 1930, in connection with the removal of traffic signs or other objects which resemble authorised traffic signs and which have been erected by owners or occupiers of land adjoining the highway?

Captain A. HUDSON: The attention of highway authorities has been drawn to these provisions on several occasions and in December last the Ministry of Transport again reminded them of the desirability of action without delay. In order further to emphasise the importance of action in this matter, my hon. Friend is circulating in the OFFICIAL REPORT a short extract from the report of the Departmental Committee on Traffic Signs in which reference was made to this question.

Mr. LLEWELLYN-JONES: Has the Minister any reason to believe that local highway authorities are not generally aware of the provisions of the Section?

Mr. HUDSON: I think the hon. Member had better put down a question.

Following is the extract:

"The Committee also recommend that highway authorities should exercise vigilantly the duty imposed upon them by subsection (4) of section 48 of the Road Traffic Act, to secure the removal from private land of unauthorised warning signs or signs which may reasonably be mistaken for traffic signs. Signs which tell the motorist to "STOP" or "SLOW DOWN" so that he may purchase some commodity a little further on are particularly objectionable. In some cases holiday resorts are advertised by direction posts at distances of a hundred miles or more. Advertisements of this kind in the form of traffic signs should be removed."

MOTOR DRIVING TESTS (EXAMINERS).

67. **Mr. ANSTRUTHER-GRAY** asked the Minister of Transport if he will state the number of examiners it is proposed to enlist to conduct the new private motor-car driving tests; how many persons have applied for these posts up to date; and the minimum number of years' driving experience required of applicants?

Captain A. HUDSON: I am sending my hon. Friend the form of application which sets out the particulars required to be filled in by applicants for the post of examiner. There have been more than ten thousand applications to date, but the Minister is not yet in a position to determine the number of examiners who will be finally required.

SCOTLAND.

FIRE, LONGRIGGEND, LANARKSHIRE (REHOUSING).

36. **Mr. ANSTRUTHER-GRAY** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland whether he can now state what is being done to house the families rendered homeless by the recent fire at Longriggend, Lanarkshire?

Mr. SKELTON: I would refer my hon. Friend to the reply which I gave to him on the 28th November. I am informed that a suggestion that huts should be erected as temporary accommodation for the displaced families is under consideration by the local authority.

Mr. ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that these families are unanimous in their desire that huts should be erected in their own village rather than that they should be sent to old condemned houses in a neighbouring village, where their chances of work are no better? Will he bear that fact in mind?

Mr. SKELTON: That may very well be, but my hon. Friend knows that I have no power to interfere with the discretion of the local authority.

MILK MARKETING SCHEME.

37. **Captain SHAW** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland whether he is now in a position to make a statement as to what steps he proposes to take to deal with the difficulties which have arisen under the Scottish Milk Marketing Scheme?

The SECRETARY of STATE for SCOTLAND (Sir Godfrey Collins): I have reached certain decisions as to the im-

[Sir G. Collins.]

mediate action which I find it necessary to take following on the report of the Committee of Investigation and also, after consultation with my right hon. Friend the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, as to a general review of the position with regard to milk marketing in Great Britain. I regret that it is impossible to make a concise statement on the subject by an answer on the Floor of the House, and with my hon. Friend's permission I propose to circulate a full statement in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following is the statement:

1. It will be recalled that the Committee of Investigation for Scotland made certain recommendations to alleviate the position of level producers under the Scottish Milk Marketing Scheme.

2. On consideration of the report of the committee and the evidence led before them, I decided myself to interview representatives of the parties interested.

3. Since meeting the parties, I have again examined the position and have decided to make the following adjustments, some of which will require the amendment of the scheme, to be operative for a period of one year only:—

(*a*) a variation of the standard price of milk as recommended by the Committee of Investigation;

(*b*) twelve additional haulage centres to be prescribed in the East of Scotland area; the twelve new centres proposed are Alloa, Arbroath, Brechin, Crieff, Cupar, Dunfermline, Duns, Galashiels, Haddington, Kirkcaldy, Perth, Stirling;

(*c*) a special premium of ½d. per gallon, on milk sold by all ordinary level producers, whom I define for this purpose as producers who contract not to sell to or through the agency of the Board in any month during the year 1935 a quantity exceeding by more than 10 per cent. the quantity so sold in December, 1933;

(*d*) the levy on producer-retailers to be fixed on the basis of the number of cows in their possession. The levy to be at the rate of £5 per annum, provided that in the case of a producer-retailer who makes and observes a contract to handle all his own milk (that is, to sell no milk otherwise than by retail) the levy shall be at the rate of £4 per annum.

4. Further, it has been suggested to the Board that they should review the financial arrangements with respect to the acquisition of creameries so as to effect a reduction on the contribution payable by producers for this purpose throughout the scheme area. I understand that the Board have already opened negotiations with this object in view and that they are hopeful of satisfactory results.

5. Having regard to the general situation I came to the conclusion that the review of the position which it was intended to undertake, with a view to securing a permanent settlement, should be of a more comprehensive character than that previously contemplated. I have accordingly been in consultation with my right hon. Friend the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, and we are agreed that sufficient experience has now been gained of the working of organised milk marketing in Great Britain to enable an examination to be usefully made, in the course of the next twelve months, of the possibilities of further improvement, including the question of co-ordination or amalgamation of schemes.

6. We propose, therefore, to constitute a Milk Reorganisation Commission for Great Britain which would undertake this comprehensive survey.

7. There remains the problem of the unpaid levies. I have endeavoured to improve the position of the producer-retailer so as to assist him to meet his obligations. The modifications as affecting him, are intended, as far as practicable, to apply also to the producer-wholesaler, as defined in the scheme. The board have already undertaken that in cases of serious hardship they will not demand full payment of the unpaid levies immediately, and it has been suggested to the board that in such cases they should consider the possibility of devising a plan to provide for the payment of the amounts due by a system of instalments. I trust, however, that producers will recognise that the collection of the levy is a statutory duty of the board and that the arrangements now being made absolve neither the board from that duty nor producers from their obligations under the scheme.

8. The Orders necessary to give statutory effect to my decisions will be issued forthwith, and I hope that all parties concerned will co-operate, with good will, in the administration of the scheme and will support the board pending the outcome of the larger inquiry for which my right hon. Friend and I have decided to arrange.

41. **Captain SHAW** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland whether he is aware of representations made by the association of certified and grade A (T.T.) milk producers in Scotland with regard to the operation of the Scottish milk marketing scheme; and what action he proposes to take in the matter?

Sir G. COLLINS: The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the last part, the representations referred to have been remitted to the Committee of Investigation for Scotland and every endeavour will be made to expedite a decision upon them. Although I am informed that the board are prepared to go a considerable way towards meeting the representations, it is impossible for me, pending the report of the committee, to deal with the case of these producers at this stage.

HARBOURS, PIERS AND FERRIES.

40. **Mr. BOOTHBY** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland whether it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to introduce the Harbours, Piers, and Ferries (Scotland) Bill this session?

Sir G. COLLINS: I regret I am not at present in a position to make any statement in the matter.

Mr. BOOTHBY: When does the right hon. Gentleman think he will be able to make a statement?

HERRING FISHING INDUSTRY.

38. **Sir MURDOCH McKENZIE WOOD** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland whether he is yet in a position to announce the intentions of the Government regarding the recommendations of the Sea-fish Commission for the reorganisation of the herring industry?

39. **Mr. BOOTHBY** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland whether he can now state the policy of His Majesty's Government with regard to the herring fishing industry?

Sir G. COLLINS: The introduction of legislation for reorganising the herring industry on the lines of the report of the Sea-fish Commission has been approved in principle, and I hope to introduce the Bill next week.

Mr. BOOTHBY: Does the right hon. Gentleman propose to take counsel with the leaders of the industry before the Bill is finally in draft, or has he already done so; and will he do his best to facilitate the passage of this legislation before next summer's fishing begins?

Sir G. COLLINS: I am fully aware of the urgency of the matter. If the Bill is passed by the House of Commons, the scheme will be in operation at a very early date next year. In reply to the earlier part of the question, I speak from memory, but I think the interests have been consulted. I would like to check that point.

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT (PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY).

45. **Mr. ALAN TODD** asked the Prime Minister whether he will consider the immediate appointment of a Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Transport, in view of the arduous nature of the Minister's present duties?

46. **Mr. PIKE** asked the Prime Minister whether, in view of the extensive duties involving administration and personal supervision falling upon the Minister of Transport, he will appoint a Parliamentary Secretary to that Department at the earliest moment?

The PRIME MINISTER (Mr. Ramsay MacDonald): This question is under consideration, but it is not quite clear at the moment that the need for an appointment has arisen.

Mr. PIKE: Will the right hon. Gentleman bear in mind that the principal task of the Minister of Transport is the saving of human life, and, as his success depends to a very large extent upon his absence from this House, would it not be far better for a solution of this problem to appoint a deputy at once?

The PRIME MINISTER: I can assure the House that the answer I have given is not altogether without the cognisance of the Minister.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

47. **Sir ASSHETON POWNALL** asked the Prime Minister whether the Government will now reconsider their decision to take the India Bill in Committee of the Whole House and, in view of the greater powers entrusted to Chairmen of Committees, send it to a Committee upstairs?

The PRIME MINISTER: No, Sir. In the opinion of the Government, a Bill of such constitutional importance should be kept on the Floor of the House, and, accordingly, it is intended to refer the Indian Constitution Bill, after Second Reading, to a Committee of the Whole House.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman accept the thanks of the House for repulsing this disreputable suggestion?

COAL INDUSTRY (PIT INSPECTIONS).

49. **Mr. LLEWELLYN-JONES** asked the Secretary for Mines to what extent the powers of Section 16 of the Coal Mines Act, 1911, in reference to the periodical inspections of mines on behalf of the workmen, have been exercised during the past three years; and whether, in the interest of safety in the working of coal mines, he will take steps to urge upon employers and workmen the advantage of adopting the procedure laid down by the above-mentioned Section?

The SECRETARY for MINES (Mr. Ernest Brown): The number of inspections made on behalf of workmen under Section 16 of the Coal Mines Act, 1911, was 3,193 in 1931, 2,902 in 1932 and 2,880 in 1933. Approximately 90 per cent. of these inspections in each year were made in the coalfields of Durham, Northumberland and South Wales. Efforts are frequently made to emphasise the undoubted desirability of a much wider exercise of the workmen's rights under this Section, and I am glad to have this opportunity of expressing that view again.

Mr. T. SMITH: Could the hon. Gentleman say in how many separate pits this has been done?

Mr. BROWN: If the hon. Member will put that question down, I will try to get him the number.

Mr. LLEWELLYN-JONES: Will the Secretary for Mines communicate with the miners in other areas as to the advisability of their availing themselves of these facilities?

Mr. BROWN: I have more than once expressed that view in various parts of this country and in this House.

SUDAN (YELLOW FEVER).

50. **Sir ROBERT HAMILTON** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has received official intimation of the existence of yellow fever in the Bahr-el-Ghazal Province of the Sudan; and what measures are being taken to prevent the spread of this disease into the East African territories?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister): The answer is a long one, and, with the hon. Member's permission, I will circulate it in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following is the answer:

I received official information of a case of yellow fever that occurred in the Bahr-el-Ghazal Province of the Sudan in June last.

Measures in excess of those obligatory under the International Sanitary Convention for Aerial Navigation were taken by the Government of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan in co-operation with the Government of Uganda to stop the spread of infection to neighbouring territories. In particular all aerial navigation from any aerodrome in the Bahr-el-Ghazal Province to such territories was prohibited, and aerodromes in the province were closed to all civil aircraft flying within the Sudan. Juba and Malakal were made—and declared—anti-amaryl aerodromes, although there is no reason to believe that yellow fever exists in these districts. The sanitary staff at Wau in the Bahr-el-Ghazal Province was increased in order that every effort should be made to eliminate the mosquito vector. On arrival at any aerodrome in Mongalla Province aircraft were subjected to the measures prescribed under Article 47 of the International Sanitary Convention for Aerial Navigation.

At the request of the Government of Uganda the Sudan Government agreed to subject all aircraft on departure from Juba to the measures prescribed under Article 42 of the Convention.

No further special measures of protection on the part of the Governments of the East African territories under the control of the Colonial Office appear to be necessary.

UNEMPLOYMENT (TRANSITIONAL PAYMENTS, HULL).

51. **Mr. THORNE** asked the Minister of Labour whether he has arrived at any definite agreement with the Hull Public Assistance Committee in connection with the paying of transitional payment; and if not, whether it is his intention to send down a commissioner to take full control?

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the MINISTRY of LABOUR (Mr. R. S. Hudson): I received a deputation from the town council on Tuesday last and, as a result, it is hoped that it may not be necessary for a commissioner to take over the duties of the council in the administration of transitional payments. A further report is being called for.

WILTS UNITED DAIRIES, LIMITED (LABOUR CONDITIONS).

52. **Mr. THORNE** asked the Minister of Labour what control he has over the milk distributors; and is he aware of the long hours and systematic overtime that is being worked at the Wilts United Dairies, Limited?

Mr. HUDSON: I am making inquiry, and will communicate with the hon. Member in due course.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION CASES (HOSPITAL TREATMENT).

55. **Mr. TINKER** asked the Home Secretary whether he is aware of the increasing number of cases that are taken to hospitals for treatment where the accident comes under the Workmen's Compensation Act; and whether he will consider amending the Act so as to provide that the cost of such treatment and the conveyance to and from the hospital shall be made a compulsory charge on the employer?

Captain CROOKSHANK: My right hon. Friend is not aware of any such increase. Proposals were considered some years ago, in correspondence with the British Hospitals Association, for requiring employers to pay for the cost of hospital treatment in Workmen's Compensation cases. On examination, however, it appeared that they would involve great practical difficulties and that there were other considerations to be taken into account, including the possible effect on the employers' voluntary subscriptions to the hospitals; and my right hon. Friend does not think this question could usefully be taken up again except in connection with a general review of the Acts.

Mr. TINKER: When there is such a review, will this point be taken into consideration?

Captain CROOKSHANK: A great many things will fall to be considered then, and I have no doubt that this will be one of them.

Mr. WHITESIDE: Are not the expenses already assessed in computing the amount of compensation to be given?

LOTTERIES AND SWEEPSTAKES.

56. **Sir W. DAVISON** asked the Home Secretary by what statutory authority he has directed the Postmaster-General to open private correspondence between this country and the Irish Free State and to abstract therefrom any Irish sweepstakes ticket which has been legally purchased by an individual residing in Great Britain for his own use and not for sale or distribution; and whether, in view of the assurances recently given by him as to the legality of an individual acting as above, he will withdraw any instructions in the matter which may have been given by him to the Postmaster-General?

57. **Mr. PETHERICK** asked the Home Secretary, in view of the powers recognised by the Post Office Act, 1908, by which he can issue a warrant to the Postmaster-General authorising him to open letters, under what further Act of Parliament and under which section of such an Act he proposes to issue such warrants in respect of letters believed to contain tickets or applications for tickets in the Irish sweepstakes when

[Mr. Petherick.]
the tickets are not known or not found to have been issued or applied for for the purpose of sale or distribution?

Captain CROOKSHANK: Although it is not an offence for a person to purchase a ticket in a lottery for his own use, and not for sale or distribution, the publication in this country of advertisements relating to the Irish sweepstakes and the sale or distribution in this country of tickets in these lotteries by the promoters or their agents is illegal, and the use of the post cannot be allowed for this purpose. The powers under which the necessary action is taken are Common Law powers to which my right hon. Friend has already referred in reply to a question by my hon. Friend the Member for Penryn and Falmouth (Mr. Petherick) on the 5th instant.

Sir W. DAVISON: Are not the Common Law powers powers of the Home Secretary to make a request to the Postmaster-General? Does the Home Secretary allege that he is entitled to direct the Postmaster-General to open private letters containing matter which is not illegal? Does not my hon. and gallant Friend think that that is an entire abuse of the secrecy of the post?

Captain CROOKSHANK: The powers under which my right hon. Friend would be acting have already been explained in the reply to which I have referred. The question of private correspondence is really to be answered by saying that a policy of non-interference altogether would be playing into the hands of lottery promoters, which is against the decision of this House during the last Session. I do not think that the question of private correspondence arises.

Sir W. DAVISON: Is my hon. and gallant Friend aware that letters addressed to a private individual getting a ticket for his own use are being opened, and that there is no question of forming a lottery cabal in this country?

Captain CROOKSHANK: No doubt people take different views as to what is private correspondence when they are dealing with lottery tickets.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Could we have a return or statement of the numbers of private letters which are being rummaged and opened in this way in His Majesty s mails?

Mr. PIKE: Will the Under-Secretary say whether the reply given to the recent question also applies to correspondence directed to or from syndicates or clubs established in this country?

Mr. McGOVERN: Is the hon. and gallant Gentleman aware that, when the recent decision was given by the Home Secretary that it was legal to purchase a ticket, I and my wife sent for a ticket each; and will he say whether, if the receipts or tickets, in a legal transaction, are sent to me, they are liable to be confiscated?

Captain CROOKSHANK: I think that that question has already been answered.

HON. MEMBERS: No!

Mr. McGOVERN: I have never heard the answer, and I have been very particular. Can the hon. and gallant Gentleman give us an answer to this simple question? Why all this evasion?

Captain CROOKSHANK: It has already been stated several times that it is illegal to send them through the post. The Assistant Postmaster-General replied to that question the other day in my hearing.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Would my hon. and gallant Friend kindly reply to the question I asked about the numbers of letters which are being opened in His Majesty's mails?

Captain CROOKSHANK: The right hon. Gentleman knows that that is not a question which can be replied to on the spur of the moment.

Mr. CHURCHILL: I will put a question down.

Mr. PETHERICK: Is it the case that the legislation which has just been passed is so obscure that it is necessary to go to the courts almost immediately to obtain an interpretation of it?

BRITISH UNION OF FASCISTS.

58. **Mr. THORNE** asked the Home Secretary how many policemen attended the meeting that was held by the British Union of Fascists at Burghley Hall,

Leytonstone; whether the assistance of the police was asked for by this organisation; and was any charge made for their services?

Captain CROOKSHANK: I am informed by the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis that 12 police officers were on duty outside the premises on which the meeting was held. No request for police assistance was made by the organisers of the meeting, and the police were present as a precautionary measure in case of disorder arising. No charge was made for their services.

AUSTRIAN LOAN.

60. **Mr. MORGAN JONES** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has any statement to make to the House as to the new Austrian Loan; and whether His Majesty's Government has undertaken any new obligation in respect thereto?

Mr. COOPER: As I stated in reply to my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Sir P. Goff) on Wednesday last, the negotiations for raising an internationally guaranteed conversion loan for Austria had the full approval of His Majesty's Government. The extent of the guarantee given by His Majesty's Government, namely 24½ per cent. of all the issues, is the same as that given to the old loan, which is being converted, and in view of the reduction in the burden on Austria, it is evident that the risk of our guarantee becoming operative will be very greatly reduced.

Sir J. NALL: Does this mean that a new Financial Resolution will be submitted to the House guaranteeing the loan?

Mr. COOPER: I must ask for notice of that question.

Mr. ANEURIN BEVAN: Is France accepting her share of the obligation, too?

Mr. COOPER: I must ask for notice of that question.

Sir ASSHETON POWNALL: Is not the period of this loan being extended for a further ten years, and are not British taxpayers, in consequence, liable to interest for the extra ten years?

Mr. COOPER: Yes, but the danger of the obligation becoming due is very much reduced owing to the diminished burden in Austria, and this is very much to the advantage of the taxpayer.

ELECTRICITY UNDERTAKINGS (STATISTICS).

62. **Mr. WEST** asked the Minister of Transport what is the electrical output per head of population in Canada, Norway and Great Britain?

Captain AUSTIN HUDSON (Lord of the Treasury): I have been asked to reply. Public statistics indicate that the electrical output (excluding the output of private plant) per head of population in 1932-1933 was approximately 1,460, 940 and 300 units in Canada, Norway and Great Britain respectively.

Mr. WEST: Can the hon. Gentleman give an explanation why the industry in this country is so very far behind that of Canada and Norway?

63. **Mr. WEST** asked the Minister of Transport what is the average price of electricity sold to the consumers in this country; and what would be the national annual saving if the average price were 1d. per unit?

Captain A. HUDSON: The average price obtained by authorised undertakers in the calendar year 1933 for electricity sold to consumers in Great Britain was 1.295d. per unit. If the sales of electricity in that year had been at an average price of 1d. per unit, the revenue received from consumers would have been reduced by about £13,490,000.

METROPOLITAN POLICE (BORROWING POWERS) BILL,

"to extend the powers of the Receiver for the Metropolitan Police District with respect to the borrowing of money for the provision of better accommodation required for the purposes of the Metropolitan Police Force; and to enable the Public Works Loan Commissioners to lend money for such purposes," presented by Sir John Gilmour; supported by Captain Crookshank and Mr. Duff Cooper; to be read a Second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 13.]

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

STANDING COMMITTEE A.

Mr. William Nicholson reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee A: Brigadier-General Makins; and had appointed in substitution: Lieut.-Commander Agnew.

Report to lie upon the Table.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

ELECTRICITY CHARGES.

Mr. H. WILLIAMS asked the Minister of Transport for the latest year available the average price charged per unit of electricity sold, excluding intersales, by public authorities and companies, respectively?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: The average price obtained by authorised undertakers in 1933 per unit of electricity sold for all purposes, including power supplies, traction, street lighting and domestic supplies, but excluding intersales, was in the case of public authorities 1.29d. and in the case of companies 1.27d.

RAILWAY ACCOMMODATION CROSSINGS.

Mr. T. MORRIS asked the Minister of Transport the number of accommodation crossings which exist in this country; and whether, in view of the serious mishaps which occur to trains on such crossings, he will endeavour to enforce some better system of supervision and control for the safety of the travelling public?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I cannot say how many railway accommodation crossings there are, but there can be little doubt that the number of such crossings largely exceeds the number of public road crossings, and may be 10,000 or more. During 1933, 43 train accidents in which 13 persons (including six pedestrians) were killed, have been reported at railway occupation crossings, as compared with 140 train accidents, in which eight persons (including six pedestrians) were killed, at public road crossings. As my hon. Friend will see, the risk of accidents at occupation crossings is relatively not large, and while I have no power to enforce the provision of safeguards for the travelling public, the attention of railway companies or other parties concerned will be called to any recommendations which may be made in any reports on accidents of this kind made by railway inspecting officers.

SEA-COAST TOWNS (FORESHORE OWNERSHIP).

Captain ERSKINE-BOLST asked the President of the Board of Trade the names of those seaside resorts with a population of over 5,000 where the beach, or the main part of it, is owned by private interests?

Dr. BURGIN: The foreshore below high-water mark adjacent to the following sea-coast towns in England and Wales with a population of over 5,000 is not regarded, wholly or mainly, as under the management of the Board of Trade, the Commissioners of Crown Lands, or of the Duchies of Lancaster or Cornwall:

*Blackpool.	Margate.
Blyth.	*Morecambe.
Bournemouth.	*Newquay.
*Brighton.	*Paignton.
Broadstairs.	Penarth.
Christchurch.	*Penzance.
*Dover.	Ramsgate.
*Eastbourne.	Redcar.
Falmouth.	Ryde.
Felixstowe.	St. Ives.
*Fleetwood.	*Sandown-Shanklin.
Folkestone.	*Scarborough.
Formby.	Southend-on-Sea.
Great Crosby.	Southport.
*Hastings.	South Shields.
Herne Bay.	Sunderland.
*Hoylake and West Kirby.	*Swansea.
Hythe.	*Torquay.
Littlehampton.	Tynemouth.
Lytham St. Anne's.	*Wallasey.

In the cases of those towns marked with an asterisk, it is understood that the foreshore is owned wholly or mainly by a local authority. I have no information as to the present ownership of the foreshore adjacent to the other towns. In some cases the foreshore passed from the Crown many years ago.

WAR MATERIAL (EXPORT LICENCES).

Mr. R. T. EVANS asked the President of the Board of Trade particulars of all licences granted during the years 1932, 1933, and the 11 months of 1934, in respect of exports of war material, such particulars to include the names of the firms to whom the licences have been granted, the quantities and descriptions of the commodities involved, and the oversea countries to which they were consigned?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: It has not been the practice to disclose the names of the individual firms to whom licences have been granted, and the value of a statement of such length and in such detail as the hon. Member desires would not, in my opinion, justify the expenditure of the time and labour which would be required for its preparation.

INDIA (MINES, STATISTICS).

Mr. T. SMITH asked the Secretary of State for India the number of women employed underground in coal mines in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, and the Central Provinces in 1932 and 1933?

Sir S. HOARE: The following are the figures:

STATEMENT of the Number of Women Employed Underground in Coal Mines in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, and the Central Provinces in 1932 and 1933.

	1932.	1933.
Bengal	5,060	4,551
Bihar and Orissa ...	8,827	7,292
Central Provinces ...	696	846
Total	14,583	12,689

Mr. GRUNDY asked the Secretary of State for India what are the number of mines at work in India; the number of persons engaged in the mines; the number of males, females, and children, respectively; and the earliest age children are allowed to work in the mines?

Sir S. HOARE: The following is the information asked for:

STATISTICS Relating to Mines (All Minerals) in British India.

Number of Mines working in 1932 ... 1,281
(The 1933 figures are not yet available.)

Number of Persons engaged in Mines in 1933:

Males	171,038
Females	35,469
Total	206,507

No child is allowed to be employed in a mine, or to be present in any part of a mine which is below ground. The minimum age of employment in mines is 13 years.

NIGERIA (VACCINATION).

Mr. GROVES asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any alteration in the vaccination laws of Nigeria has been carried through; and what is the nature of the recent legislation proposed or carried through on that subject?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: The Vaccination Ordinance of Nigeria, which was enacted in 1917, has not been amended, and I am not aware of any proposal to alter its provisions.

PENNY POSTAGE.

31. **Mr. HALES** asked the Postmaster-General whether, having regard to the increase of revenue since the introduction of the reduced charges for telephone calls, he will consider the advisability of introducing penny postage for a period of three months in order to see whether an increase of revenue would also result?

Sir E. BENNETT: I am afraid that it would be impracticable to undertake an experiment such as my hon. Friend suggests.

FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE.

Mr. PERKINS asked the Minister of Agriculture the basis of compensation paid to farmers whose cattle are slaughtered as a result of foot-and-mouth disease; and whether any compensation is paid for pedigree?

Mr. ELLIOT: The basis of compensation to the owners of animals slaughtered

in connection with outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease is that laid down in Section 15 of the Diseases of Animals Act, 1894, namely:

"(i) Where the animal slaughtered was affected with foot-and-mouth disease the compensation shall be the value of the animal immediately before it became so affected;

(ii) in every other case the compensation shall be the value of the animal immediately before it was slaughtered."

In the case of pedigree stock the value of the animal is its actual value as a pedigree animal.

Mr. PERKINS asked the Minister of Agriculture the total amount paid in respect of compensation for animals as a result of outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease in Gloucestershire during 1932, 1933, and 1934, and the total amount paid in respect of England, Wales, and Scotland during 1933?

Mr. ELLIOT: The following is the information desired by my hon. Friend:

COMPENSATION paid for animals slaughtered in connection with outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease.

Gloucestershire:

	£	s.	d.
Year 1932	1,610	7	6
Year 1933	Nil.		
Year 1934 (to 7.12.34) ...	6,678	7	0
	8,288	14	6

Great Britain—year 1933:

	£	s.	d.
England	71,322	3	9
Wales	1,076	9	0
Scotland	Nil.		
	72,398	12	9

GREY SEALS.

Major OWEN asked the Minister of Agriculture whether his attention has been drawn to the presence in Nevin Bay, Carnarvonshire, of large numbers of grey seals which are destroying herring, damaging nets, and causing considerable loss to fishermen; and what steps he proposes to take to protect the fishing interests of that area?

Mr. ELLIOT: I have seen a Press report but no complaints of damage done to fisheries or nets by grey seals in Nevin Bay have recently been received by the Ministry. As regards the last part of the question, it would be an offence under the Grey Seals Protection Act, 1932, for any person knowingly to kill, wound, or take a grey seal at the present time, since the period from 1st September to 31st December is a close season for grey seals.

ARGENTINA.

BRITISH NATIONALS.

Mr. LYONS asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any censorship exists in the transmission to this country of news from the Argentine Republic regarding British nationals and their movements?

Sir J. SIMON: So far as I am aware, no such censorship is enforced by the Argentine Government.

MR. R. TOOTELL.

Mr. LYONS asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the arrest, release, and subsequent re-arrest of Mr. Richard Tootell, a British subject in the Argentine Republic; whether Mr. Tootell was arrested at the instance of the meat trade investigating committee of the Argentine; whether he is now in custody and upon what charge; and whether he is being allowed all reasonable facilities in connection therewith?

Sir J. SIMON: According to my information, the position is that Mr. Tootell was arrested on 25th November at the instance of the committee of the Argentine Senate, which the latter recently appointed to investigate the meat trade. Mr. Tootell was subsequently released, but he is at present again under nominal detention on an order of the Federal Court and upon the charge, it is understood, of concealing evidence from the Senatorial investigation. I am informed that Mr. Tootell is receiving full legal facilities.

INDIAN CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM.

3.40 p.m.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Sir Samuel Hoare): I beg to move,

"That this House accepts the recommendations of the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform as the basis for the revision of the Indian Constitution and considers it expedient that a Bill should be introduced on the general lines of the Report."

The report which I have moved is by no means the first of its kind that has come before this House. A century and a half ago there was a similar Debate on the report of a Joint Select Committee on the Government of India. A right hon. Gentleman—I think he must have been the prototype of my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill)—accused the Committee of "prejudice and preconceived opinions." It was Edmund Burke, who replied to the accusation in these words:

"Their conduct has been an instance of the most extraordinary perseverance and the most steady and patient assiduity that perhaps ever had occurred."

A century and a half has passed since Burke used those words of that Joint Select Committee on the Government of India, yet such is the strength of our Parliamentary traditions and of our feelings of Parliamentary public service, that no better words than those can be used to-day to describe the report we have to consider this afternoon. "Their conduct and assiduity"—I do not include Members of the Government; it is part of their official work; I am thinking rather of those other Members of this House fully engaged with other work who for almost two years devoted their time, energy and abilities to this long and often thankless task. Their conduct has been an instance of the most extraordinary perseverance and the most steady and patient assiduity that perhaps ever has occurred. When Parliamentary institutions are under a cloud in many countries in the world and when constitutions at the present time are often dictated by ruthless autocrats, Parliament should be proud of its Members of all three parties—Conservative, Labour and Liberal—for their attempt to build up, in consultation with representative public men of India and Burma, a constitution by agreement and free discussion.

In the course of the eighteenth century debate Burke made another observation which is not inapplicable to our present discussion. He described himself as

"a Member of Parliament who has supplied a mediocrity of talents by the extreme of diligence and who has thought himself obliged by the research of years to wind himself into the inmost recesses and labyrinths of Indian detail."

Could you find a better description, not so much of the great Parliamentarian Edmund Burke, but of a much humbler individual who is now Secretary of State for India—"a Member who has supplied a mediocrity of talents by the extreme of diligence and who has thought himself obliged by the research of years to wind himself into the inmost recesses and labyrinths of the Indian detail." I will make the confession to the House that, in opening this Debate to-day, I am almost overwhelmed by two difficulties. How can I deal with this immense subject without avoiding the dilemma of vague generalisations, on the one hand, or such great detail, on the other, as to weary the House and take up excessive time for one particular speaker? How, again, can I, in my attempt to make clear to the House the strength and the stability of the Constitution that is being proposed, avoid being misunderstood in India and the impression being created that the self-government we are offering to India is nothing more than a sham and a delusion?

It took me 19 days in the witness box in the Select Committee and many thousands of questions to explain the details of this complicated scheme to the Members of the Committee. If I made a similar attempt to-day, not a Member would be left to listen to me in this House. Perhaps the best course for me to take is the simplest course, to avoid detail and to concentrate upon the main features of the scheme, and not in any way to shirk the difficulties, particularly connected with the reservation and the safeguards, and to make an appeal to men of good will in this House and in India to take the scheme as a whole and to believe that it is the intention of the committee, and of the Government in supporting the report of the committee, to offer to India the widest opportunities for self-government and to propose to this

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House a scheme which we believe will help to keep India for all time a partner with Great Britain in the Empire, and a scheme which, at the same time, as the committee and we believe, contains in it the seeds for wide extension and development in the future.

From the hundreds of meetings held by the committee, the volumes of the evidence that they have received, the mass of memoranda that they discussed, and the long discussions that they held with public men from India and Burma, there emerge three broad conclusions —Provincial Autonomy, All-India Federation, and Responsibility with Safeguards. It may be thought, to judge from the observations of some of our critics, that those conclusions came on the brain wave of a party of constitutional theorists. When they first came to the fore there was a Socialist Government in office, and it may be asked: Are they not the conclusions of theorists, defeatists and revolutionists? It mattered not what Government was in office four years ago. It matters not what Government is in office to-day. Those broad conclusions came, not from theorists, not from constitutionalists, but from the stubborn and irreducible facts of the problem. They came from a century and a-half of British teaching in India. They came from a century and a-half of Indian experience. Politically, Indian public men have for generations been taught to work upon the Westminster model. Socially, Indian questions, such as the question of child marriage, of temple entry and of the depressed classes, have been thrusting themselves more and more upon public attention, and more and more it became clear that these questions could only be dealt with effectively by responsible Indian politicians. Economically, better communications and higher tariffs had made it inevitable that the India of the Indian States should take a direct part in the Central Indian Government. These broad conclusions emerged from this long chain of what I have just called "stubborn and irreducible facts."

It was not the committee that lightly and irresponsibly created the problem. The problem was there already, increasing in perplexity and increasing also in risk every year. If, indeed, there was a change between the more recent years and the years of past history it was that a more alert public opinion was constantly bringing these facts into greater prominence.

"Public opinion is growing all the while, is articulate, is daily becoming more powerful, cannot be ignored. What is the origin of the mistake sometimes made in Great Britain? It is that men are standing still with their eyes shut, and do not see the movement here in India."

Those are not the words of Lord Halifax, speaking to Mr. Gandhi, they are the words of Lord Curzon, spoken more than 30 years ago. The overwhelming weight of these facts drove the committee to reach the broad conclusions that I have just enumerated.

First of all, Provincial Autonomy. If it were only an administrative problem, the time was overdue to make a further step upon the road of decentralisation. The old central Government of India was adequate so long as the problems of government were comparatively simple. As, however, they became more complex, as political opinion grew up in the great Provinces, so more and more it became inevitable that this step forward should be taken on the road of decentralisation. On the political side, I think it has been admitted by almost everyone who has studied the problem impartially that the reforms made under the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme had outlasted their usefulness.

For both these reasons, it was necessary to take a step forward on the road to Provincial Autonomy. Provincial Autonomy may mean one of two things. It may mean a kind of glorified county council government, under which the Centre still maintains a considerable measure of control over the Provinces, under which the Centre makes grants-in-aid to the Provinces, and under which the Centre is ready to intervene when things are going wrong with the Provinces. That is not the conception of provincial autonomy supported by the majority of the Joint Select Committee. I believe myself that such a type of provincial autonomy in India, in a country as great as India, with all its multiplicity of conditions, is totally impracticable. Any system of grants-in-aid and inspection from the Centre will not work. Lord Curzon tried it a generation ago. Even Lord Curzon, with his great driving force and his great administrative ability, failed to make it work.

The only wise form of Provincial Autonomy is real provincial autonomy, a form of provincial autonomy in which the field of provincial activities is clearly marked out, and in which field the Provinces are free from interference from the centre; a form of provincial autonomy that is broadly based upon a wide franchise, in which the agricultural classes, the women and the Depressed Classes can make their voices heard; a system of provincial autonomy that is not dependent upon grants-in-aid from the Centre, but subsists upon definitely allocated taxes. That is the system of provincial autonomy recommended by the majority of the Committee. The House will see at once that it is inevitable that in any system of real provincial autonomy of that kind, in which Indian Ministers are to be truly responsible for provincial affairs, it is essential and inevitable that law and order should not be reserved, but should be transferred to the responsible Indian Ministers. The House will see set out in detail both in the report of the Statutory Commission and in the report of the Joint Select Committee arguments that make inevitable the transfer of law and order. I will not at this point in my speech delay to repeat them. I will, however, in a minute or two refer to them when I come to deal with the safeguards, the special provisions that are proposed by the majority of the Committee for safeguarding the preservation of peace. Let me only at this point summarise what I have just said, namely, that the first broad conclusion is the conclusion of Provincial Autonomy, and, if it is a real Provincial Autonomy, it must contain within it the responsibility for law and order.

I come to the second of the broad conclusions of the Committee, a conclusion, in my view, as inevitable as the conclusion of the Provincial Autonomy—the conclusion of All-India Federation. If you set up these great and responsible provincial governments, and you leave the centre as it is now, you are running the risk of destroying one of the greatest works of the British Raj in India, the unity of India, and you are running the risk of breaking India into fragments. Secondly, you will leave at the centre a government unsupported by any substantial measure of public opinion, at the mercy of the governments of great Provinces with an alert body of provincial opinion behind them. What will be the effect of such a situation upon the two main functions of the central government —the maintenance of Indian credit and the maintenance of Indian defence? What, again, will be the result of such a state of affairs on the Indian Princes and the Indian States when they see around them these great provincial governments gaining strength at the expense of the centre, and they themselves pushed more and more into a position of defenceless isolation?

I believe that it is necessary to state those questions to show to the House that, if once you accept the broad recommendation of effective provincial autonomy, the inevitable consequence is All-India Federation. But there is another conclusion to which we are driven. If there is to be an All-India Federation, it must be a federation with a government responsible to an Indian federal legislature. I can explain the position in a sentence. There can be no All-India Federation without the effective accession of a substantial number of Indian Princes. An All-India Federation without the accession of the Princes is a contradiction in terms. You cannot persuade the Princes to accede to any federation which still remains under the control of Whitehall government. They have stated over and over again that the only kind of federation which they will join is a federation in which the Indian executive is responsible to the Indian legislature. It follows, therefore, that if there is to be an All-India Federation in any conditions that we can contemplate, that federation must be a federation with responsible government. Moreover, it must also be a federation containing units which are divergent and differing one from the other.

You might have imagined, from some of the criticisms we have heard, that no federation is possible unless there is a neat and exact uniformity running through all the units. Historically that is not correct. There have been federations in which the units have been diverse to a remarkable degree. There was the federation of the old German Empire—a federation that remained in being for more than half a century, a federation in which there were great autocracies, small city States, bureaucratic governments, and in which there was every kind of dis-

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parity in the treatment of the various units. Indeed, in one of the greatest units, the kingdom of Bavaria, although excise and customs were federal subjects, Bavaria insisted on retaining the taxation of its beer before it entered the federation. But, apart from the historical argument, the criticism surely goes much further than its authors intend. If there can be no federation in which there is not uniformity in India, you are driven to one of two conclusions: Either you have to insist upon uniformity—that is, I suppose, democratising the States, and I should have thought there was nothing further from the minds of the critics who use these arguments or your criticism is a criticism not against federation now, in 1934, but a criticism against federation in India at any time and under any conditions. The fact is that it is inevitable that in any All-India Federation there must be these diverse elements, and, speaking for myself, I see great advantage in avoiding uniformity and in having this kind of disparity. Be that as it may, there is the second broad conclusion of the majority of the committee of responsible All-India Federation composed of all types of units.

But their conclusion does not end at this point. The third of their conclusions is the conclusion that may roughly be described as responsibility with safeguards. I think that there, again, their conclusion has arisen directly from the study of the concrete facts. It has become clear to almost everyone who has impartially considered this problem that it is essential that if Provincial Autonomy and All-India Federation are to work successfully, certain precautions must be taken to ensure the security and the stability of the various Governments. These precautions are not the creation of theorists who wish to set up a system of checks and balances. These precautions are inherent in the actual facts. They are not intended to impede the organic development of the Constitution. Least of all are they cunningly devised to take away with one hand what we are giving with the other. In every case they are the direct result of the hard pressure of the existing facts and conditions in India.

Let me give the House an illustration or two of what I mean. There are three types of these precautions. In the first place, there are a number of precautions which deal with the working of the executives and the legislatures. Hon. Members will see, if they study these provisions, that they set out in precise form conventions, habits and Parliamentary practices that have grown up here in the course of many generations. The Committee rightly felt that if a Constitution is being set up in India upon the general lines of the British Constitution, the Constitution could not possibly work if there were not contained in it these conventions, habits and practices without which the British Constitution here could not possibly work at all. Accordingly, the Committee rightly laid stress upon giving statutory form to a number of these conventions, and in making those recommendations it is worth noting that the Committee followed definitely on the lines of the creators of the British North America Act.

Secondly, there are what are called the reserved departments, notably the reserved department of defence. Here, again, this reservation arises from no wish to deprive Indians of responsibility to which they are entitled. It arises from the actual facts of the case, which are these. As things are now, India is not in a position to defend itself. A great part of the defence of India is dependent on British Imperial troops. Nobody I know has ever seriously suggested that it would be possible to bring the control of Imperial troops under any authority but the authority of the Imperial Parliament. That being so, it is essential, in the present conditions, to keep the defence of India under the control of the Imperial Parliament. That does not mean that we do not look sympathetically upon the great experiment of Indianisation. I do not think that anyone can say that the present Government of India or the present Commander-in-Chief are not fully in sympathy with that experiment, and are doing their best to make it successful, but, as things are now it is essential, the facts being as I have stated, that the Army should remain under the direct control of the Imperial Parliament.

Thirdly, there are the class of reservations and precautions known as special responsibilities. Here again every one of the special responsibilities arises out of the actual facts and conditions of the Indian situation. They do not come out of the minds of theorists; they arise

See Debate 6th Feb. 1935, p. 1162 (Speech of Sir Samuel Hoare)

directly out of the Indian problem, and it is worth noting that they are as much, if not more, in Indian interests as they are in British interests. They give to the Governor-General and the Provincial Governors the right to intervene, acting on their own discretion and not on the advice of Indian Ministers, that is to say, as the agents exclusively of the Imperial Parliament in certain specified conditions. These conditions are explicitly set out in the report of the committee. Let me give the House an instance or two as an illustration. There are special responsibilities enabling the Governors to intervene in the case of the persecution of minorities. That does not mean that we think it likely that Indian Ministers will persecute minorities, but it means that we have to have powers in reserve to meet a case of that kind, although it may be remote. It is interesting to note that those who have most demanded a special responsibility of this kind have been the representatives of the Indian minorities themselves in India. Again, with the backward districts and the aboriginal tribes, there, I am quite sure, every hon. Member will agree that we must keep in reserve powers to prevent these tribes and these remote districts being exploited.

Lastly, there is the field of special responsibilities connected with the various obligations which have grown up as the result of British partnership with India. I think that we are fully justified, after a century and a-half of this partnership, to insist that although the occasions for intervention may be rare—we hope they will be very rare—there must be in reserve powers in the hands of the Governor-General and the Governors of the Provinces to intervene if a threat is made in this particular field. Particularly is this the case with the police. I am certain that no House of Commons, however it is composed, would pass any India Constitutional Act that did not, so far as it was possible, safeguard the morale and discipline of that splendid force the Indian Police, and I agree that every impartial Indian would also desire that nothing should be done that might undermine the morale or endanger the organisation of that force.

The problem which was presented to the Committee was this. Assume that the transfer of law and order is an essential part of Provincial Autonomy, is it possible within that transfer to safeguard the police force itself from the danger of its morale being undermined and the sources of its information being dried up? The House will see in the report the proposals which the Committee make to avoid these dangers. Speaking generally, they take the form of making precise the conventions which actually exist in this country. Here, in Great Britain, no one will suggest that the Home Secretary is not responsible for the maintenance of law and order, and yet no one will imagine that the Home Secretary would interfere with the postings and promotions within the police force itself. No one would contemplate the Home Secretary asking for the names of secret agents and the exact sources of secret intelligence. It is proposed to make precise and statutory these British conventions, without which here in England it would be impossible to maintain the morale, discipline and organisation of the police force. I am glad to believe that the police in India, when they study these provisions, will be greatly reassured. I think they go a long way to remove the anxieties that have been rife in the minds of many police officers in India, and that they wisely hold the balance between the responsibilities of the Minister on the one hand for law and order and the safeguarding of the internal morale and discipline of the police force on the other.

So also with the Committee's proposals to deal with terrorism. I am not surprised that the Committee has made special and specific proposals for arming the Governor-General and the Governors with special powers to deal with this terrible evil. I gave the Committee a statement in which was set out in great detail the whole history of terrorism in India for many years past. I wished the Committee to be in full possession of all the details of this black and terrible chapter. Provided with this information, the Committee recommend, not that a particular section of intelligence should be reserved to the Provincial Governors or to the Governor-General—that precaution might be totally inadequate in the circumstances—but that where a serious emergency had arisen the Governor in the Province, acting with the sanction of the Secretary of State and the Imperial Parliament, would be entitled to retain in his hands, or to resume into

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his hands, any Department of Government he thought necessary for the purpose of combating terrorism. These are extensive provisions, I believe they are necessary provisions, and that nothing short of them is adequate in the circumstances. None the less I do not contemplate that except in exceptional circumstances their use will be required. Normally we shall find Indian public men as anxious to eradicate terrorism from the life of India as any Provincial Governor or any Governor-General. None the less it is necessary in the circumstances, and, in view of the facts which I have set out in the memorandum which forms part of one of the volumes of the report, to arm the Governor-General and the Provincial Governors with these reserve powers.

It may be said that reserve powers of this kind are nothing more than paper powers, that they have no sanction behind them, and in time of stress will be of no use or value. Nothing is further from the case. Behind these powers will be, first of all, the Governor-General and the Provincial Governors, appointed by the Crown, and kept fully informed by their Ministers and their officials of everything that is taking place. The Services are behind them, as the executive to carry out the Governor's orders; and the only valid orders are the orders of the Governor-General and the Provincial Governors. Is it suggested that the Services, with their long traditions of courage and loyalty, will not carry out the executive order of the Governor-General and the Provincial Governor? I cannot contemplate such a contingency, and, if such a contingency did arise, it would mean the breakdown of the constitution and the abrogation of all these powers. How different from the case about which we have heard so much during the course of this controversy—the Irish case. The Governor-General in Ireland is appointed on the recommendations of the Irish Government, left with no powers, no Services, on which to depend for executive action. We have withdrawn the Services from Ireland. We have kept no Army there, as the last and ultimate resource in time of crisis. It is only necessary to state the two cases in a sentence or two to show how the Irish case, so far from being an analogy to the Indian case, is a direct contrast and antithesis.

No, Sir; these safeguards are not paper safeguards. They are safeguards with sanction behind them and with effective executive action to be put into effect if need arises. I have emphasised their efficacy to the House, but I do not wish any hon. Member to think that the Committee or the Government contemplate that there will be constant need for their use. I believe that the very existence of these powers in reserve will make it unnecessary nine times out of ten to bring them into play at all. I believe that the Governors, who will be in close contact with their Ministers, when they see the case arising in which one of these special responsibilities may be endangered, will persuade their Ministers to take the necessary action, and in nine cases out of ten the Indian Ministers will be only too glad to take that advice and to take that action. It is only for the emergency cases that we contemplate there will be need for this intervention. If, however, the need does arise, there will be the powers and there will be the effective executive action behind them. So far from thinking that these safeguards will be an obstacle in the way of the development of self-government in India, I believe that they are the necessary support without which self-government in India cannot succeed.

I come now to two further questions, two questions that I am sure are in the minds of many hon. Members. It may be that I have carried, at any rate, some of them with my argument up to this point. None the less, they may say to me: "These arguments sound strong arguments, but what reason have we to suppose that this complicated Constitution will actually work? What reason have we to suppose that any substantial body of Indian public men are prepared to work it?" First of all, will it work? I am not going to be so foolish as to make any optimistic prophecies. I expect that we shall all find many difficulties, some of them unforeseen. I feel sure that we shall suffer many disappointments. I think that very likely the development of the Constitution may not be upon the lines of the Westminster model, but that it may develop on distinctive lines of its own. None the less I believe that if a Bill is passed on the general lines of the Report of the Committee, the Constitution will work. I am supported in that view by the opinion of

the Governor-General, the Government of India and all the Provincial Governments. In the course of the last three weeks I have put this question to each of them. One and all they say that in their view, admitting all the difficulties and uncertainties, they believe that the scheme of the Joint Select Committee is a workable basis for an Indian Constitution.

Secondly, is there a substantial body of public men in India who are prepared to work the Constitution? I am painfully aware of the fact that few, if any, Indian public men can say that they are satisfied with this or any other scheme. Safeguards and precautions which we here think necessary and without which no Bill can pass through this House, seem irksome and hampering to most Indian public men. I know also that in the recent elections which took place for the Indian Assembly, Congress, upon a programme of hostility to these proposals, won very many seats. I know also that many of my Indian friends with whom I worked during the last three or four years, have been defeated. They fell, let me say in passing, in the honourable cause of co-operation and reconciliation. These events did not come to me as a surprise. I knew Congress would win many seats in this election. None the less the Viceroy and I were so anxious to bring Congress back from the barren field of non-co-operation into the field of responsible public work, that we were prepared to face the risk.

If I draw a lesson from the recent elections, it is that so long as the present system continues, under which electoral success depends almost exclusively upon attacking the Government—there is this difference between attacking the Government in India and attacking the Government here, that the Government of India, being a bureaucracy makes no response on the platform or in the country—the elections in India will almost invariably go the way of the elections that have just taken place. I know also that subsequently Congress has passed a resolution hostile to the report. I hope that on second thoughts they will reconsider their position. I should have thought that the day of antiquated negation, whether in this country or India, was passed. I should have thought that there were great bodies of opinion in India whose one desire is to avoid further delay, to reach at no distant date definite decisions upon a constitutional scheme. Any proposal for a constituent Assembly in India seems to me quite impracticable, and I believe that Indians themselves know it to be impracticable. I believe that the time has come to bring to an end this long period of protracted delay, and to take definite action upon the one scheme that holds the ground and to which there has been proposed no workable alternative.

May I say this word of appeal to my Indian friends in India? During the last three years I have had a better opportunity of meeting Indians and discussing with them these questions by word of mouth than any previous Secretary of State. I think that during all these long discussions, even though we may not always have agreed with each other, we have become better able to understand each other's difficulties. They took some risks in co-operating with us in London. Perhaps in a small way I took some risks in maintaining steadily now for three years past the path of constitutional reform. But be that as it may, let me put, if I may say so as a friend, the position as I see it. I do not believe that it is a choice between a Bill founded upon the broad lines of the Committee's Report and a more advanced Bill at any near future date. I know, perhaps, better than most people, the weight of exacting work, the thanklessness of the task that has gone to the framing of this scheme. I do not see, within any reasonable compass of time, any other Government, Conservative, Labour or Liberal, giving the time and the trouble and incurring the unpopularity in this country of introducing another scheme.

If my forecast be right, it means that if no Bill passes this Session there will be no comprehensive India Bill for many years to come. I am quite sure that the inevitable result of such a state of affairs would be to drive the problem of Indian constitutional reform into the hands of the extreme Right and extreme Left. That would develop into a battle between the extreme Right and the extreme Left, and the creation of such an atmosphere as to make impossible, if not for all time at any rate for many years, the reconciliation of differences between the two peoples.

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Let Indians mark what they have been offered in this scheme. They are being offered, as the basis of the Indian Constitution, the three essential principles for which every Indian who has been in consultation with us has asked—Provincial Autonomy, All-India Federation, and Provincial Autonomy and All-India Federation brought about in a comprehensive scheme and not taken stage by stage and chapter by chapter. Further than that they are being offered a scheme which, if they will examine it, they will find to contain in every chapter the seeds of futures growth. I venture to appeal to my friends in British India to mark these great advances. They are not mere paper promises. They are made by a Government with a majority behind it and a Government determined to carry its promises into effect without delay and in the course of this Session.

There is a word which I would venture to say to my friends in the Indian States. I am convinced that no form of future government in India can be complete without the participation of the Indian Princes and the Indian States. It was the Indian Princes who made the offer of federation four years ago, and it was the British Indians at that time who received that offer in the spirit in which it was made. I am glad to think that there is a chance of having the advantage in the government of India of the forces of stability, the hereditary knowledge of government, and the traditions which the Princes can bring to it. I have no reason to suppose that the Princes have in any way altered their position since they made that offer four years ago. Neither they nor I will be deflected by partisan propaganda. They are free agents. Let them study the report, and I believe they will find that their claims, their rightful claims, have been met in the letter and the spirit and that there is no reason why they should not without delay take a great opportunity that may never recur of establishing their rightful position in the central government of India.

I have been drawn away—and I am obliged to the House for allowing me to make this digression—into saying a word or two to my Indian friends in British India and the Indian States. Let me remember that I am addressing the House of Commons and that I am asking hon. Members to pass by an overwhelming majority the Resolution in my name, which will enable the Government to proceed without undue delay with a Bill upon the lines of the Committee's report. If Great Britain were weak, if our prestige were low in the world, I would not be standing here to-day asking this House to approve of any changes in India. It is only when a country is strong, when a Government is stable, that it can afford to make constitutional reforms.

We propose these constitutional reforms on their merits, not because we have been driven into making concessions by weakness, timidity or vacillation. We propose them because we believe them to be for the better government of India. We propose them because we believe, not only that they are in full accord with the British traditions of the past, but because we believe that they will help to keep India a contented partner with Great Britain in the British Empire. We propose them because we believe that they have behind them the greatest measure of agreement that has been achieved either in India or in this country for any constitutional proposals, because no one, British or Indian, has proposed a workable alternative. We propose them because we believe that the differences between Great Britain and India are not yet irreconcilable, but that, if we do not adjust our relations to modern conditions, those differences will drag us further and further apart.

It is in this spirit that I ask the House to pass this Resolution and to pass it with an overwhelming majority. I believe that if they pass it with an overwhelming majority it will be said that the action of the Imperial Parliament is yet another instance of British wisdom, British foresight and British common sense. Let it be said of this Parliament as it was said of the Members of Parliament who more than two centuries ago did so much to strengthen the foundation of the British Constitution:

"They were not dreary pedants. They were statesmen accustomed to the management of great affairs. Their plans of reform were not so extensive as those of the lawgivers of Cadiz, but what they planned that they effected; and what they effected, that they maintained against the fiercest critics at home and abroad."

4.53 p.m.

Mr. ATTLEE: The right hon. Gentleman has given the House, as he always does, a very clear and careful exposition, and he has made an appeal to this House and to the people of India. If I wished to criticise that speech in one sentence I should say that there was one thing lacking in it and that was any admission of the rights of the Indian people. It seems to me that it is essential when we are dealing with a great issue concerning the people of two nations, to approach it from the right angle and to recognise the Indian outlook as well as the British outlook. I want at the outset to acknowledge the great work of the right hon. Gentleman in connection with the Joint Committee. No Minister could have been more patient, and no Minister could have been better informed or more lucid. I would like also to say that I believe all the members of that committee applied themselves honestly to arriving at conclusions as to what would be best for the people of India. At the end of it we differed. I and my colleagues and other members of the committee took a different view from that of the majority and I want shortly to explain why we differed.

I make no apology for putting forward the views of my party. We do not desire to score any party advantage or to make India a pawn in some party game. But I do protest against the prevalent view that differences of opinion on great problems are due to mere party. It implies that there is no reality in our party system at all, that parties are not divided on real differences of political outlook. In my view, where parties are divided on vital differences of outlook and principle those differences are bound to express themselves not only in the domestic field, but in the foreign field and the Imperial field. Our party is based on the principle of Socialism, and it was quite inevitable, on coming to apply our minds to the problem of India, that we should find ourselves in disagreement with Conservatives and Liberals who take a different point of view. Our party is supremely concerned with the question of economic justice as the foundation for the advance of humanity, and we exist as a party to secure our ends by constitutional and political methods. We do not believe that justice can be given to anybody by an autocrat however benevolent. We believe that it has to be won by people for themselves and we want to secure it for all people. We want social and economic justice for our own people here at home and for the people all over the world, and it is with this object in view that we approach the Indian problem.

The question which we have to ask ourselves is: what form of constitution will enable the Indian people to emancipate themselves from economic and social injustice? That is the criterion which we apply. We are aware of the facts of the Indian situation. We are aware that the answer is not easy. We know of the many obstacles—the size of India, and difficult questions like defence and the communal question. All these condition the answer but we approach it with that view. How are you going to deal with the poverty problem of India, because that is the outstanding fact? The outstanding fact in India is the poverty of the masses. You have an enormous population living for the most part, on the borderline of starvation. You have great inequalities of wealth. You have the exploitation of the many by the few. In many Provinces the rural workers are subject to one of the most vicious forms of landlordism existing anywhere. They are in the hands of people who do nothing whatever for their tenants but draw the utmost they can out of them. In the Provinces there is the rapacious moneylender. In the towns and urban areas you have a capitalism, both imported and indigenous, which is, I think, less enlightened than the capitalism and industrialism that we have at home.

We on these benches are not interested in a mere change of master. It is no good changing the colour of the skin of your capitalist. In India, in our view, poverty is so closely interwoven with the social and religious order of society that it is impossible for any outside force to deal with it. It is quite impossible for the British to introduce radical reforms into the Indian social system. The fragmentation of holdings and the excessive growth of the population, which presses on the means of subsistence, are phenomena which spring directly from the social system. We see a whole mass of social questions, and we say that they

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have to be dealt with by the Indian people themselves.

It is no part of our case to attribute this poverty solely to British rule or solely to the exploitation of the people of India by an alien Imperialism. We recognise the good and the evil that have been done in India by our connection with it. We know the great service that has been done by men and women of our race, and how often the Britisher has been the protector of the poor, but the fact remains, and this is what the Indians feel, that after a century and a half of our rule the Indian masses remain poor, ignorant, and exploited, capitalism and landlordism flourish, the moneylender flourishes, untouchability continues to exist, and the subjugation of women continues to exist. We have to take responsibility for these things, because we deny responsibility to others. That is what they say, and they are justified in saying it. The forces which might have arisen in India whereby these things might have been changed have been restrained, because the flood of Indian life has been confined within the strong embankments of our rule.

Let me give two examples. In a disorderly country the landlord and the moneylender are restrained in their rapacity to some extent by the fear lest their victims may rise against them. We have policed rapacity; we have given the moneylender the shelter of the law. Again, the autocratic ruler of a state is subject to the threat of revolt by his subjects, but in the autocracies of the Indian States we keep the rulers on the *guddi* by our armies. Therefore, in our action in India in preserving law and order, we have really shielded the existing social order from the continual shocks to which in more normal circumstances it would be subject. Granted that those shocks might have meant all kinds of revolutions and bloodshed; they might even have meant civil war and intense bitterness, but, after all, these things are the stuff of which history is made. We have kept things at a certain stage of development, and we are as responsible for India to-day as a parent who has brought up a child under the sheltered life theory. We have for very many years delayed in giving India responsibility, and it is really this delay in giving to Indians themselves the responsibility of working out their own destinies that is the indictment against us, and is such a powerful offset to the material benefits and peace which we have given to India.

For every evil which flourished unchecked in India we must take responsibility, because we have been the repositories of power. That is not the view of a sentimental theorist. The view that there was a very great danger and risk in our taking this responsibility and bringing up Indians in the sheltered life was held by the greatest administrators in India 100 years ago. That was the view taken by men like Sir Thomas Monro in Madras. In a well-known passage in which he described what would happen if we did not associate Indians with our rule, he wrote:

> "The consequence therefore of the conquest of India by British arms would be to debase the whole people. There is perhaps no example of any conquest in which the natives have been so completely excluded from all share of the government of their country as in British India."

You find men like Elphinstone and Sleeman saying the same thing, and although we have got away from that, although we have gradually got an increase of responsibility, it was long delayed. But I would like to stress that point, that the idea that Indians must always be ruled for their own good by the lonely white man is a late Victorian sentiment. It was not so thought by the great Governors. I think it is now generally realised that India has outgrown her period of pupilage. We have done as much as we can in that way, and what we are concerned with is the form of government which we are going to set up, a form which will attract to its working the live forces of the Indian people. I say the live forces of the Indian people, not the dead forces, not the vested interests, but living forces. We want to see that in any Constitution which we set up we give the chance for the masses of India to rid themselves of the social and economic evils from which they suffer.

That is where I come back to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. He quite frankly recognised the strength of the Indian Nationalist movement, but I do not think he recognised that the Indian Nationalist movement is the only thing that can be the driving force to make this Constitution a success. If you take away the drive that come from ad-

ministrators sent out from this country to govern India, you cannot leave it without some force; you must have some force to come in, and unless you want India to remain as it is—and I do not believe it is for the good of the world that it should—you must have some force at work that is making for change. Our first objection to the report of the committee is that it is informed throughout with a distrust of the active political forces in India. I am under no illusions as to the defects of Indian Nationalism. I hold no brief at all for the Congress party, but it is strong in the fact that it can demand the devotion and self-sacrifice of the youth of India. There is no doubt about that. It is a cause for which men will suffer, for which men and women will go to prison, and when we are discussing political matters, there is another important fact to remember. It is the political party in India which wins elections. Sometimes we say it does not really count, that it is just a mere handful of intellectuals. It reminds me of people who go to see a crew rowing on the river, and who say that it has all the defects of style. It is no good saying they have no rhythm, they do not use their slides properly, and their backs are not straight. The trouble is they win all the races. That is what happened when they had the new style of rowing. It is no good saying the Congress party has this fault and that fault. The fact is that it is the central political force in India, and we have no doubt at all that it will get majorities in the Lower Chambers. It is Indian Nationalism that will either make or break the machine of this Constitution.

The committee have elaborated plans to thwart this popular will through distrust. The first point is that they have left out what is of vital importance in dealing with the people, and that is an appeal to their idealism and self-respect. I think it is a grave mistake that is this report and in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman there was no word as to the goal to which Indian is moving, and there was no word at all of Dominion status. You can quibble as much as you please about the term "Dominion status." The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) may have used the words in a moment of expression, but he cannot explain them away. The fact is that it was definitely laid down as the goal of the people of India by the Viceroy of India, Lord Irwin, who, I think, of all recent Viceroys has known best how to appeal to the soul of India. It was laid down quite solemnly by the Prime Minister, and it was accepted by him as the view of the people of this country. Why has that been dropped? I wonder whether it is possible to think of a great Nationalist movement going forward without something to inscribe on its banners. If it does not have "Dominion status" on its banners, perhaps it will have "Separation." You express the hope that Indians will work for the development and co-operation of India within the Empire. Well, give them a rallying cry. That seems to me a terrible failure. I think we in this country are peculiarly insensitive to form. As long as the substance is there, we do not care about form, and we are insensitive to the sensibilities of other peoples. People on the Continent, people in India, like to have these things written down and indicated. They care about the form as well as the substance. I think we have made a great mistake here, and I and my friends think that in the forefront of any report, in the forefront of any Bill, dealing with India there should be the recognition of the right of the Indian people—not because there is something wonderful in merely writing down a thing in words, but you have to evoke the forces of the Indian people to work this Constitution.

Secondly, there is a grave mistake in the way in which the legislatures have been formed. In the Provinces there is representation given to all kinds of vested interests, what you call safe and conservative vested interests. In many of the principal Provinces the committee has drawn up second chambers, avowedly conservative, elected on a narrow franchise, representative of wealth, put there, as all second chambers are, to curb the popular will. I am not going to argue this afternoon on the question of second chambers. I have argued it often in committee, but I know there is no good my arguing the question with Conservatives, because all second chambers are necessarily a conservative force, and therefore all Conservatives agree with them whereas all Labour people disagree with them because we do not want Conservatism.

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I think it has gone much further than that in the Central Government. The Central Legislature has been framed in such a way that it is practically impossible for the forces of nationalism even to get control of the Centre. The Central Legislative Chambers are some of the most reactionary bodies ever devised. They are partly formed of nominees of the Princes and partly of representatives from the Second Chambers in the Provinces indirectly elected. In order to make still more certain of the absence from the Legislatures of the most live forces of India, a special provision has been recommended to exclude from membership people who have been imprisoned for more than a year. In the last four or five years there have been disturbances in India and lots of people have gone to prison, and many of them are among the keenest people who ought to be working the new Constitution. Suppose when self-government were given to South Africa a provision had been inserted that no one who had taken part on the Boer side in the Boer War should be allowed in the Legislature. That would have excluded such people as General Smuts and General Botha. I have met a number of statesmen in India who have been revolutionists, who have been suspected and even put into prison, and who have subsequently been Ministers of the Crown in India. That is an example of what I see running through the report—mistrust all the way.

I want to stress the next point. It is that it is a very difficult thing to establish a federation in India and get anything like a balance between the Centre and the Provinces. We want to get the same kind of forces at work in the Centre as are at work in the Provinces. We all realise that one of the difficulties of the last 10 years is that there has been a degree of responsible government in the Provinces but not in the Centre. In certain Provinces where there have not been second chambers there there is a very good chance that the forces of Congress or some form of nationalism will take control. They will be influential in the Provinces, but, if we deliberately say, "We will keep the Centre as a preserve of Conservatism," we shall set up an unbearable strain between the Centre and the Provinces.

The third point is this. Despite what the Secretary of State said, I think there is no adequate provision for constitutional development at the Centre. What is conceded is conceded as an instalment. There is not any provision for organic growth. Indeed, there is danger of delay in even starting Federation at the Centre. Here I would dissent from the Secretary of State's dictum that you cannot start federation until a large number of Indian States are in it. I believe that we could start it with one or two States and allow the others to come in. Responsibility at the Centre ought not to be subjected to the veto of a certain number of autocrats. I do not think anyone can be very happy when he contemplates what the Central Legislature is to be. We are to have 600 members or more at the Centre with hardly anything to do. There is to be an entirely unnecessary upper house which will, in the event of any trouble with the lower house, sit with it. On vital matters, therefore, there will be only one House. I believe that, except for the precedent of the House of Lords, no one would ever have thought of having a Second Chamber at all at the Centre.

We are going to have a dyarchic Government. I do not want to express again my objections to dyarchy for I have expressed them in the Statutory Committee's report and in the House, but I think that the amount of responsibility conceded to the Centre is a very serious objection to the whole Constitution. There is no flexibility at the Centre, and we should at the present time give a great deal more responsibility. India should have charge of her own foreign affairs. We should lay down a definite term for the Indianisation of the Army. I may be told that no one can prophesy about that. We in our alternative draft have put down a term of years and we did it on the best authority, namely, that of the Government of India which included Lord Reading as Governor-General, and of Lord Rawlinson, the Commander-in-Chief. We may not achieve it in that time but I think we can. The Indians, however, want to see their goal marked clearly in front of them. If we leave it vague, we do not give them any picture of what may be.

Throughout there is a lack of the forces of development at the Centre. We have suggested a means by way of the com-

mittee system of steadily developing responsibility at the Centre year by year. We do not believe in the Westminster system at the Centre. We would like to have no Second Chamber at the Centre and we would like, if we could, to get a smaller body to deal with the very small content of work that is to be done at the Centre. We say that we reject the possibility of Parliamentary system just like our own because of the peculiar composition of the Centre. I want it to be realised that it is a hazardous experiment combining the representation of autocracies and democracies at the Centre. I do not believe that that can long endure. The movements that are on foot in British India are bound to extend to the Indian States. Further, I doubt very much how long the British democracy will continue to maintain autocracy without some better guarantee of what is going on inside it. I do not condemn indiscriminately all the Indian States. Mysore and Baroda are examples of good government, but everybody knows examples of misrule. You never know when the chances of a change in the succession to a principality may not mean the fall of a State down to utter barbarism.

At the Centre, again, we think it is absurd to suggest that we are giving responsibility to the people when we are not going to allow them to have responsibility for their own finance. The Indians are fairly well read in history. They know that the power of the Commons has been built up on control of the purse. We do not think there should be a special responsibility in the Governor-General for finance. We object to a central bank not under the control of the Government. We object to the width of the powers of the Governor in the Provinces, and we think there should be real responsibility. There is a danger in the multiplication of safeguards that you do away with responsibility and breed irresponsibility. I am aware that in any Constitution it is not so much what is in the Constitution as the way in which it is worked. It may well be that all these powers will fall into desuetude, but the Committee have unduly extended the powers of interference of the Governor. It tends to blur responsibility and the difference between the two periods, one in which the responsibility of Indian Ministers is operating and the other where there has been a breakdown and someone else has had to step in.

I am not suggesting there should not be a certain amount of power in the Governor for certain special subjects and responsibilities, but they must be reduced to a minimum. The Committee have decided to form the representation at the Centre by the method of indirect election. There is nothing sacrosanct about direct or indirect election. I believe that it is more suitable in India that the Centre should be formed by indirect election. My colleagues think that it should be by direct election. The Committee have made the worst of the job by the method of indirect election. One of the reasons why I advocated indirect election at the Centre was that I hoped we might get away from crude communal representation at the Centre, but the indirect representation set up is based on communalism. I think it would have been quite possible to get a system of indirect election from the Provinces to the Centre. I am aware that much is to be said on the other side but, if we had a really democratic form of provincial government without a second chamber we should get the forces of the natives represented at the Centre.

Let us suppose that we have this Constitution. What will be the position of the masses under it? Self-government is only a means to an end. We do not want to hand over the workers and peasants of India to the Princes, landlords, moneylenders, industrialists and lawyers. I fear that that is what we are doing. In the Provinces there are second chambers in which vested interests are entrenched. They are pretty strong in the first chambers as well. At the Centre they are not only entrenched, but dug right in. There is no provision in the Constitution for extending the franchise. I grant that the extension given under the proposals of the Committee are far wider than we have at present, but we want to see a definition provision that adult franchise should be introduced as soon as it is administratively possible. I am not going to suggest that if we did this the Indian peasants and workers would emancipate themselves to-day. It is not the experience of history that a class that is given the franchise emancipates itself straight away. I have no doubt that they will do just as Britishers have

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done and continue to elect the landlords, the moneylenders and the lawyers for many generations, but the potentiality ought to be with the workers. I want to put the Indian politician in the position of courting the suffrages of the poor. I want there to be an opportunity in this matter which will lead to their education. The report denies them this, especially at the Centre.

I have no wish to weary the House with Committee points, but I think the report fails as an instrument for gaining the live forces in Indian life. It is a backward step in that it really relies on vested interests and does not go out on a bold course. In our view the forces of the modern world, political and economic, are alive in India to-day, and the question is, Are they to be destructive or constructive; are they to work constitutionally or unconstitutionally; are they merely to gather strength by struggling against restrictions imposed from outside, or are they going to be disciplined and controlled by responsibility? In our view our co-operation in India can only be fruitful if we meet India in a spirit of generosity and understanding, and work with the live interests of the Indian nation. I would say to those who think that somehow or other we are betraying all the Englishmen who have served in India that I was very much struck by a passage in a letter of that great Governor of Bombay, Elphinstone. He wrote, 110 years ago:

"It may be urged that if we raise the natives to an equality with ourselves by education and at the same time admit them to a share in their own government, it is not likely that they will be content with the position assigned to them, or will ever rest until they have made good their title to the whole. It cannot be denied that there is much ground for apprehension, but I do not see that we are at all more secure on any other plan. It is better for our honour and interest, as well as for the welfare of mankind, that we should resign our power into the hands of the people for whose benefit it is intended than that it should be wrested from us by a rival nation."

And here is one other quotation from Elphinstone:

"The moral is that we must not dream of perpetual possession, but must apply ourselves to bring the natives into a state which will admit of their governing themselves in a manner that may be beneficial to our interests as well as their own and that of the rest of the world, and to take the glory of achievement and the sense of having done our duty for the chief reward of our labours."

I think those were profoundly wise words. We have to face up to the fact that we have educated the Indians, that we have trained them in self-government, that there is no other plan than that of going forward and that the boldest and safest plan is to go forward with a clear goal in view, whereas what we are going to do is to give them a little bit and say, "We are going to see how you get on." We should tell the Indians, "We are out for you to achieve full status within the British Commonwealth of Nations, we are working for the elimination of our own control and for the complete control of India by Indians." In that way I think we shall turn the devotion and enthusiasm of the youth of India to building up India and not to rending it into ruin.

5.34 p.m.

Mr. ISAAC FOOT: The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India, in making his speech just now, spoke of his task as having been a thankless one. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not put any emphasis on that word "thankless." He has had to carry a most exceptional burden in recent years, and I cannot do better than apply to him the tribute that Clarendon paid to Cromwell, a tribute paid by one opponent to another. Clarendon said of him:

"Yet as he grew into place and authority his parts seemed to be raised as if he had concealed faculties till he had occasion to use them."

The right hon. Gentleman is certainly, in the mind of the public, a greater man than he was when he undertook this burden some years ago, and those of us who have had the privilege of serving on the committee have wondered at his resilience of mind and at the courage with which he has carried this burden from day to day, and we are very happy to think that the responsibilities associated with India have rested upon such worthy shoulders. I would also like to pay my tribute to the chairman of the committee. I had not the honour of knowing the chairman before I served on that committee, but I think this country is in a very fortunate position as long as there are men like Lord Linlithgow to undertake a task of this sort. I hope this work will go through for the sake of the right hon. Gentleman

and for the sake of the chairman of the committee. In one sense there are very many bigger reasons, but for their sakes I would like to see this work done and their names written, as I think indelibly, in a great record of a very great hour in the history of this island.

Will the House allow me to make one other reference? There was one member of the committee who was not enabled to complete her service among us—a Member of this House. We had two losses—one from the other House and one from this House. She was a Member of this House who had gone to India to serve on the franchise committee and who brought to the work a wonderful aptitude, diligence, skill and great public service. We were, before the close of our labours, deprived of her contribution, and I would like to make this acknowledgment of the service she gave. We had the privilege of meeting a number of Indian delegates, men who would be able to take their place in any assembly in the world, men of great intellectual attainment who, at great sacrifice to themselves had come to one committee after another in order that they might serve their own Motherland. I would like to acknowledge the privilege of having been associated with them at different round table conferences and on the Select Committee itself. That reference would apply, also, to the representatives who came from Burma. The right hon. Gentleman did not, in his survey, refer to Burma, as I understand that is to be dealt with to-morrow, but the committee very rightly came to the conclusion that Burma ought to be separated from India, and we would not like the people of Burma to think that their interests are unimportant because, for the time being, they seem to be submerged. The trouble we have had is in the multitude of memoranda. I have accumulated during those years over 60 Blue Books dealing with India, and the average Member looking upon that number, may very well say, in the words of Milton,

> "Who shall tempt with wandering feet
> This Dark, unbottomed, infinite abyss?"

The danger now is that we shall miss the wood for the trees. It was Carlyle who said that no man could see the French Revolution. It is certain that no one man can see India. I was not at all surprised that, before the right hon. Gentleman had been speaking three minutes, he had introduced the name of Burke. I wonder how many times Burke is to be quoted in this Debate. At the Round Table Conference practically every member quoted Burke. Burke was an additional member. He is, indeed, the bridge between intellectual India and intellectual Britain. I agree with what Mr. Birrell said, that

> "Nobody is fit to govern this country who has not drunk deep at the springs of Burke. 'Have you read your Burke?' is at least as sensible a question to put to a Parliamentary candidate as to ask whether he is a total abstainer or a desperate drunkard."

The only people who disparage Burke are those who have never settled down to read him. It is impossible for us to estimate the worth of his services to the Indian people. I will content myself, at great self-sacrifice, with one quotation. In speaking on the Indian problem in December, 1783, Burke spoke of this labyrinth of detail and said:

> "We are, in general, so little acquainted with India in detail, the instruments of oppression under which the people suffer are so hard to be understood, and even the very names of the sufferers are so uncouth and strange to our ears, that it is very difficult for our sympathy to fix upon these objects. All these circumstances are not, I confess, very favourable to the idea of our attempting to govern India at all. But there we are, there we are placed by the Sovereign Disposer, and we must do the best we can in our situation. The situation of man is the preceptor of his duty."

It was over 30 years ago that I read this sentence of Burke:

> "Our Empire in India is an awful thing."

I see the truth of that now more than I did then, and I think anyone who tries to study this question becomes very diffident and not inclined to be at all dogmatic. Anything I have to say is certainly said with great diffidence.

First of all, this is not a party Measure. It is one in which we look for the co-operation of all parties. We have tried to make our Liberal contribution. There was a Liberal delegation on all the conferences, and I was a little astonished when the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, speaking of this Committee three or four nights ago, said that it was a Conservative Committee and that the Amendments were Conservative Amendments. In view of that it is necessary for us to say something. Suffering is the badge of all our tribe on these benches, but meekness may be carried a little too far. The main declaraion in this matter

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was made by a Liberal member of the delegation in December, 1930, when he stated that, with certain Safeguards, he, speaking on behalf of the delegation, would consent to a federal Government being set up. That is accepted as a truism to-day, but it caused much astonishment then. If any guarantee of that is required, let me quote the "Times" correspondent, writing from Delhi on 10th January, 1931:

"Only one incident in the proceedings so far has fired the imagination of political India, and that is Lord Reading's speech in which he signified that the Liberal delegation was ready to concede, with certain safeguards, the principle of responsibility of the Indian Central Government to the India Federal Legislature. The effect of that speech has been instantaneous."

I am very glad that that opinion is now held throughout the House. We do not complain because we remember that John Stuart Mill once said that the chief function of the Liberal party was to educate the Conservative party. If hon. Members turn to the early part of the report they will see paragraph 11, where we speak of the reality of Indian political aspirations. I had no doubt of the reality of the demand for Indian self-government on the first day when the Round Table Conference met in 1930. That demand was expressed by every representative who was there, whether representing the Depressed Classes, or the Hindus or the Mohammedans—whatever their divergencies they all agreed in the demand for self-government.

One of the most misleading arguments that has been used by the opponents of this proposal is that we speak only for the literate classes and that we have no right to speak for what are called the indigent masses of India. That is not true. I would like to quote what was said in answer to that by a man who carried great weight in this country, who was then called Ranjitsinji but who was speaking as the Maharajah of Nawanagar. This was his answer to the contention that this demand was only the demand of the literate classes. He said, speaking at the Round Table Conference:

"Much has been said . . . on the supreme gravity of the issues that agitate India to-day; I can hardly add, with any words of mine, to the volume of testimony that is forthcoming from speaker after speaker, who bring to this country very recent and intimate knowledge of the national movement which has long since stepped beyond the proverbial lawyer, and has entered the hearts and homes of all classes of people in all parts of the country. It is a mass movement that has got in its grip the mind of India—not the literate classes only, as is alleged in this country. Let that stern fact be clearly recognised and properly appreciated."

That was said at the end of 1930. The Nationalist demand is the inevitable result of Macaulay's classical Minute. When that decision was taken, on 2nd February, 1935, Macaulay said:

"You plant the seed of ambition; you must enable it to be fulfilled."

We have given these people the literature of liberty. It is impossible to give people history that tells them of Hampden, Burke, Fox, Shelley, Mazzini, and Lincoln and expect them then to be tolerant of oppression. It is impossible to give them that history and to expect them to distinguish between the ship money of the 17th century and the salt money of the 20th. There is no difference. The ship money demand was a very fair demand perhaps, made by a benevolent monarch, but the ground of its resistance was that it was imposed by authority upon men who had to pay while having no voice in its decision. That is precisely the complaint of the Indian in respect of the salt tax. The tax may have been made under the constitution, but you have given the people of India a new test. You cannot give to the youth of India Milton's "Areopagitica" and "The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates," and expect them not to resist authority. If you were to shut out the New Testament you could not shut out the "Times" newspaper. Last week the "Times" contained a report of the speech of the Lord President of the Council upon liberty. I read that speech with very respectful admiration. He was talking about liberty and what it meant. Liberty, as I understand it, means that you have a system under which people have a voice in making their own laws. Swift put it thus:

"For, in reason, all government without the consent of the governed is the very definition of slavery."

The movement which has taken place is very largely the result of our teaching, and I suggest that we ought to welcome it. It has its bad side, but it has a good side, and this country was meant for

something more than the repression of the bad side of Nationalism.

Lord Halifax was speaking at the National Liberal Club last week. We were very glad to welcome him. I think that we may get better Liberalism from a Tory than from an ex-Liberal. He said that the people of India were saying what we should say in the same circumstances. They are doing just what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) would be doing. I understand that he was born at Blenheim. Suppose he had been born not in this country but in Benares, in India. What would his position be in relation to Nationalism? With his undoubted courage, even in these happy circumstances he is not very docile under authority, and he is not altogether subordinate even towards his party leaders. What would he be if he were in India? I believe he would be the leader of the movement. Would the right hon. Gentleman be content with an opposition that put him in a party that never had any prospect of office? The right hon. Gentleman has served with distinction in some of the biggest offices in the State. What sort of condition is it which would condemn him year after year to all the barren agitation of an Opposition with never any prospect of taking upon himself responsibility for the Government of his country? I have not the slightest doubt that he would be the leader of the movement, and the likelihood is that to-day he would be in gaol.

The right hon. Gentleman was speaking last week at the Queen's Hall meeting. I was not allowed to go, but I read what he said. The right hon. Gentleman asked of the new government, "Will it give them more food?" I was astonished that a man of any Liberal predilections should ask that in relation to self-government. That is not the question. There is something more than bread. Those who fought for liberty have been concerned more with liberty than with food. I would put to the right hon. Gentleman the very wise words of Mr. Bernard Shaw in "John Bull's Other Island":

> "All demonstrations of the virtues of a foreign government, though often conclusive, are as useless as demonstrations of the superiority of artificial teeth, glass eyes, silver windpipes and patent wooden legs to the natural products. Like democracy, national self-government is not for the good of the people; it is for the satisfaction of the people."

The right hon. Gentleman should not have put that at a meeting in this country at which we were being taught something about freedom.

We have had a long association with India, and I think there are only three courses to follow—abdication, domination or co-operation. Some very able men in this country have advocated abdication. Mr. H. G. Wells many years ago, in the "Empire Review," put the case for abdication as well as it has ever been put, when he said that we were entangled by these dusky people and that the English-speaking peoples of the world ought to rally in their defence and cut themselves off from those hoary entanglements. But if we chose abdication, we should not have solved the problem, because England and India would still be left to live in the same world. Our history demonstrates that to leave India in that way would be the gravest dereliction of duty.

There is domination. The Indian regards the present system as in a large measure domination. I accept what was said by a colleague of mine at the Round Table Conference. He came over to represent Christian India, and his name was Mr. K. T. Paul. He wrote a book on the British connection with India, and he said in that book that he did not know one public man in Indian life who desired or would tolerate a continuance of the connection with India upon the present basis, but that a great many would accept new conditions. The real point, which I think was put by the right hon. Gentleman, and was also put last week at the meeting which took place in this city, is this: If you are to fall back upon domination, what is your machinery? The whole basis of Indian domination has been the consent of the people. It has not rested upon force of arms, but upon the assumed consent of the people, and except for that consent we have no right to be there. If that consent is withdrawn, how are you going to force upon them the system of government of which you approve? Where is your machinery for your force? What are you going to do with the schools and colleges which are turning out by thousands, and perhaps by tens of thousands, students who have been taught

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by professors of nationalist sympathies and who are coming out with great nationalist demands? That may be a mischief, but how is it to be stopped? Do you propose to give them new teachers and professors, a new curriculum and a new literature? You would have to wait for your literature, because all the literature which is produced in this country will inculcate the love of liberty—the very principle which is causing the trouble. That is the weakness of the case, and I put it to the Noble Lord who, I understand, is to speak later: Suppose that consent is withheld; by what machinery do you propose to carry out your policy?

We are told that we are dealing not with the masses of India but with the politically-minded few. Suppose that be so, and that out of every 1,000 people one person is politically-minded? He represents and is in touch with 999 of the ignorant mass, and we are not. He lives there, and we do not. If you decided upon a policy of repression, make sure that you can carry it through, and where your machinery will be for that purpose.

I have been interested in the reception of the report. I have seen its reception in this country. Lord Salisbury spoke last week. I congratulate the opponents of these proposals upon having so distinguished a leader. He is a servant of the State whose sincerity in these matters is beyond question. I was astonished at what he had to say about the Mohammedans and the Communal question. He is reported as saying:

> "According to the Majority report the Mohammedans and the Hindus were divided into a creed register. No Mohammedan was to have an opportunity of voting for other than a Mohammedan Member of Parliament, and similarly with the Hindus. They said that was self-government; he said it was ludicrous."

I say it too. It has not been done by me. It was done by others.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Is the hon. Member quarrelling with the Government already?

Mr. FOOT: When the Congress was set up in France in 1789, a rule was established that not more than four speakers should address the Congress together. I think that having a communal register is a negation of democracy. I have not signed the report. That was a legacy that came to us, and was decided years ago. If anyone wants to see the arguments that were used, let him see the speeches by Lord Morley in the House of Lords many years ago on this question. The cleavage had its existence before this country had come into its present state of civilisation. If we had been writing upon a clean slate I would not have approved of it. Do the opponents of this Measure propose that we should wipe out the communal register? I believe that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme (Colonel Wedgwood) would do so. Do they suggest that the communal register, which has been set up in consequence of these historic and unhappy differences, is to be wiped out? If so, I would like to hear what answer India has to make to that suggestion. The right hon. Gentleman not only prophesies great disaster; he prophesies red ruin and breaking of the laws in India. The question that I would put to him and his friends is: If these things happen, whose is the risk? It may be ours to some extent, but the loss is qualified so far as we are concerned. I suppose that, if India were lost to us, it might mean suffering on the part of many of our people, and it might mean some suffering to this country, but we should survive. For those who are in India, however, if these things happen of which the right hon. Gentleman has been speaking, the risk is final and irremediable—and they are the people who ask us to take the risk. The Princes ask us to take the risk—[HON. MEMBERS: "No!"] I have the answer here. I heard the Maharajah of Bikanir say in my presence, and in the presence of the Round Table Conference, in November, 1930——

Mr. BRACKEN: What did the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes say?

Mr. FOOT: I do not know whether the Maharajah is interested in the Chancellor. All that I know is that he said this at the Round Table Conference in 1930:

> "Nothing worth having can be attained without taking some risks. These were taken when Lord Durham laid the foundations for the position which Canada enjoys to-day as the premier Dominion in our great Commonwealth, to the mutual benefit of Great Britain and Canada. Similar risks were run when Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman

secured Dominion status for South Africa with the happiest results. I am equally convinced that if this Conference will but do the right thing by India, justly and magnanimously, my country will be a willing and contented partner in the commonwealth."

He was followed by the Prime Minister of Mysore, who said:

"I know the risks; I know the difficulties; but I ask this country to give this Measure of self-government to India."

One after another, those who have everything at stake asked that these risks should be taken. Who are we to talk about risks in the light of that? The Princes ask us to take the risk; the missionaries ask us to take the risk—[*Interruption.*] I have ample documentary evidence. Does the hon. and gallant Gentleman question it?

Brigadier-General Sir HENRY CROFT: I question it to this extent. Will the hon. Gentleman deny that the Secretary of the All-India Council of Christians wrote to the "Times" saying that they regarded the reforms with the gravest mistrust?

Mr. FOOT: If the hon. and gallant Gentleman can give that quotation I shall be interested; but there was received at the beginning of our Round Table Conference a Memorandum signed by a very large number of missionaries, including the leading missionaries in India, in which they said that the denial of self-government in India and of the political aspirations of the people was a great hindrance to the work in which they were concerned, and asked that those aspirations should be gratified. I will see that the full quotation is given later, so that the hon. and gallant Gentleman may have the chance of answering it in the course of the Debate. There is a further point. Who are those concerned who run the most risk in India? They are the Europeans who have their business interests there. When the representatives of the European Association gave evidence before our Committee, I put the question to him:

"Supposing that the White Paper, or some such policy, is not adopted, what will be the result in India."

I have the answer here in full. In substance it was as follows:

"If you do not grant this policy, virtually there will be chaos and disorder."

It is very remarkable that the responsible spokesmen of the European societies sent their witnesses to this country to urge that reforms upon the lines of the White Paper should be made.

Duchess of ATHOLL: Was that at the first Round Table Conference? Does the hon. Gentleman know that the delegates of the European Association were not carrying out the policy which had been laid down for them in India by the Association before they came?

Mr. FOOT: I am not talking about the first Round Table Conference; I am talking about the Joint Select Committee. That question was put when they came to make their representations, and it will be found on page 502, paragraphs 4196-4200. I put the question to Mr. F. E. James, who was the head of the Delegation. The Delegation consisted of Mr. James, who is a member of the Legislative Assembly and a member of the Council of the European Association; Mr. W. W. K. Page, a member of the Council of the European Association; Mr. T. Gavin-Jones, a member of the Council of the same Association, and chairman of the United Provinces Branch; Mr. G. E. Cuffe, chairman of the Assam Branch of the European Association; and Mr. Roffey, late chairman of the Assam Branch. My question is in paragraph 4201. I said:

"Supposing that there is no reform embodying Provincial Autonomy and responsibility with safeguards, do you think that there would be a dangerous expression of opinion in India? Supposing the White Paper proposals were wiped out and there was no substantial advance, as is suggested in the White Paper proposals, have you formed any opinion as to what is likely to be the reaction in India?"

I admit that it was a very badly framed question. Mr. James replied as follows:

"Yes, I think that I can say this fairly, that the Association would view with grave misgivings the position which would arise in India if reasonable expectations of political advance were now disappointed by the rejection of the White Paper proposals. This would, in our mind, lead to serious consequences, and it would be almost impossible, in our view, to re-establish that co-operation between British-Indian leaders which has characterised the Round Table Conferences, and has brought the whole question to its present stage. The view of the Association generally is that it is not practicable to go back behind the present Government of India Act. It is not possible to stand still, and the White Paper proposals, subject to such modifications as we are asking the Joint Committee to consider, do offer a reasonable and

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cautious advance towards the ideal of a Federated India. I am glad to make that perfectly clear."

If those who are opposed to these proposals lay their emphasis on the modifications, they will find that these requests have been substantially met. That is the response in this country. I should like now, with the permission of the House, to refer to a matter upon which I am gravely concerned, and upon which there has been a response in India, in particular with regard to the method of election. There I am absolutely at issue with the right hon. Gentleman whose name has been so honourably associated with this controversy, and who devoted so much time and energy to the matter before the preparation of his statutory report. The gravest change that has been made——

The SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir John Simon): May I remind my hon. Friend that the hon. Member for Limehouse (Mr. Attlee), and all the other members of the Statutory Commission, agreed with me?

Mr. FOOT: I quite agree, but I am afraid that my hon. Friend on the Front Bench here must have found the position very hard to accept. I know that he was animated by the highest motives in everything that he did, but I regret the consequences of his act; I regret it as being a very grave decision. We hold very strong views on this matter of direct election. We intend to raise it in the course of this Debate; we intend to raise it on the Second Reading of the Bill in this House; we shall raise it during the Committee stage; it will be raised in another place; and it will be raised in the country. Members of this House ought to know, therefore, just what our contention is.

In relation to direct election, hon. Members will know that the White Paper proposed that the Central Parliament should have two Chambers, and that the Lower Central Chamber should be elected by the direct vote of the people in territorial constituencies. The Upper Central Chamber was to be elected by the votes of the Lower Provincial Chambers. That was the system as set out in the White Paper. It has now been altered. I have not time to go into the details of the alterations, but broadly it is now intended that the Central Upper Chamber shall be constituted by the votes of an electorate representing the Provincial Upper Chambers, and that the Central Lower Chamber, instead of being elected by the direct vote of the people in territorial constituencies, shall be elected by the Provincial Lower Chambers. That, roughly, is the change. What is our objection to it? If hon. Members are concerned to go into this matter—and obviously it must be answered—they will find our contention set out in paragraph 200 of the Proceedings of the Committee. It is there set out to the extent of five pages. Some care was given to the Amendment, so that our case might be fully presented. The Amendment was defeated by 18 votes to five. The five who voted for it were the Marquess of Reading, the Marquess of Lothian, the hon. Member for Broxtowe (Mr. Cocks), the hon. Member for Caerphilly (Mr. Morgan Jones) and myself. When the ultimate vote was taken, indirect election was carried by 21 votes to six, the six who voted against it being the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Marquess of Reading, Lord Snell, the hon. Member for Broxtowe, the hon. Member for Caerphilly, and myself. On the other side was the hon. Member for Limehouse (Mr. Attlee), as he was perfectly entitled to be. Earl Peel did not vote. I noticed that at the meeting last Tuesday the Lord President of the Council welcomed that change. He said:

"You will also notice that the Joint Select Committee have gone back to what was unanimously recommended by the Simon Commission; that is, indirect election for the Federal Legislature. I am quite sure that will be an immense relief to everyone who has studied this question and who has felt, not only a natural, but a right anxiety as to the insuperable difficulties of direct franchise in constituencies, the size of which will be found in India under this scheme. I am very glad indeed to note that. That great change, I confess quite frankly, gives me personally great satisfaction."

The right hon. Gentleman takes that view, but will the House consent to hear what the arguments are against it? First of all, it is contrary to the decision of this House in 1919 and 1920. When the Government of India Bill was passed in 1919 and 1920, the Joint Select Committee of that day decided against the suggestion of indirect election, and that there should be a direct vote. That was in the days when the right hon. Gentle-

man was in the Ministry. Parliament adopted the recommendation of the Joint Select Committee of that day, and we are face to face with the fact that 13 or 14 years ago, Parliament, considering this question, gave to the Indian citizen the direct vote for his Central Legislature. It is now proposing to withdraw that vote, and to give him only an indirect franchise. First of all, we undo what Parliament did at that time. Is it not a fair thing to say that, before you take away from the Indian people something that they have enjoyed for 13 or 14 years, you ought to show either that they have not used that right properly or that the thing has been a failure? The second argument against it is that it is against the Government's own proposal. The White Paper policy contained proposals for direct election. Those proposals were made after consultation with all the authorities. The third contention is that it is against the decision of the Franchise Committee. This House set up a Franchise Committee a few years ago and sent it out to India under the chairmanship of Lord Lothian. It included the present Under-Secretary of State and some distinguished Members of the House. There were also included in their number leading Indian politicians. They set up in every part of India provincial councils for consultation. They spent thousands of pounds of public money, necessarily, in their inquiries, and they travelled thousands of miles. Having considered this question, the committee reported unanimously against the indirect system of voting and in favour of the direct. Who is there in this House who has any right to speak with authority against the authority of a committee which was deliberately set up for that purpose and which took into consultation all Indian opinion?

Now we come to what is stronger still. It is against the opinion of the Government of India. When the right hon. Gentleman presented the report of the Statutory Commission in 1929 or 1930, the Government of India was invited to express its opinion and, knowing all about these big constituencies, knowing all about these astronomical numbers, knowing all about the disabilities and difficulties, they said they still stood by the direct vote. I want to know why the opinion of the Government of India is to be set aside. You are acting against Indian opinion. The Indian delegates were all invited to consultation, they were all in favour of the direct vote and, when they left, they left a memorandum which is in the records. Whatever their communal differences, they all asked for the direct vote. That is expressed also by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru in his memorandum which we found among the records. We have been asked all along by the Lord President of the Council to observe two things. He met his friends face to face and he said: "You must observe two things, first of all, the opinion of the man on the spot, and secondly the opinion of India." I want to know why both those canons are being broken.

But there is yet a stronger argument, which has never been met. The whole case put by the Select Committee, and the case put by the right hon. Gentleman to-day, is the danger of weakening the Centre and, if you set up these great autonomous Provinces, you are going to weaken your central Government. They claim that the greatest gift that this country has made to India is unity, the sense of its national consciousness. That is the opinion expressed by the Government of India in its own despatch, that the vote given by the Indian citizen for his central Government is the expression and the symbol of his national allegiance, and you are running a risk, upon the admission of the Select Committee, in weakening your central unity by setting up these autonomous Provinces, and at the same time you propose to take away from the Indian what he has enjoyed for the last 14 years.

Major-General Sir ALFRED KNOX: Is it not true that they were herded in by the candidates' agents and did not know whom they were voting for?

Mr. FOOT: The Lord President of the Council once said that he knew what it was in politics to shepherd the last vote from the public house into the polling booth. If it comes to herding, there is not very much difference between herding and shepherding. That is an argument that must be met that you are destroying the symbol of unity, and you are doing it against the opinion of the Indian people. The Delhi correspondent of the "Times" last week said that the first outcry had been against the taking

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away of the direct vote. Let hon. Members turn to any reports they like and they will find that the first contention that is made by the people of India is, "You are taking away our direct vote." That has now to be justified. I do not believe it can be justified. You are going to confuse every election. You are strengthening vested interests. The hon. Member for Limehouse did not intend it but as the result of the carrying indirect election we have now an added authority, a second chamber in the Provinces representing the vested interests.

Mr. ATTLEE: The hon. Member must remember that we proposed to have no second chamber, but he himself voted in favour of a second chamber.

Mr. FOOT: I voted for a second chamber as a purely revising and delaying body, and I said so in our Amendment. It is indirect election that has brought about this change and, instead of having a second chamber in touch with 35,000,000 people at one remove, you have now your central upper chamber dependent only upon the vested interests, and upper chambers in the Provinces elected upon a narrow franchise. No man in this country can claim more credit for it than the hon. Member. If it is wrong, no man in the country has to share a bigger responsibility for it than the hon. Member. It may be right or wrong. I think it is wrong. If it is right, let him claim the credit. Let us have these questions argued out, I hope without passion and without ill will. All that Members have to do is to watch what is happening in India and listen to what is being said by every class of opinion—"Now that you are giving us a Central Parliament which has some added powers, you are taking away the vote that you were content we should have." We considered an Amendment being put down to this Motion, so deeply did we feel on this question of the direct vote, but we considered that it was hardly in the spirit of co-operation which has prevailed especially as, generally speaking, we support the report. The report is not the one that I should like to have. It does not represent my opinion. It does not represent Liberal opinion, but it makes it perfectly clear that it represents a body of central opinion, and that was what we had to look for. There are many parts of the report with which I should agree and many with which I should disagree but there merges, after four years of consultation, a certain amount of common ground, and it was in the interest of the country that upon that common ground we should seek to build a bridge between one country and the other. Therefore, do not hold those upon these benches responsible for everything in the report, but let it be looked upon as the largest measure of common ground that we could get.

I hope that those in India will not be disturbed about the Safeguards. I have no time to deal with them, but I am not prepared to vote for a single safeguard which I am not satisfied in my mind is for the good of India. I will vote for no other. We have got, if we can, to turn enemies into friends. The Lord President of the Council said that freedom would depend not only upon those in this country; it would depend on all who believed in freedom throughout the world. I am sure he had not only in mind those who live in this country. We taught the people of India something about freedom. They have learnt something about the literature of liberty. I do not think there can be before this country any higher precept than obtaining the friendship of these people for the defence of liberty and all the things that are most precious in civilisation. It is not a question so much of India needing us. I think we need India. I think we need friends in India. We have not too many friends in Asia. I am sure I can speak for those on these benches. I feel it a big obligation to speak for Liberals in this country, and there are still a good many. I should like the people of India to know that we are concerned to be their friends, that we are concerned with nothing but their welfare, and I wish the Debates in this House could be upon that basis. Our first concern is not for ourselves but for India. I believe, if we had that, we should get a great result. We should find perhaps that "he that loseth his life shall find it."

6.29 p.m.

Viscount WOLMER: The hon. Member is always delightful to listen to as well as very eloquent, but the first half of his speech consisted of a detailed lecture to my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill), in which he taught him how he ought to make his own speeches at his party conferences,

and the second half really ought to have been made in the Committee stage. It really is a Committee point and, therefore, I hope he will forgive me if I do not follow him in great detail, but I should like to tell him that he entirely misconceives the attitude from which those with whom I am associated approach this question. We do not deny the importance of the Indian political movement in the least. We do not minimise its importance or its intensity, but because we refuse to look through the blinkers which the hon. Member himself puts on and insist upon looking at other facts in the picture, we cannot share his enthusiasm for this report. Our doubts and anxieties in this matter arise not because we doubt the reality or the importance of the Indian political movement, but because we believe that the proposals which His Majesty's Government are putting forward are not the best way of dealing with an admittedly very difficult problem and will land India and the whole Empire in a host of evils, dangers and disasters for which this House will ultimately have to bear the responsibility.

The basic difficulty of the problem is that the very great majority of the population of India have not yet reached the stage in which they can effectively or wisely be entrusted with self-government. The vast majority of the population, whether by reason of their poverty or the districts in which they live or their illiteracy, are quite incapable of taking the same part in politics as do the electors of this country and most European countries. The whole political movement comes from that numerically minute minority of educated or semi-educated Indians, though I quite agree with the hon. Member that the political movement extends into certain sections and classes which, perhaps, could not properly be described as politically-minded. When we come to analyse this politically-minded minority, we are at once faced with the fact, of which every one in this House is aware, that it consists of two parts. In the first part, there are the Communists, and in the other and greater part numerically, is that moderate liberal opinion, as we call it, which the Government and hon. Members opposite desire to conciliate. One of the great dangers which I and my hon. Friends most apprehend is that the machinery which you are erecting in this Constitution will practically be captured by the Congress party.

Let us have no illusions whatever as to the object of Congress. It is exactly the same as the object of Mr. de Valera. It is to drive the British out of India. They will play Mr. de Valera's game, and play it to the utmost of their power. We believe that they are burning to dominate this electoral machinery which you are erecting, in the first place because they are the only organised party in India. You have seen already how they have practically swept the board at nearly every election they contested in the last election. The Secretary of State in his speech to-day gave that election as the reason for altering the present state of affairs. I think that we all agree that the present state of affairs has to be altered, but I do not in the least agree with him that, after his Bill has been passed, attacking the Government will be any the less popular in India than it is to-day. You will have a complete repetition of this election at all the elections that are to take place under this Constitution. The second reason why I believe that Congress is bound to capture this machine, is that which history teaches, namely, that in a movement of this sort the extreme wing always eats up the moderate wing. Just as the Jacobins destroyed the Girondins, or as Lenin destroyed Karensky, or as the Radicals destroyed the Whigs, and the Socialists destroyed the Radicals, so will Congress destroy the moderate Liberal party.

The third reason is that in all these elections Congress candidates will not hesitate to make the most unscrupulous promises and statements to the electors, and they will have the most ignorant electorate in the world to prevail upon. It is not merely in the elections that Congress will dominate the liberal party in India. It will dominate it in the Legislative Assemblies as well. In the war of attrition which Congress is to wage against His Majesty's Government, using all the resources and experience of Parliamentary manoeuvre which we have witnessed in the past, and which they are admirably qualified and fitted to carry out, you will find moderate liberal opinion voting with Congress nine times out of ten, not because they are in any

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way tainted with Congress disloyalty, but because by their own liberalism and by their own commitments, they are committed to the points which Congress will inevitably raise. This Constitution has not been accepted by liberal opinion in India. It has not been accepted by any representative body in India. The Secretary of State admitted that fact this afternoon. The Indian Delegation to the Joint Committee in their Memorandum mentioned at least ten fundamental points which are in complete variance with this Constitution, and therefore when Congress is challenging this Constitution and seeking to extend it and to drive us out, as they will at every parliamentary opportunity, you will have not only Congress going into the Lobby against you, but the great bulk of the liberal party in India as well, being forced or manoeuvred into the position, and to that extent they will be made the tools of Congress.

Therefore we start this Constitution knowing that it satisfies nobody in India, and that it is to be used by Congress in order to make our position as impossible as it can be. For that reason the Government propose a series of safeguards so that there shall be no breakdown in the working of the Constitution. I am bound to confess that I have very little faith in the value of those safeguards. Every one of them, in the cases which we contemplate, is to be used in the teeth of an elected majority. They will not be used on any other basis. They can only be used if the majority is mis-using its powers, and the whole forces you have erected masquerading in the name of democracy will be against the Governor who tries to use his safeguards. He will let himself in for a first-class row every time he tries to use the weapon you have placed in his hands. He will be attacked all over India. He will be attacked in this House. I can see the hon. Member for Bodmin (Mr. Isaac Foot) and the Labour party attacking him violently because he had dared to stand up against the people's rights. If he has a Secretary of State like Mr. Birrell or Mr. Wedgwood Benn, his position will be very nearly intolerable. He will not even have the security of tenure of an ordinary judge in this country. I know that the Labour party dislike all safeguards, but I will say this to them. The whole of this machinery you are electing cannot truthfully or accurately be described as democracy. I said just now "masquerading in the name of democracy," and that is what it is. It is not the fault of the Government's draft. It is inherent in the whole problem. You cannot have democracy in India at the present moment. Your Communal Award alone makes democracy impossible. I was interested to hear the hon. Member for Bodmin admit that, and, I think, the hon. Member for Limehouse (Mr. Attlee) admitted it.

Mr. ATTLEE: No.

Viscount WOLMER: I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon. The hon. Gentleman referred to the Communal Award. But let hon. Members consider what a fundamental difference that makes in the whole working of the machine. All our democratic institutions depend upon the fact that we have political parties based on certain principles and that in between them there is a great floating mass of population not attached to any political party who, at every election, act as a sort of great national jury to decide between the contending parties. It is for that reason that all parties try to gain the suffrages of this unattached non-party elector by sweet reasonableness, concessions and promises, and by trying to see the point of view of the other man. Now that all becomes impossible under your Communal Award. The Moslem voters can vote only for Moslem candidates, and, practically speaking, the Hindu voters can vote only for Hindu candidates. Therefore, the whole object of trying to conciliate moderate opinion goes. There is no object in any politician trying to conciliate the other side. He thinks only of his own people. In this Constitution there are five Provinces which are condemned in perpetuity to be dominated by Hinduism. They must always have a Hindu. The Joint Committee tell us that good government is no substitute for self-government. What sort of self-government are the Moslems going to have in this form of government? It is neither good government nor self-government. We must also recognise the fact that under the caste system you cannot possibly have anything which is worthy of the name of democracy. What is the use of saying one vote one value when one is a Brahmin and the other is an Untouchable?

Surely these considerations imply that in making an experiment on democratic lines, using democratic forms, giving democratic power, where the realities of democracy and the healthy signs of democracy cannot exist, or can only exist to a very small extent, we should act with the very gravest caution. I and those with whom I am associated recognise the force of the contention of the right hon. Gentleman the Foreign Secretary and his Commission that you cannot make a real test without giving a measure of real responsibility. That is why we are prepared to go with the Government a good way in the direction of Provincial Autonomy, but our form of Provincial Autonomy would be very different from the Provincial Autonomy suggested in the report in a number of material respects, which I will mention later.

In our view it is not in the least inconsistent to say that you can give Provincial Autonomy and real responsibility in government without handing over the control of the police to elected Ministers. Some hon. Members speak as if there cannot be a real Parliament unless it has control of the police. Have they forgotten that this Parliament has not direct control of the police in this country, except in London? The laws which we pass are administered by the county and borough police throughout the Provinces, without question, and it never occurs to anybody in the greatest of all Parliaments to demand that the provincial police should be put under our control. They are administered by an authority which is just as much a part of the State as we are, but quite independent of this Parliament. Therefore, it is all nonsense to say that you cannot have self-government without mixing the police up in party politics. I am afraid that the report in giving way on this subject, as it does on so many others, is not following the essential needs of the case, but is merely making a concession to something which has become a "flag" in the Indian mind—"He won't be happy till he gets it," what we may call "the Pears Soap arguments," which so frequently figures in our deliberations about India.

If we agree to go with hon. and right hon. Members in this great experiment of provincial autonomy, although we may differ about the exact form and we may particularly differ in respect of this question of police, surely, that is in itself a tremendous and enormous experiment. Every one of these Provinces is as big as this country. How can you possibly say that you are not giving a tremendous chance and a tremendous opportunity to Indian statesmanship and giving a tremendous test of Indian statesmanship in handing over to their charge the destinies of these vast territories? But you want to go on with this further and, as it appears to us, insane experiment of Federation. We are told by the Government, in the first place, that you cannot have responsibility in the Provinces and an irresponsible Government in the Centre. I should like to protest in the strongest way I can against the use of the term "irresponsible." It is a monstrous expression to use in this connection. Is the Viceroy an irresponsible person? It is this sort of language which Ministers use that makes me sick. It is the language of men who have lost faith in our moral right to be in India at all.

What they mean, I take it, is that you cannot have a democratic Government in the Provinces and a non-democratic Government in the Centre. But you are not giving a democratic Government in the Centre. You are giving dyarchy, the system which the Simon Commission pointed out, unanswerably, has never worked and never can work. That is the system which is being repeated by this Government at the Centre. The Secretary of State tells us that the Centre is weak and that if we do not have Federation we shall have centrifugal forces which will split India into its 11 Provinces. On that, I should like to make two observations. In the first place, in making the Constitution for the Provinces you have made them as independent of the Centre as you can. Instead of giving them delegated powers you have given them original powers. You have not left residuary powers in the hands of the Central Government. Instead of giving the Central Government opportunity of influencing the Provinces by the allocation of receipts of taxation or the like, you have taken that power away from them altogether. As the hon. Member for Bodmin (Mr. Isaac Foot) pointed out, this system of indirect election, although it is an immeasurable improvement on

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what was in the White Paper, in the form in which you have embodied it in this report makes the Centre subject to the Provinces in that the members elected to the Centre will be a mere microcosm of the Provincial Legislatures. In all these respects you have made the Centre as weak as possible and the Provinces as strong as possible, and having done that you have no right to complain about centrifugal dangers. It would have been possible to grant provincial autonomy without expressing the independence of the Provinces in any one of these respects in the direction in which you have done.

But that is really beside the point. The remedy that you propose, instead of curing the disease, will aggravate it. The Secretary of State says that the Government at the Centre is weak. This new Government will be much weaker. Instead of having to deal with a recalcitrant province you will have the representatives of all the provinces to deal with in the most difficult of all possible circumstances. Let us take an instance which, I suppose, everyone will agree is a subject on which friction is most likely to occur, and is almost certain to occur —the expenditure on defence. How is your Federation going to help you there? The argument of the Government, I take it, is that what they have called the irresponsible Centre will find it difficult to stand up against the demands of the provinces that they should have a larger share of the common purse for nation building subjects and that less should be spent on the Army. You have not got rid of this difficulty in your Federation. The Army is a reserved subject, so you have exactly the same problem in a more intensified form. Instead of having to deal with a recalcitrant province, individually, you will have to deal with a body which claims, under our own title deeds, to represent all the provinces and all the peoples of India.

How is it possible to strengthen your position at the Centre by giving half your powers away? Conceive the opportunities that Congress will have in obstruction at the Centre by dyarchy. They will have no responsibility for any money spent on the Army, which represents more than half the Budget. Therefore, they will take no responsibility for the Budget, no responsibility for anything affected by the Budget. You will not get them as partners in this business, but you will merely get them as privileged critics. You will have exactly the same situation that the Simon Commission found in the provinces when they went round and you will have it under the searchlight of the whole world. The Federal Assembly will be the sounding board for Indian nationalism, represented by Congress, with Congress as its spokesman speaking to the whole world about the injustice of the way in which England has treated India. For these reasons we cannot feel that federation is in any way going to strengthen our position or to make the problem easier.

Hon. Members tell us that the Princes' representatives will be there, and that with the aid of the Princes' representatives we are going to outvote Congress. I very much doubt if that is going to be the case. But if it is, how long do you expect the Indian Princes to go on pulling the chestnuts out of the fire for you? And why should they? If we have not the courage to stand up to Congress ourselves, why should we expect the Indian Princes to do it for us? And if they do do it, what will Congress have to say on the matter? What an invidious position, in the artificial and exotic system which you are imposing on India, the Indian Princes will occupy! The position of the Indian Princes in the Federal Legislature is the most vulnerable in the whole scheme. They will be forced into the position of voting on issues which do not directly affect their States. They will be voting for taxes in Budgets which their own subjects will not pay. How long do you think Congress and Indian politicians are going to stand that? If the Princes ally themselves with the Viceroy against Congress, do you think that Congress will hesitate to start an intensive agitation against the position of the Princes?

There is another aspect of the situation to which I should like to draw the attention of the House, and that is the position of the Viceroy. Hitherto the Viceroy has been able to exercise very important progressive influence upon the Princes. He has been able to interfere with their administration when they misgoverned and he has been able to warn them when they have overspent. How long do you think he will be able to continue

doing that if he is dependent upon them to pass his Budgets? I cannot believe that there is any safety or any honour in us relying upon the Princes to do our work for us in the Central Government of India, and I believe that the Princes will be very ill-advised at this juncture to mix themselves up in party politics.

This scheme of federation cannot possibly work as a practical piece of legislation. Whoever heard of a federation where half the territory did not pay the taxes and obeyed only some of the laws? The Secretary of State in his speech said there were many precedents, but I noticed that he gave us only one precedent—that of the German Empire. What analogy is that? I should like to see Bismarck dealing with Gandhi. He would not have invited him to tea. That was the sole and solitary example which the Secretary of State could cite. And what has been the result after 50 years? All your independent Kingdoms, all your independent States and all your independent authorities have been swept away into a common Reich. That will be an encouragement to the Princes of India when they read the right hon. Gentleman's speech to-morrow.

In these circumstances, and with all these difficulties, is it not only common sense to wait to see how this tremendous experiment of autonomy in the Provinces works out before you call into being a federation three times the size of the United States of America? The right hon. Gentleman himself in his speech to-day admitted that he anticipated many difficulties and many disappointments and unexpected developments. Well, if that is the case, is not that an argument for going slowly? And of all the follies imaginable is there a greater folly than to legislate now, and tie yourselves, for a federation that you admit cannot come into force for another five years at least? You are going to tie yourselves by your Bill and commit yourselves to a plan of federation—this vast, complicated, unprecedented, extraordinary, Alice-in-Wonderland federation that is to come into being not now but at least five years hence in circumstances which may be totally different from what you visualise at the present moment. Could anything as a matter of practical politics be sillier than that? Who among my hon. friends would engage to marry a lady five years hence? Why on earth are we asked to do such a silly thing? "Oh," it is said, "to satisfy moderate liberal opinion in India." It just shows how inexperienced liberal opinion in India must be of practical politics that they should desire such a thing to be done. But you have not conciliated moderate Indian liberal opinion. As the right hon. Gentleman confessed, not a single note of support has come from any quarter in India. You have not conciliated even the Delegation who came over from India and sat on your Joint Committee and whom you treated as accredited representatives of India. Every one of them has been defeated at the last election. You have not conciliated them; you have disappointed them. Would it not have been better to disappoint them with something that may work instead of with something that cannot possibly work? I ask myself: What is our position going to be if the Princes do not come in? You have excited hopes which you do not dare now to resist. If the Princes refuse to come in, what is your position going to be? Are you not going to be faced with an intensive demand from that self-same liberal opinion for federation of British India, a solution which everybody who has examined this question agrees would be the worst possible solution? You have excited these hopes of federation and held out hopes about the possibilities of federation instead of giving the people the ordinary common-sense advice of learning to walk before they attempt to run, of taking things gradually, of getting experience. You have excited these hopes, and if they are dashed from the lips of your expectant liberal opinion in India, you will be in a worse position than you were before. You will be faced with a far more difficult demand to resist than at present.

But the Secretary of State asked us, and we were asked at the Queen's Hall, what object we think we can gain by delay. I think it was the Lord President of the Council who said that if the difficulties of federation are very great to-day, would they not be just as great in 10 or 20 years' time, or whenever we think it expedient to move? There will be this great and, to my mind, overwhelming difference, we shall have gained experience. If you give provincial autonomy a real trial first, we shall have

[Viscount Wolmer.]

gained experience of how provincial autonomy does work. We shall have gained experience of the value of safeguards. We shall have gained experience of how far moderate liberal opinion is able to stand up against Congress. The Indian politicians will have gained experience; and the Indian electors will have gained experience. Is not that experience worth having? If we had that experience to-day, would it not make all the difference to the problem? The problem would be difficult enough at any time in any case, for the inherent difficulties are so fundamental that it can never be easy. But why go and commit yourselves now to a plan, a detailed plan, an immense plan, which you admit cannot come into force in the lifetime of this Parliament or the next Parliament, and which can only come into force at the soonest in five or six years' time? Why commit yourselves to that unnecessarily, when we have no experience of how this gigantic experiment of provincial autonomy will work? I do beg my right hon. Friends not to use their great influence and their great power to force the Conservative party of this country to do something which is plainly against the dictates of common sense, and which no man would dream of doing in his own private affairs, in the hope that you can thereby conciliate people who, in their inexperience, ask for something which is not practicable. If you make yourselves responsible for a plan that does not work you will have to bear the blame, and justly bear the blame. The Indian peasant may not be learned in politics, but when he sees misgovernment where the used to be good government, when he sees injustice where there used to be justice, when he sees riots where there used to be law and order, he will blame the British Raj—and will blame it rightly.

7.10 p.m.

Mr. CADOGAN: As far as time permits, I will endeavour to explain to the Noble Lord the Member for Aldershot (Viscount Wolmer), and to the House, why I was unable to associate myself with those on the Joint Select Committee who, I presume, represent his views. I say "presume" because the Noble Lord did not tell us whether he subscribes to Lord Salisbury's Memorandum. But before I do so I should like to make a preliminary observation in the nature of an apologia. Though there are many hon. Members in this House who are more qualified to influence opinion on this great issue than I am, I would plead as an extenuating circumstance that I am one of a very few Members in this House who, before the Joint Select Committee began its sessions, had committed themselves almost more categorically and more irretrievably, as some might think, than even the right hon. Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) himself. Those who find themselves in this embarrassing situation might very well think it necessary to have their present views taken into account if in the course of our proceedings it is revealed that we have gone back on our original opinion; and if I am to meet a charge of inconsistency that is all the more reason why I should trespass upon the patience of the House.

Although my pre-conceived views are enshrined within the leaves of a State Paper, and are available to any hon. Member who cares to exhume them and bring them in evidence against the Foreign Secretary, the hon. Member for Limehouse (Mr. Attlee) and myself, I do derive a gloomy satisfaction from one feature which seems to be common to all our discussions upon India. It is the intriguing circumstance that not only the supporters of the Government but also those who oppose the Government draw very liberally on the report of the Statutory Commission in order to find corroboration for their various and separate views. The hon. Member for Bodmin (Mr. Isaac Foot) said just now that Edmund Burke had been quoted indiscriminately in our discussions. I think that Edmund Burke will have to look to his laurels if he is going to compete with the report of the Statutory Commission. That ill-starred document seems to be more elastic than even the framers originally intended. I have no intention of taking a mean advantage of its almost phenomenal adaptability.

I want to be quite frank with the House and explain to what extent and for what reason I have altered my preconceived views. Perhaps it will not be thought too egotistical if I give the House some of my soul's history in this matter. When the Statutory Commission reported, some four or five years ago, I frankly admit that I believed our recom-

mendations were, in their broad, general outline, the most feasible solution of this great problem. Although it met with abundant criticism—a great deal of it ill-informed—it was the only scheme canvassed. There was no other scheme canvassed by the Government of the day until the sitting of the Round Table Conferences. In view of all the vicissitudes affecting the long history of the negotiations since we reported, I do put it to the House that it will be fairer to take into consideration not what the Statutory Commission did recommend but rather what it would have recommended had we known what we now know.

Not the least of the difficulties which confronted the Statutory Commission in its difficult and almost superhuman task was the fact that our terms of reference were so limited as to preclude one of the most material considerations of all; and the result was that we were only able to make what I might call hypothetical recommendations. We had no mandate to examine the problem of the States at first hand or to make suggestions thereon, although this problem is inexplicably interwoven into the fabric of the larger issue. The States, which represent one-half the territory and something like one-third of the population of the whole of India, are to-day, owing to the interplay of economic forces, the development of transport, the incidence of customs and monetary policy, far more involved than ever before in the fortunes of British India.

Very early in our deliberations we came to the conclusion that there was only one possible solution, and that was an All-India Federation. The obstacles to a British India Federation, exclusive of the States, seemed at one time sufficiently formidable, but after maturer reflection I was convinced that they were insuperable, especially in view of the fact that the States were reluctant to favour any solution of the problem which precluded the exercise of their influence upon central policy. That is a consideration which is vital in this matter. We had no means of ascertaining when and under what conditions the States would accede, and, therefore, it would have been mere impertinence on our part if we had made other than tentative suggestions towards the establishment of what we hoped would be the ultimate result—namely, the entry of the States into an All-India Federation. That accounts for our recommendation that there should be a Council of Greater India, an expedient which, somewhat to my surprise, has been appropriated by certain members of the Joint Select Committee. Surely it is rather late in the day to reproduce a recommendation which in the nature of things must now be obsolete. If I am asked why I have not the courage or consistency to abide by my former recommendations, I can only reply that my action is neither pusillanimous nor irreconcilable with my former attitude, but is rather influenced by the recognition that the situation has undergone considerable change. I only subscribed to the recommendation in the first instance, because I despaired of the States acceding to an All-India Federation in anything like reasonable time. Now we have evidence that they are prepared to accede, and upon what terms, and it is much easier than it was for the members of the Statutory Commission to decide what the structure of the Federation shall be.

With regard to my antecedents, I have another admission to make. Not only was I a signatory of the Statutory Commission's Report but I was also a critic of the White Paper; and I am still. I believed that many of its provisions were defective. I regretted the omission of much which I regarded as essential for a proper working of an Indian Constitution, and I thought the Safeguards which it contained were incomplete and ill defined, and, therefore, inoperative. At the same time I reserved to myself the right to postpone final judgment, as anyone else with common sense must have done, until I knew exactly the intentions of the Government after the Joint Select Committee had reported. I submit to the House that there is no inconsistency in any hon. Member who has criticised the White Paper being able to subscribe to the Report of the Joint Select Committee as it stands. If the Government had insisted on the whole of the White Paper, and nothing but the White Paper, I certainly should not have given it my support; and I also want an assurance before I finally give my adherence to the Government that they will implement certain changes, which I consider vital, which have been made from the White Paper.

[Mr. Cadogan.]

It has been predicted by the Noble Lord and some of his friends that no change would be made by the Joint Select Committee in the White Paper proposals, and that therefore the whole of our 160 sittings would be entirely futile. From the report itself it is now obvious that it is absolutely impossible to maintain this attitude. There remains the argument of the Noble Lord that there has been no change from the main principle of the White Paper. I agree; there has been no change from the main principle of the White Paper. It said:

"The gradual association of Indians with self-governing institutions and the administration with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government."

There is very good reason why that principle has not been departed from; I am not aware that it has been departed from in any quarter. That is the position of successive Governments. When I agreed to serve on the Joint Select Committee I did so with the fixed intention of putting aside all free conceived views, and I have formed my opinion on the long experience I have had on these sittings and upon the conciliatory and wise attitude which the Secretary of State has maintained throughout. I am constrained to admit that the more I examine this subject—I am afraid the Noble Lord has not convinced me to the contrary—the more I believe that you cannot have autonomous Provinces with responsible legislatures and an irresponsible Centre—I do not use the phrase with any other meaning—without any representation of the States. I regard that as impossible now. The only alternative is a Federation of All-India with responsible government with safeguards, a formula which contains two discordant phrases, one the bugbear of the right and the other the bugbear of the left.

On the question of responsiblity which seems such a rock of stumbling for some people, may I quote passages from the report which, those for whom responsibility has still any terrors, may derive some measures of comfort, and which those who regard responsibility as a *sine qua non* in any form of constitution for India, may recast their ideas.

"Responsible government is not, as it has sometimes seemed to us, as Indians regard it, an automatic device or a machine running on a motive power of its own. It postulates conditions which Indians themselves have still to create. Nor is a technique which we here in Britain have developed in the course of many generations to be acquired in the twinkling of an eye."

And in the words of the Simon Report:

"Nor may the precise form of responsibility as we know it in England be ever reproduced under conditions which are totally different to our own."

If those two passages are rightly appreciated responsibility may lose its terrors for some and its fascination for others. We need not be apprehensive about responsibility. With the best intentions in the world we cannot give full responsibility to India until Indians themselves supply the missing factors, without which responsibility is simply a meaningless phrase. I put it to Indians, that the measure of responsibility which we are giving, qualified as it is, with safeguards, should create conditions which ultimately might make it possible for us to dispense with safeguards. And what is all this talk in regard to safeguards, about whittling away with one hand what you are giving with the other. The hon. Member for Limehouse (Mr. Attlee) was not very fair when he said that safeguards showed our distrust of Indians. No one has suggested, no sane Indian has suggested, that we should dissolve partnership. It is impossible, and therefore, safeguards are contingent upon the indispensable obligations which we owe to the millions of Indians, by reason of our partnership. In my view partnership should be a bond of unity rather than a bone of contention.

After the considerations I have given to this subject, I have come to the conclusion that responsibility with safeguards at the Centre, although it introduces an element of diarchy so roundly condemned by the Government of India and the Statutory Commission, is the only possible solution of the problem, and to-day there is a formidable consensus of opinion in favour of it. It might be urged, indeed the Noble Lord alluded to it, that the report of the Joint Select Committee has met with an extremely unfavourable reception in India. My anxiety is not concerned with the reception which the report is receiving at the moment because taking a long view I am optimistic, and in any case I discount altogether the premature clamour of the extremists. Our proceedings and dis-

cussions at no stage should be influenced by extremists, English or Indian, of the Right or the Left. It is much better that men of moderate views should combine and consult and co-operate, and this can only be achieved if concessions are made. That is evidently the spirit which prevailed on the Joint Select Committee, and if the Noble Lord had been a member of it he might not have passed so many strictures on men of moderate views. If men of moderate views in India and in England combine, then I think a far more satisfactory solution can be arrived at.

Sir A. KNOX: The hon. Member has told us clearly why he changed his opinions between signing the report of the Statutory Commission and signing the majority report of the Joint Select Committee. He signed the report of the Statutory Committee in 1930, and in 1932 published a charming book in which he seemed to regret having signed the Statutory Commission report, as having gone too far. Why did he change his opinions between publishing his book and signing the report of the Joint Select Committee?

Mr. CADOGAN: I have had a long experience since I signed the report and since I wrote the book. It is not for nothing that I sat for 160 days on the Joint Select Committee, hearing evidence from every section of people in England and India, and I thought that I had spent most of my speech to-day, already too long, in explaining why I altered my views. I am not in the least ashamed of having done so. As our Debates develop on this great scheme and wherever and whenever awkward situations will arise, as will undoubtedly be the case, then, subject to the main principles to which I adhere, I shall always be in favour of conciliation and accommodation. My experience has been that it is difficult to conserve a right sense of proportion on this question and I have come to the conclusion that there is a real danger that the good understanding between Englishmen and Indians may be imperilled by mistaking as the hon. Member for Bodmin has done, machinery for immutable constitutional principles. A very good example of that is the subject to which he referred, the subject of indirect election. That is not an immutable constitutional principle, and we have recommended that if indirect election is not appropriate it might be changed.

I will put in one caveat before concluding. My chief difficulty in consenting with a clear conscience to some of the provisions of the report is that we may stultify ourselves if the Constitution which we provide for India is unalterable. As the Statutory Commission insisted, the Constitution given to India should contain the potentialities of growth and development; otherwise the plant would be barren. In this case the plant is not indigenous and requires acclimatisation. The Constitution should *ab initio* carry into effect the famous words of the Preamble. That does not mean that those who will be called upon to rule in India under the new dispensation will not often find that the English Parliamentary model will have to be departed from in many important respects.

Perhaps I may be forgiven for having troubled the House with these rambling and incoherent remarks, but I feel so intensively the responsibility which rests upon each and every one of us, and more especially upon those who, like myself, were called upon by Government to investigate and report upon it to the Imperial Parliament—in my case in two capacities—that if I remained silent I might be evading that responsibility in some sense. The time for definite decisions as to the main course we are to pursue has arrived. We are at the parting of the ways. Three roads seem to be open to us. None of them at first sight seemed to offer a very alluring prospect. There is the short cut indicated to us by the most unreliable of guides, over ground which is much too hazardous for us to tread. There is the road along which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping beckons us to follow, but that seems to be in the direction only from whence he came. Finally there is the middle road, which is narrow and rough going, and as far as I can see it winds uphill all the way. But that is the road which any Member who attaches the smallest importance to my judgment I counsel to take.

7.34 p.m.

Mr. DONNER: On this great question, as to whether the Majority Report of the Joint Select Committee should be accepted as a basis for legislation one particular argument is so remarkable that

[Mr. Donner.]

it deserves examination. Surely you will accept the report, it is said, on account of the additional Safeguards? If nearly two years ago some of us, on account of deep conviction, opposed the White Paper proposals on principle, how can we now, on account of a few additional Safeguards, a few minor alterations and concessions, alter our attitude to-day? The details may be changed but the principle remains. In our belief the Federal scheme, as it is proposed, has no roots in the soil of India. We think that this gigantic and alien superstructure will break of its own weight. It would be a mistake to assume that the division of opinion in this House is one of pace and time only. I submit that the division of opinion is due to the principles underlying these reforms, and further it is the suggestion of an All-India Federation to which objection is very largely taken. It is perfectly true that the Simon Report recommended Federation as an ultimate goal. The word "ultimate" is not a word of to-day or of to-morrow. It implies that so long as India remains in essence as she is to-day, there can be little hope that an All-India Federation will succeed. The suggestion moreover that Federation should be inaugurated in the near future disregards all available experience. It was precisely a matter of State rights which imposed a four years civil war on the American people.

The Simon Report, that great and weighty document, was at pains to point out the gradual growth of federation in Canada. I am bound to confess I was greatly surprised this afternoon when I heard the claim being put forward on behalf of the Government that the Government's proposals are "following in line of the British North America Act." In the case of Canada where there were only two different races and only two religious divisions, incidentally both of them Christian, provincial autonomy was given to two provinces only in the year 1846, and these two provinces were not federated until as much as 21 years later. That is not exactly what the Government propose for India, for in India it is proposed to establish units and to federate them at one and the same time. The Act of 1867 which established Federation in the Dominion of Canada, brought together only four provinces, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario. That is roughly one-third of the Dominion of Canada as we know it to-day. But the Simon Report pointed out as a striking fact that even to-day Canadian Federation as contemplated in the Act of 1867 is not yet complete, because, as we all know, Newfoundland has never entered the Dominion of Canada.

Even in Australia, where you have a single people, grave difficulties have arisen owing to Federation. Already the people of Western Australia have expressed their desire, by means of the referendum which was taken in conjunction with the general elections only last year, to secede, not from the Empire but from the Federal Commonwealth. I submit that a mistake would be made if we assumed that Western Australia alone, on account of difficulties owing solely to the existence of federation, desired to become a distinct self-governing community within the British Empire. That feeling has been voiced in South Australia, in Tasmania, and I believe in Victoria as well. But if grave doubts exist to-day as to the satisfactory working of federation in Australia, where after all the people are homogeneous, how can anyone seriously entertain the notion that federation will work in India, which is divided and sub-divided by differences of race, language, religion, caste, history, tradition, circumstances, marriage laws and customs?

In this connection it is interesting to note that one of the greatest living Constitutional lawyers in this country has commented that the startling fact about these White Paper proposals is that for the first time Parliament is invited to bestow not only legislative authority but self-government on a gigantic collection of units on the express assumption that self-government will be abused, and therefore Parliament is invited to provide safeguards against such abuses. Surely it is not a little strange that under these conditions we should be required to express confidence in these devices, called safeguards, when their very existence exposes the Government's own lack of confidence in their own policy. If the Government had any faith in their own policy there would be no safeguards.

Mr. PETHERICK: But surely the Safeguards are an integral part of the Government's policy?

Mr. DONNER: Certainly, they are. We are told that the Majority report bristles with Safeguards. Of course it does. For all the world they are like Belisha beacons, and just about as ineffectual. It is a very remarkable situation. I was interested to find an article in a contemporary newspaper, ostensibly on wheat, but unconsciously it describes the position as it is to-day in Parliament and in relation to the future of India. I should like to read two or three sentences but must apologise for the exceedingly unparliamentary language which is employed:

"In primitive countries when anything goes wrong with the crops the witch doctor is called and there is a grand public smelling out."

Obviously, in this case by the witch doctor the Secretary of State is intended, and the great public smelling out is this Debate. The next sentence is more illuminating, because it is apparently written by someone who sees the situation through the eyes of the Government:

"Some harmless old man is declared to be the cause of all the trouble,"

clearly by this is meant my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill),

"and if the medicine man is lucky prosperity returns after the accused has been bumped off."

The last sentence contains a solemn warning to the Government:

"If, however, the practitioner has been wrong in his diagnosis, things may become very uncomfortable for him."

I should like to submit that my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping is not the cause of all the trouble, but that rather the cause of all the trouble is the principle underlying these reforms and the fundamental laxity, speciousness and sophistry of the Government's proposals regarding the future Constitution of India. The Majority report is now before us, and I submit that this is not self-government, it is not democracy, it is not even government on Oriental lines, and has none of the advantages which automatically accrue to any of these three systems of government. It is neither one thing nor the other. It is neither consomme nor asparagus cream but it is a nondescript pottage with the Safeguards like lumps slowly dissolving in the liquid. Of course the reforms may work for one year or two years or even three years. But after that with the steel framework of the British element gradually decreasing as the process of Indianisation continues so the Safeguards will gradually melt away and there will be nothing left between Congress and their avowed aims.

It has been said that the Government's proposals envisage 11 provincial dictators and one super-dictator to control them. Some people take the view that there will be a super-super-dictator in the shape of the financial adviser to the Viceroy. Certainly he will no longer be under the control of the British Parliament. It follows that in proportion to the degree that the Viceroy is not a financial expert, so correspondingly will the power and influence of the financial adviser increase. In practice, therefore, since it is unlikely that a future Viceroy, apart from all his other administrative qualities, will be an outstanding financial expert, this financial adviser may well prove to be the real ruler of India. The financial adviser is to be appointed by the Viceroy after consultation with his Cabinet. Already demands have been put forward that the adviser should be a member of the Central Legislature. Under those conditions it is not unlikely, indeed, it is probable that in the not too distant future the adviser will be a Hindu of the moneylending or financial castes. What an opportunity for Congress to quarrel with him, or, better still, to get him completely under their thumb! It is no use brushing aside such ideas as these as mere hypothetical possibilities. It is our business in this House as trustees for the welfare, safety and contentment of the peoples of India to visualise the probable consequences of what the Government now proposes to do.

Much has been said about the weakness of the Centre. I do not share the view that it is so very weak. At any rate, it has shown itself capable of firm administration and the restoration of law and order, but even if it is weak, how much weaker will it not be if power is transferred at the Centre? Consider the position then. First of all, it will not have the British Parliament behind it. Secondly, it will not have the invaluable British element in the services. Thirdly, the Cabinet will consist of Hindus, Mohammedans and the Princes' representatives all tugging and pulling in different directions, with contrary aims and conflicting interests. Con-

[Mr. Donner.]

sider the effect on defence. I cannot develop that point because I do not wish to inflict myself too long upon the House. [HON. MEMBERS: "Go on!"] I think enough is as good as a feast. I would only point out that in the North-West Provinces, Provinces north of Delhi stretching away to Peshawar and Quetta, there are 50,000,000 people with a great Moslem majority. Suppose one day they were to refuse to comply with the laws emanating from Delhi? Suppose they came to feel like the people of Western Australia, that they would prefer to secede, not from the Empire but from the All-India Federation. Are we so certain that this new Delhi, this centre of unprecedented weakness, would be able to deal with far less grave contingencies and emergencies than this?

It has been shown by men of long administrative experience in India and I will quote their very words that a Central Federal Legislature will be both an irresponsible and a divided body; irresponsible because Congress can introduce or will attempt to introduce unconstitutional illegal and even frivolous measures in the sure and certain knowledge that by so doing they will compel the Governor-General to intervene and so shift responsibility from themselves, while all the time increasing their popularity with an electorate which will learn more and more to regard the British element as an impotent and discredited relic of a decayed administration still striving to act as an obstacle in India's march towards a home-made Utopia. It follows and I commend this to the notice of the House with all the earnestness at my command, that the hatred and contempt in which Great Britain will then be held will be on a scale hitherto unknown.

The Central Assembly, I said, will be a divided one. It will be divided because its members will be both nominated and elected while sub-divisions of a racial and religious character will tend to multiply the major divisions. Congress in the meantime is certain to introduce grandiose and extravagant schemes under the dubious plea that they are essential nation-building services and will agitate for a reduction in the large but vital defence estimates. Let us consider the position of the Princes in this proposed federation. First, they will nominate their representatives whereas the representatives from the Provinces will be elected by largly illiterate voters, in other words demagogue fodder. Secondly the Princes will not give up either their land or sea customs which will create a situation opposed to the very fundamentals of the federal conception. Thirdly, the Princes have made it plain that they will refuse to allow the Federal Government to apply direct taxation to their States.

Fourthly, the degree of sovereignty which the Princes will be required to surrender varies considerably and yet their nominated representatives will have equal status as betwen each other and as regards the elected members from the Provinces. Yet the British India Provinces are not now in a position to contract their share of obligations nor, what is more, do they wish to do so. As the Simon Report observes the Provinces are simply administrative areas and in no sense are they either autonomous or mutually independent. It follows, therefore, that the Provinces to-day have nothing to offer. They are to receive much and concede nothing whereas the Princes are to concede much and receive little, apparently save interference. Fifthly, the Princes will not accept Federal laws nor allow them to be applied in their own States except at their own discretion and even then by their own machinery. Can anomaly and contradiction go further? If many Princes entertain grave misgivings as to these proposals to-day we have at least a sufficient galaxy of facts to prepare us for such a development. To reassure us the Government tell us that if the Princes will only come in they will supply a stabilising element in the Central Assembly. How can they supply anything of the sort when they will be in a permanent and fixed minority?

I believe that the truth of the situation is unpleasant to say but the Noble Lord the Member for Aldershot (Viscount Wolmer) has most ably drawn attention to it. I believe that the truth is that the Government have not the courage to stand up to the British India politicians, to this noisy, unrepresentative, clamouring minority. Therefore, they are now manoeuvring the Princes into a position in which they will be required to pick our chestnuts out of the fire because we lack the courage to do so ourselves. The

only answer we have yet had from the Government in this respect is, "We must proceed with the reforms boldly," and then with a catch in the throat, "We must go on with the reforms courageously." But it is not courage of a very high order that is required, since we are going forward with the reforms at somebody else's expense. We are not going on with the reforms at the expense of His Majesty's Ministers. Oh, no, we are going forward with the reforms at the expense of the peasants, of the inarticulate folk, the illiterate, voteless, helpless millions in India. And it is they who will be the victims when this crazy edifice of hamstrung dictatorships topples to the ground.

7.55 p.m.

Captain CAZALET: I should have been much more influenced by the cogent remarks of the Noble Lord the Member for Aldershot (Viscount Wolmer) had I not read with great care the first volume of the Joint Committee's report, in which nearly all the arguments raised by him are faced and answered. While as a Conservative I should naturally be influenced by the remarks of the Noble Lord, the weight of authority behind the Joint Committee is such as to incline me to think that the balance of opinion is in their favour. I do not believe that Congress will get or can get a majority at the Centre under the Government's proposals. It is possible that Congress may get majorities in certain Provinces, but immediately they get into power in a Province I believe that they will split up, as other parties have done in other Parliaments, on a variety of issues. After all, both my remarks and those of the Noble Lord on this subject must be hypothetical but if what I have suggested turns out or not to be the case, I cannot see why any party in the provincial legislatures or at the Centre should wish to pursue a policy which would inevitably mean ruin and chaos in India.

Although the differences between the majority and minority reports are clearly defined and have been well advertised, it is a remarkable fact that over such a wide field there is general agreement. A generation ago it would have been considered almost impossible to bring into operation in India full Provincial Autonomy. It is in the field of Provincial Autonomy that the Indians will prove themselves. It is to the Provincial Legislature that the best brains of India will be directed and it is those local legislatures which will have the power to control the lives of the masses of the peasants in India. It is not always realised that already in many Provinces half of the administrative areas are administered by Indians themselves and in certain seasons of the year the figure is even higher.

Various arguments have been used both inside and outside the House against the policy of advance and constitutional reform in India. First it is said that democratic government in India is an anomaly. That may be true. It is equally true that the Princes are an anomaly in India to-day. The politicians and the Princes are equally anomalous and we alone are responsible for both of them. We have nurtured and cultivated in British India both the democratic idea and the politician, while it is almost entirely due to our influence that both have been excluded from the States of the Princes. Any scheme which can bring together these two divergent elements must, of necessity, be original, bold and open to considerable criticism.

Then the question arises: Could we have done anything else? Could we have pursued a different policy? I believe not. I believe our traditions and our national characteristics would have prevented us, over the course of the last century, pursuing any other policy than that which we have done.. Even if one party had changed that policy, then, immediately the Opposition had come into power, they would have continued it. It is over a century since Sir Thomas Munro used these words:

> "The cardinal point of our rule must be to enable the Indians to govern and protect themselves."

From those days till to-day our policy has been consistent and deliberate, namely, to continue to educate the Indians to take a greater share in the government of their own country. It is true that the present century has accelerated the pace, but India is not the only country in the world, during this century, in which the democratic idea and the desire and the urge for self-government or a change of government have been prominent. There has

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been a whole series of events which have altered the circumstances in India during the past generation. There was the victory of the Japanese over the Russians. That was the first time that the East believed that they were not only the equals but perhaps in some ways the superior of the West. Again, there were the Nationalist movements in China and Japan, there was the War, there were the Chelmsford-Montagu reforms. Then there were constant Imperial Conferences, in which great stress was laid upon the independence of the Dominions, and each time it was put forward the Indians asked themselves, "Why are we different from the other Dominions?"

Finally, there was the ideal of self-determination, which was regarded as one of the fruits of victory in the Great War. The Press and the cinema spread these ideas throughout India. It is difficult to allocate how much influence any one of these particular events may have had, but that which without doubt had the greatest influence of all was our "teaching." For years now we have turned out of the universities in India thousands of students educated on all the Liberal writers of the last century—Locke, Bentham, Mills, Macaulay. We have taught them that it is the duty of any self-respecting people to govern themselves. We have made them self-conscious about self-government, and we can hardly turn round now and say, We are afraid that all this teaching was only applicable to ourselves, not to them. I think it is quite possible to say that we have spent too much money on secondary education and that in India, as in other parts of the world, there are too many University students to-day, with or without degrees, for whom there is no occupation or job in their own country.

Another argument that has been raised to-day is that it is only a very small section of the community who are asking for these reforms. That may be true in point of numbers, but actually they represent the only elements which are politically conscious, the only elements that can put into operation any reforms which we may give them. It is, I think, easy to over-estimate the simplicity and the ignorance of the villagers. It has been shown in the last few years that a united party like the Congress party can put over, with very great success, propaganda among the villagers. Then it is said that the majority of politicians appear to be against these reforms. I should have thought they were very poor politicians indeed and had learned their lessons from us very badly if they were satisfied at the start with what we had to offer them. Because they criticise and condemn these proposals now, it does not mean that the majority will not be prepared to give them a fair trial. After all, if they do not, and if no body of opinion in India is prepared to work these reforms, naturally the whole scheme will have to be altered.

Again, it is said that religious intolerance, corruption, nepotism will make any effective responsible self-government impossible. It would be idle to deny that these characteristics exist in India, but I think it may also be remarked that they are not conspicuous by their absence in certain other democracies, both on this side and on the other side of the Atlantic; and to-day we are introducing a new element which will, I think, tend to check these abuses. In all the various local Parliaments we are setting up, not only an Indian Government, but an Indian Opposition as well. That Opposition trained in the experience and by the example of Oppositions in this country, will be only too anxious, as indeed Oppositions are in this country, to catch the Government out, to prove that they have done wrong, and to show that they have used partisan or political methods in their appointments, and they will be just as anxious to step into the shoes of the Government in India as Oppositions in this country are to do the same here. After all, as regards religious intolerance, it is only just over a century since we refused either a Jew or a Catholic the right to sit in this House, and although religious intolerance dies hard, it dies hard whether it be in Ireland, Spain, the United States of America, or India.

But whatever may be the force of these arguments—and, as I say, it would be foolish and idle to deny it—it seems to me that they are not sufficient to warrant our rejecting these proposals. They are all set out fully and elaborately in the Simon Statutory Commission's Report, and after due consideration they came to the conclusion that provincial autonomy

should be established. Perhaps one of the reasons which finally convinced me that the Government scheme was a moderate and reasonable scheme was that, on the one hand, you had the extremists in this country saying: "We are giving away India, we are abdicating our rule," and, on the other, you had the majority of politicians in India, as you have to-day, explaining that these reforms really meant nothing and that the strong, firm hand of England would still be firmly placed upon India. If the case for some reform, some advance, has been made out, I believe we are right to go boldly ahead and to take risks. There were some words of Lord Curzon which explain exactly what I mean. He was referring to some other proposals which had gone somewhat beyond what was originally intended, and he said that while recognising that the proposals would not only solve a difficulty, but create a precedent, he urged that no solution would ever be attained by half measures. He continued:

> "If we are to advance it must be a large advance in the direction, not merely of co-operation, but of trust."

As I say, if the case for reform has been made out, I for one am prepared to leave the details of that reform to those who, in my opinion, are best able to decide upon them, and I believe the judgment of the Joint Committee has received and will continue to receive overwhelming support, both because of the knowledge and of the experience of those who were willing and good enough to sit upon it.

There is one small point of detail that I should like to raise. We know that under these reforms Burma is to be separated from India, and Aden is to come under the control of the Colonial Office. As far as I know, there is nothing in the report which deals with the position in the Persian Gulf. To-day our policy in the Persian Gulf is controlled by three or four Departments in this country, and partly by the Indian Government as well, and it seems to me that here is an opportunity to clear up this matter. The Protectorate of Aden stretches to the Persian Gulf, and Muscat, Bahrein, Kuweit, and Bushire raise matters of immediate concern to Persia and to Iraq which are dealt with by the Foreign Office. To-day the appointment of officials is carred out by the political department of the Government of India, and there have been several very serious mistakes which we have made in the Persian Gulf during the past few years. I think those mistakes have been due largely to the divided control under which our policy in the Persian Gulf is directed. Now seems to me to be the time to clear up that situation.

Earl WINTERTON: I think my hon. and gallant Friend has overlooked the fact that we recommended in our report that Aden should be taken out of the purview of the Government of India and put under the Imperial Government, and that would leave the Gulf residents still under the Indian Office, under whom they ought to be.

Captain CAZALET: I did say that Aden was to come under the control of the Colonial Office, but there are many thousands of miles between Aden and the Gulf, although the Protectorate reaches nearly to the Gulf. I am talking of the Northern end of the Gulf—of Bahrein, Kuweit, and Bushire. I was there only a few months ago, and I was told of several very glaring cases where lack of general control had adversely affected British interests.

So much has already been said, and will be said again, with regard to provincial autonomy and federation at the Centre, that I have only the very shortest remarks to make about them. I do believe that it would be fatal to give provincial autonomy without law and order and equally fatal and give provincial autonomy without federation at the Centre. This was an opinion which was voiced to me universally in India, though others may have had a different experience. To keep the police under a Minister appointed by the Government would be to create the maximum amount of ill-will and to focus on the policeman the whole of the anti-foreign sentiment in India. The police must be ineffective unless they carry with them the goodwill of the majority of the inhabitants. Indian home members have already shown that they can deal effectively with precarious situations, I admit, under slightly different conditions than are proposed here, but still it has been shown that men are there with independence, judgment, and character. I think it may sometimes be very much easier for an

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Indian in certain circumstances to deal with his own people without incurring the odium which must necessarily fall on a Britisher in similar circumstances. I believe also that in certain provinces, such as Bengal, where opinion is more or less equally divided between Mohammedans and Hindus, it is likely that a European will be chosen as home member with the full consent of his colleagues in the Cabinet.

One word only as to the Centre. It is true that you are doing something in India that is contrary to all precedent. You are taking powers from a unitary Government and giving them to the provinces, whereas in all other federations, such as Australia, Canada, South Africa, and the United States of America, it was only with the greatest difficulty that the various provinces or states were induced to yield up their powers to the federal centre. Here we are doing exactly the opposite. Therefore, it seems to me that unless you can establish some form of federation at the Centre, within a reasonable time and without too much delay, the provinces are very likely to lose all interest in the Centre, and it may not be long before you get a province like Madras wishing to secede from the federation, which would be fatal, not only in the interests of India, but really in the interests of the provinces themselves.

The proposals of the Government have obvious drawbacks. We have heard something about them, and we shall hear more of them in the future. But nothing better has been proposed. The Council of Greater India would leave the position very much as it is to-day. There is very little favour for that solution in this country and absolutely none in India. It is impossible to exaggerate the influence of bringing in the Princes. It will strengthen the link between this country and India and will add a stabilising factor in politics. It will also add to the influence of the rural interests in India, because the States are largely rural, whereas the Provinces are largely industrial. It would be impossible to get the independent Provinces to work with a Centre which they believe is largely controlled by Whitehall. I have heard eloquent speeches from my right hon. Friend who sits below me in regard to the Princes, but I venture to say that the administration in many of the territories of the Princes is not only equal to, but better than, that in many parts of British India. There is an idea that they are behind in education, but the budget of Travancore, for instance, shows that 16 per cent. of the revenues is spent on education alone. There is a higher degree of literacy in most of the bigger States than in British India itself, and I believe that they may contribute something really worth while in social legislation by coming into the Centre.

After all, the Centre must look to the Provinces to carry out its decrees. I wish the Chambers had been smaller. I think the large numbers merely invite difficulties. A wrong impression has I maintain been given of much of the work with which the Centre will be occupied. It is true that they can debate the reserved subjects. They can debate finance, but finance is already largely allocated to the Army, the Provinces, interest on loans, etc. Social legislation is almost entirely a matter for the Provinces. They are left with the railways and posts and telegraphs, which should be non-political. Currency and finance will largely be the business of the Federal Reserve Bank. There are, it is true, 64 Federal items in one of the appendices to the report, and, added to that there is the list of concurrent legislation, yet it does not seem to me that there is much that need necessarily cause differences and difficulties between the Governor-General and his Ministers.

If these arguments are not sufficient, there is one other, and it is, I think, the answer to the speeches of the opponents of this Measure. What alternative proposals have the slightest chance of being accepted by any body of political opinion in India? They may argue that the Indian politicians do not like these proposals, but do they like the proposals of our opponents any better? We have to work with the political bodies that are there, for we cannot create new ones. The truth is there are no alternative proposals that are acceptable to any appreciable body of opinion in India to-day. It is well to emphasise the fact that this steel framework of British civilians about which we have often heard will still be there. Under the proposals no member of the All-India services can be transferred or dismissed without the consent and the knowledge of the Governor, who is appointed by the Crown. Civil Ser-

vice commissioners are to be set up in most of the Provinces. They are to operate in all Provinces, although one commission may do the work in two Provinces. If these commissions work, as one already in being does in Madras to-day, it will ensure that the Governor and the public are informed each year of what is taking place in regard to the recruitment and postings of officers.

Many people in India assured me that as a result of these proposals there will be in many organisations, such as schools, universities and hospitals, an increased demand for Englishmen to occupy posts of responsibility, because there is all the difference in the world, from the Indian point of view, between having somebody imposed upon you by Whitehall and appointing the best man for the job yourself. The future alone can tell whether that will come about. There are also various social reforms which I believe the Indians alone can solve. We have studiously avoided interfering, I think, to too great an extent with the religious customs, the domestic habits, or the social traditions and conventions of Indians. I am certain that by doing something in these matters a greater benefit will be conferred on the lives of the individual peasants than by any number of White Papers or constitutional reforms. We are precluded by promise after promise from interfering in these matters, and it will be largely due, if and when these reforms come, to the influence of women in Indian politics.

It is obvious that any fundamental change in the Indian Constitution must be attended by grave risks. We have to find that change and reform which will receive not only some measure of Indian support but at the same time ensure law and order. These reforms are the very maximum which England can offer and the very minimum which India is prepared to accept. What is the alternative? If we draw back and refuse to continue, then a policy of coercion and oppression is bound to ensue. I do not believe that such a policy can be carried out, opposed as it would be in this country by the Socialist and Liberal parties and by a large proportion of the Conservative party. The only chance of imposing upon India a constitution which she is not willing to work is, first of all, to establish a Fascist regime in this country. If we refuse, and even if we still believe that force can be a permanent substitute for Parliamentary progress, we gravely misjudge the efficacy of that force to compel compliance in India or the assent to its use in this country. When constitutional advances have been made, as they were made in Canada and South Africa, the gloomiest predictions have always heralded them in; it was said that they would produce chaos and break up the Empire. I believe that the pessimistic prophecies that we hear to-day will be equally untrue in regard to India as they were in regard to the other Dominions.

Analogies are dangerous. We have heard many analogies, but we have often heard them drawn between India and Ireland. The true analogy is not what happened in Ireland after the War, but what ought to have been done in regard to Ireland in the 'eighties. There was a time then when men of the Conservative and Liberal parties and many people in Ireland were prepared to come to some agreement which would have been infinitely better and more honourable for all parties concerned than the ignominious surrender which we were driven to accept a few years after the War. We have to-day in India a greater measure of good will than at any time since the War, or perhaps at any time. We should capitalise this and we should, as the Secretary of State said, move forward when we are strong. No one would deny that we are strong in India to-day or that the Government in this country has a prestige which no other Government has had for generations. I admit that those who oppose these reforms are opposing them for the same reason as we support them. They believe that by opposing them they will help to have India. We believe that by supporting them we are advocating the only policy which will keep India a contented member of the British Commonwealth of nations. It may well be that a generation hence, when this country and the British Empire are once again setting the world an example of how not only to overcome their economic difficulties but also to maintain democratic government, the chief factor in and the most important contribution to that condition of affairs will be a contented India and the close relationship and loyalty between our two

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countries. I believe that in supporting these proposals we are laying the foundations for the establishment of ordered peace and prosperity in the Indian Empire.

8.26 p.m.

Mr. RAIKES: I listened with great interest to the speech of the hon. and gallant Member for Chippenham (Captain Cazalet), remembering as I did how great were his doubts a year ago about the Indian situation. I listened with interest to discover what it was that taught him so suddenly that this Measure is about the most perfect that it is possible for anyone to conceive. I wondered whether it was that visit to India, so swift, but not too swift to allow him to produce something of a book afterwards, or what it was; but we have learned. The hon. and gallant Member has told us that what has most affected his mind has been the fact that certain extremists in England have protested against the reforms and that certain persons among the Indians in India have also clamoured against them. He need not have gone to India to change his opinion if that is the sort of thing that moves him. It would be just about as reasonable a course for forming an opinion on a great matter like this if I were to say that I was opposed to these reforms because, for some reason, I objected to the fact that the Lord President of the Council lived in Worcestershire and liked pigs. That has just about as much to do with the matter as the hon. and gallant Member's vague feelings about what certain persons of the right and certain persons in India may feel on this matter. As to my hon. and gallant Friend's last point, he stands up and says, "Oh, there is no need for us to trouble because certain politicians in India are protesting overmuch. They would have been poor politicians if they had not learned from us to protest and try to get something more." Is that the hon. and gallant Member's idea of political sincerity, that we should welcome the attitude of those out in India who are protesting because they hope to get something more? Does he not believe the scheme he supports is a good scheme and that every honest politician in India ought to welcome it and not play popular tricks which, he suggests, have been learned from us?

Captain CAZALET: That is a perfectly legitimate criticism, but the hon. Gentleman has taken the one final point I made and which I regard as quite insignificant in comparison with the other half-dozen points on which I laid stress at the start.

Mr. RAIKES: I will accept the hon. and gallant Member's explanation, but he did state, as he will find in the OFFICIAL REPORT to-morrow, that the thing which had most affected his mind was the fact that certain persons on the right wing in England objected to the scheme and that there were certain extremists in India who did likewise. I leave it at that. There is one thing and one thing alone by which, to my mind, the report of the Joint Select Committee should be judged, and that is the question, Will the result of that report conduce to the welfare of the masses of India, or will it not? The greatest pledge by which we in this country are governed is the pledge of Queen Victoria that the welfare of the masses of India should be the chief and the first though of Government. I was astounded by one thing this afternoon. I listened with interest to the lucid speech which the Secretary of State delivered to us, but I did not note a single phrase in it which urged the adoption of the report on the grounds that it was something which would be of assistance to the Indian people themselves. I wonder whether a Measure of such magnitude dealing with any part of the British Empire has ever been brought before this House without the argument being put forward, and made the main argument of the right hon. Gentleman introducing the Measure, that it was for the welfare of the masses of the people in the country concerned? Under the preamble of the 1919 Act it was laid down that the reforms which we were engaged upon should be either modified or extended in the future by Parliament. The Government to-day propose in no way to modify or to restrict, but to extend very largely; to give complete provincial autonomy and to extend a very great measure of authority at the Centre.

It is our duty in this House to consider how the 1919 reforms themselves have worked in two particulars—how have they affected the welfare of the masses, the peasantry of India, and how have the transferred Departments worked. Fifteen years is a period in which much information can be gathered. It is common

knowledge that up to 1919 the main object, or one of the main objects, of government had been to keep up and to improve the prosperity of the peasantry, who have always been regarded as the economic backbone of India. They are the people who have to bear practically the whole brunt of taxation, and they constitute a huge majority of the peoples of India. The peasantry pay, of course, the whole of the land taxes and the greater part of the revenue derived from irrigation and from salt. There are practically no great farmers in India, the average holding being between 6 and 12 acres, and the peasantry, who are a body of smallholders, find well over half, and probably three-quarters, of the money for the provincial and central budgets. That is the class which has to pay for any additional so-called popular reforms. Only 7 per cent. of the whole of the budgets in India comes from Income Tax, because only a very small proportion of the people of India pay Income Tax.

Any reforms must be paid for by the peasant, who has already had a little sample of so-called representative government on the lines of the 1919 Act. The first dose of it was when the duty on imported cloth was raised from 5 per cent. to 30 per cent. after a considerable campaign by the Bombay millowners, and at the instigation of these new representatives of his who had been brought into office through the 1919 reforms. One thing is certain, that the new class who have been brought into a position of authority since 1919 are not a class who have anything to do with the land. They are an urban class, very largely taught and instructed in the colleges and universities set up in India in the last 30 or 40 years. They are an urban class, who have to depend for taxation upon the agricultural class, with whom they have nothing in common. The first step was to increase the duty on foreign cloth from 5 per cent. to 30 per cent. That not only struck a heavy blow at the trade of Lancashire, but, beyond that, deprived large masses of the peasantry of one of their few little luxuries, the foreign cloth which they preferred to the rather rougher stuff which otherwise they were compelled to buy.

The hon. and gallant Member for Chippenham referred to the question of education, and suggested that we had spent rather more on secondary education than we should have done. The money spent on education since it was transferred has gone up continuously in the last 15 years, not to provide better education for the peasants, but secondary schools, colleges and universities into which the peasants never have a chance to go. It is widely admitted that that is so in many instances, and no doubt the observation was brought before the Joint Select Committee that education has deteriorated in the villages. Turn to the medical services. In almost every district of India criticisms are met not only as to the amount of money spent upon outworn and archaic Indian systems of medicine by the gentlemen who have taken charge, but that grants are made to the hospitals and colleges to provide those outworn systems of medicine, which are simply producing the things which would have died out if Indian politicians had not debilitated things. The peasant has to pay for that. It is also generally admitted that political wire-pulling is not unknown in the medical services since transfer. I put it no higher than that.

The cultivator has no representation, and there is no indication that he will have it as a result of these reforms. There is no opportunity for democracy to exist under the reforms, because communal representation makes free representation upon Western lines an impossibility from the start. The cultivator will be brought more and more under the control of the lawyers, money-lenders and rack-renting landlords of the towns, who will cluster hopefully round him for the spoils. The masses have higher taxation and the Indian peasant is poorer to-day than he has been for a good many years. His interests are being sacrificed to the urban interests. He is only being sacrified in part to-day, but he will be sacrificed more as a result of these reforms. There is a typical example in Russia of agriculture being sacrificed to urban interests. A comparatively small proportion of the people in the towns work agriculture in their own interests, and they work the peasants also. We are going in the same direction in India. The urban interest has nothing whatever in common with the men and women who work in the fields and who have made India greater and richer.

[Mr. Raikes.]

I am only an uninfluential back-bencher, but I am raising these matters in regard to the Indian peasantry who went out in the largest numbers to fight for this country during the War. We are often told that these sacrifices are being asked for by India because of what India did in the War. What we are doing is to give the urban politician the fruits of that for which the peasant died. The peasant gets nothing except more taxation. All reforms cost taxation, and in India the peasant pays all the time. Many men on the spot admit, though they say that these reforms are inevitable, that they wish that there never had been a 1919; but they say that we cannot go back now. That is the main argument in favour of the proposals; we cannot go back, so, because we have once started that way, we have to go on, either at a fast or a slow pace in the direction of pseudo democracy, which is oligarchy, even if it means sacrificing the poor in order, on paper, to keep India within the British Empire. That is the position which we have to face, and it appears to me a rather hopeless outlook. Almost every official deplores the 1919 reforms, yet we are simply going in the same direction because, apparently, we have not sufficient wit or wisdom to consider changing into any other direction slightly more suitable to the genius of the Indian people.

The House may realise that I am not enthusiastic for the so-called Provincial Autonomy. I do not think it will work, but it is worth while to make one last great effort to try out the Indian politicians in the wider sphere. Some Ministers have done their jobs well in the last 15 years, but some have not, and there has been deterioration. You can give those politicians a wider scope in the Provinces, and, if that were a success, those of us who are opposing the reforms would admit that we had in a sense been mistaken, and we would welcome the taking of a further step later on. If it were not successful, and I do not believe it would be, one would be able to consider the alternative, and to face the fact that we have been going in a wrong direction since 1919 and that we have to turn into a different direction. What has impressed me most has been the statement made by a very influential Member of the Government the other day that Provincial Autonomy cannot possibly work, because if you try it out Indian statesmen will be so anxious to get more power at the Centre that they will neglect dealing with provincial questions. If that be the sort of statesman that you are putting into power in India, God help India.

I am not an expert on India, but I believe that if the scheme breaks down Federation would still be possible, and I and some of my hon. Friends believe that the only Federation that could exist is one built upon inherited responsibility. It would include the European bloc, to keep alive the fact, which we sometimes forget, that the English are partners in India and ought to have some of the benefits of partnership. It ought to be possible to bring in nominated representation for the zamindar class, the landed interests in India. Although in many cases they are not so close to the smallholder as we should wish, they represent land. Small class though they are, they are far more representative of India than the elective representatives of the towns. You might in that way, through the landed classes, keep India as a country in which agriculture and the peasant would still remain. At the present time, however, we are drifting towards further and further strength for the urban element, and further and further degradation for the peasant. Believing, as I do, that our duty is still to the poor of India, that our duty is still to the masses of India, is still to that great agricultural interest, I feel bound, uninfluential and unimpressive though I may be, to lift my voice, and later on give my vote, against these proposals.

8.46 p.m.

Miss HORSBRUGH: Listening to the speech of the hon. Member for South-East Essex (Mr. Raikes), I have found myself more and more in sympathy with the view of the hon. and gallant Member for Chippenham (Captain Cazalet) that absolutely no other plan is being put forward in this House. The hon. Member said, towards the end of his speech, that he was not an expert on India, and was only raising his voice against the proposals of the Government. I also am not an expert on India, and I desire to raise my voice also, but in support of

the proposals of the Government. After the hon. Member had said so much about the difficulties of the position, I was surprised to hear him say that he would like to see some other form of election, in which, perhaps, the zemindar would take precedence. I confess to only having been in India once, for eight months, but I cannot think that anybody who knows India at all would think that the zemindars are the people to represent the peasants. To my mind, that is a very surprising suggestion.

The hon. Member, in dwelling upon the difficulties of the present régime, said over and over again that the weight of the urban areas has been crushing out the rural areas. I take it for granted that the hon. Member has read the report which we are all discussing, but I would ask him to look once more at page 70, for I am sure it will rejoice his heart to know that, at any rate in one particular, he is supporting the view of the report. We find in paragraph 127 these words:

"The proposals will, in the case of most Provinces, redress the balance between town and country, which is at the present time too heavily weighted in favour of urban areas."

The members of the Joint Select Commitee, as well as the hon. Member for South-East Essex, have realised that the present situation is far too heavily weighted in favour of the town area as against the rural area, and it is because of that that the change is being made.

Mr. RAIKES: How do you propose to do it?

Miss HORSBRUGH: If my hon. Friend will look at the report, instead of asking me how I propose to do it, he will see that the Joint Select Committee suggest that it should be done by means of the franchise, as set out on page 70 of the report. I should be keeping the House too long if I read the whole of that part of the report, but no doubt my hon. Friend has overlooked it, and will now study it, with the result that he will be glad that at any rate in that particular he can agree with those who are in favour of the reforms.

The speech of the hon. Member for West Islington (Mr. Donner)—which was certainly short, but as he said, enough was as good as a feast—was to my mind the gloomiest speech that he could possibly have made on this subject. He was not in favour of Indian Federation of any kind. As regards provincial autonomy, he spoke, as other Members have spoken, of the difficulty that Congress might get a hold. He remarked upon the difficulties that would be found if autonomy were set up in the provinces, and the enormous danger which he saw in it. In this I think the hon. Member for South-East Essex agreed, and, therefore, he had no suggestion to make with regard to it—he thought that the whole thing was hopeless. I agree with what the hon. and gallant Member for Chippenham said on the subject of the police, namely, that, if the police were kept as a service by themselves, they would be, as many people in India have said, a taboo service, which would bring down suspicion upon them, and probably still greater difficulties would be put in their way in doing their work.

In studying the report, I suggest that we have to look at the actual advantages which such a scheme as is suggested would bring about. The Simon Commission stated that in their view the most formidable evils from which India is suffering have their roots in social and economic customs of long standing, which can only be altered by the action of the Indian people themselves. I should like to speak particularly on the subject of the social improvements proposed. In the report of the Joint Select Committee, as in that of the Statutory Commission, great emphasis is laid on what the Indians themselves, and particularly the Indian women, can do to bring about these social reforms. By the very fact of the publication of the report, and by giving to the women of India the wider franchise which many of us hoped they would receive when the Joint Select Committee had examined the White Paper, we have gone one step forward already towards the social reforms which every Member of this House must desire.

The House will recollect that, when the Lothian Committee went to India, they recommended very definitely an increase in the women's franchise. It was pointed out that the woman's qualification could not be justly left the same as that of the man. In India a woman, in most cases, does not hold property, and in most cases the woman has not had the same advantages in education as the man. If they had been left with the same qualifications, I think the ratio would

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have worked out at about one to 21. The changes suggested by the Lothian Committee were that for women the educational standard should be literacy, and that the woman also should have, in certain cases, a qualification based on the property held by her husband. When we received the White Paper, many of us were disappointed on this subject, and I remember how that disappointment was voiced in this House by the late Mary Pickford, who told us then what an enormous difference this change would make to India. She pointed out that if in the case of women the higher educational standard were enforced, many Indian women who had been educated at home would not be enfranchised and there were other difficulties, such as the nature of the application that was to be put in in the case of the wife who was to be enfranchised on the basis of her husband's property qualification. I welcome the change proposed by the Joint Select Committee, which I think has gone far to reassure many people that social reforms in India will have a chance of being carried out. In paragraph 134 of the Joint Committee's Report they say:

> "We concur in everything which has been said by the Statutory Commission on the necessity for improving the status and extending the influence of the women of India, and it is in our opinion impossible to exaggerate the importance of securing in the new Constitution a substantial increase of enfranchised women. 'The women's movement in India,' the Commission observe, 'holds the key of progress, and the results it may achieve are incalculably great. It is not too much to say that India cannot reach the position to which it aspires in the world until its women play their due part as educated citizens.' ".

The report of the Joint Select Committee proposes that more power should be given to women, and I think that under the proposals their voting strength will be very nearly, if not quite, up to that which was first suggested by the Lothian Committee. The very fact that women are to be given that part to play in the new Constitution shows how far we have gone, and how anxious we are for these reforms. There are certain other points, which, however, are Committee points and can be later disposed of. As the Simon Commission said, as regards reforming certain customs nobody from outside can do what the Indian people can do theselves. I believe that the women of India have moved so far forward already that, given a share in the rule of their country, we shall see changes which will make even the most gloomy here see some good points in this Constitution.

For some months up and down the country we have been told that this new Constitution will affect the trade of the country adversely. [An HON. MEMBER: "Hear, hear!"] To-day we have heard not one word of it until the applause of my hon. Friend in front. To-day we have heard that the people who will be damaged are the Indians themselves, and we have heard a plea put in for the peasants and for the Princes, but we have not heard one plea for British trade, though up and down the country we have been told that it will be ruined. [An HON. MEMBER: "It is ruined already!"] If that be the present situation, do for goodness sake let us try something else. I particularly want to bring forward this subject, because I think nowhere is the trade of Great Britain and India linked up as it is in the city of Dundee. My hon. Friend says Lancashire. The difference is that our entire import of raw material for the jute trade must come from India. It was said in the past that there was always a Scotsman who went to India, and it was even suggested on some occasions that too many Scotsmen went to India. We have heard a good deal to-day about our wonderful rule in India. Probably that was due to the Scotsmen who went there. I have studied the question as carefully as I could, because of this fear of the result of this scheme on trade, and I have come to the conclusion that, with the Safeguards now put into the report, it is amply clear that chances for even better trade are available.

It has been said over and over again that trade with any country can only come from good will. Some of the schemes that have been put up by hon. Members to-day would not have the slightest chance of bringing about any good will. It has been said also that the success of the machinery will depend entirely on a few people in charge, that regulations laid down are useless and that super-men will have to deal with them. This country, I think, has been able in the past to send out men to India who have been able to deal with these things. Sir John

Macpherson, interim Governor-General in 1785, said much the same about Parliamentary regulations as we are saying to-day. "The real security of India depends on the broadest choice of men who are to rule her, rather than on any regulations that Parliament may lay down." Those who think that Parliament is laying down regulations which are not wise and those who think that we have not got men who will go out with good will to work the regulations are mistaken.

The trade of this country is being protected and the protection in most cases will be adequate, but there is one point on which I am a little doubtful. We have it clearly stated in the report that there will be no discrimination against British imports. We have it stated, too, that the ideal of trade for India is reciprocity. I should like it to be noted that those who are interested in the exports of India also hope sincerely that there will be no discrimination in the export duties. I notice that it is suggested in the report that the export duty on jute should be shared between the Province of Bengal and the Central Government. I presume that the Central Government have the power of fixing the amount of that export duty, and that no discrimination will be allowed, as in the case of the import duties and the tariff scheme. I believe that up and down the country there has been a great deal of fear as to the future of the great industry that has been built up between this country and India. During the Debates that are to come we should, if possible, bear in mind that we are looking after the interests both of the people in India and in Britain.

I believe the responsibility of Members of the House for the work that they have to do during this coming session is enormous. We all realise it. The work that we shall do on the subject of the Indian Constitution, the work that must be done on the subject of the maintenance of the peace of the world, and further measures for its continuance and the work of rebuilding the trade and industry of this country and of the homes of the people—the great social services cannot wait. It seems to me that, unless the Debates on the Bill that is to come before us are engaged upon with that spirit of good will which has been shown in the House to-day, and able minds are brought to bear on the subject with concentration and with that lack of animosity and ill-feeling which we feel should be shown in such an assembly as this, we shall delay social measures which are of very great importance to our country at present.

I believe that our work, falling as it does into those three distinct areas, is linked up, and, if we neglect one, we shall see disaster in all three. There must be criticism, and I beg that that criticism should be concentrated. There must be attacks, but need they be in torrents of oratory? Cannot they be delivered in tabloid form? Cannot we rise to the occasion, and to the great opportunity that we have at present of building up a new Constitution which is going to affect the welfare of millions of our fellow subjects in the Indian Empire, of helping on the trade of the country, and helping on peace and good will, at the same time not neglecting the social services? If we do that, we shall achieve here what all the world is longing to achieve, a Parliamentary system that really works.

We all realise the difficulty of our task. To some it would be easy to step aside and to say, "Hands off India, our responsibility is over." To my mind, that might be an easy path, but not an honourable one. We cannot desert India at the most difficult time of her political life—her political adolescence. We have to stand by and help. Others might say we dare not go back. The hon. Member who spoke last wishes to go back further than 1919. Many say, "We have not the courage, we doubt too much to go right on." They want to stop in mid stream, the most dangerous place we could possibly be in. I realise the importance of the step that we are going to take; it is a leap but not a leap in the dark in the opinion of those best able to judge, who have been examining it year after year. We have to have courage and go forward. I support the Resolution. I wish God speed to those in responsible positions and those who are going to hold responsible positions in the future. I believe we can succeed but I know we may fail. I believe we are taking the right course, the best course and the courageous course. I am reminded of what was once said, that the tragic consequences are less when we trust and are deceived than when we mistrust and are mistaken.

9.5 p.m.

Marquess of HARTINGTON: I will endeavour to follow the advice of the hon. Lady the Member for Dundee (Miss Horsbrugh) and compress my speech into tabloid form, although I confess that in many ways her speech offended somewhat in that regard. My Noble Friend the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Aldershot (Viscount Wolmer) stated so clearly the point of view which I hold that I really need not detain the House, but I want to state briefly the great difficulty which I see about the future of these reforms. I do not know whether hon. Members opposite will object, but I believe it to be the fact that, in the last resort, all government depends on force which can only be effective in the presence and with the consent of the Government. The Spaniards could not stay in the Netherlands however much force they used, and equally no Government, however popularly elected, can carry on without the exercise of force. In the end the authority of the Government is the force which it commands backed up by the consent of the people. That is why the village constable is able to say: "Stop that now," and the people do so. The law is unquestioned in this country because it has so much force behind it. But in the new regime proposed in India the ultimate force on which government depends will be an alien force, and that is a situation which has rarely existed in the world's history. There are one or two examples. It is happening to-day in Manchuria, which we refuse to recognise. There was an attempt made in the ill-fated Empire of Mexico, and there are other examples which occur to one's mind.

I believe that in this attempt to draft self-government you must increasingly become alien to our desires. If the experiment works, it seems to be inevitable that the Indian Parliament will more and more pursue a policy which is not our own policy. There are two civilisations. Theirs is a civilisation infinitely more ancient than our own and immensely more difficult. The most robust atheists among us, whether they like it or not, have deeply grafted into their minds Christian ethics which do not obtain in India at all. It appears to me that the Indian Parliament as time goes on will pursue a policy which will be different from that pursued by an English Parliament, and if the gift of self-government works they will proceed on lines which are not our own. They will not proceed on the lines we have tried to put before them but upon their own lines.

Our situation will become one of increasing difficulty. Either we shall not allow our Army to be used behind that Government or we shall, and in either case great difficulties will arise. In the one case we shall feel that we are doing something of which we thoroughly disapprove, and in the other case the Indian Government must collapse. For that reason the experiment of divorcing the Government from the force on which it ultimately rests is a risky and a dangerous experiment, and one which cannot succeed. Moreover, the moment you divorce the Government from the force on which it rests, you are really guilty of something like fraud. The two must be indissolubly one or they cannot succeed. You come to this inescapable dilemma. The Army in India must either be the servant or the master of the Government. Are we in England prepared to see, on the one hand, the Army as the servant of an Indian Government which is pursuing a policy which we may not approve; or, on the other hand to see the forces master of that Government? If so, the self-government of which we have talked this afternoon is a fraud and a sham.

There is an inescapable dilemma over safeguards. Safeguards are either effective or they are not. If they are effective, it is no good talking about self-government. We shall not have given it. We shall have tried to fob off the Indians by fraud. If, on the other hand, they are not effective and what we have been saying this afternoon is true, we are giving something which we in this House ought not to be prepared to concede. For all those reasons we are dealing with a situation which is not really a true and a real one. We are dealing in figures and phrases of speech and not with real facts. Let us face facts. It is a fact that there are in India a very considerable number of educated Indians whose real object is to see us out of India altogether. It is no good refusing to face facts. They hate us like poison, and want to see us out of India. Unless we face facts we shall not get any further with this discussion. Will the self-government

recommended in the report help these people or will it hinder them?

Consider what self-government really is. Suppose this is a genuine scheme of self-government, will the people in India who dislike the English rule, and want to see their country entirely independent of English interference, be satisfied, or can they be satisfied with what we propose to give them? I often wonder where authority really does begin. I go back to the days before I was a Member of Parliament, even before I was a candidate, to the time when I became a delegate to party conferences. I thought that I was getting on and that I should have some voice in the affairs of my party. I went to party conferences and found that I had no voice whatever. When I became a candidate for Parliament I really thought that I was getting on and that I should have some say in affairs, but not a bit of it. One becomes a back bench Member and finds that he has not the slightest influence on the course of affairs. I have for some years been friendly with members of the Government, and I have seen the mother of Parliaments spend weeks of Parliamentary time on Measures which every Member of the House greatly dislikes, such, for instance, as the Betting Act, which I honestly believe is not liked by any Member in the House. One reads the War Memoirs of the people who were really dictators during the War. One reads the Memoirs of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Carnarvon Boroughs (Mr. Lloyd George) and of my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) and finds that they were very far from being dictators. They were unwilling slaves, and one wonders where authority really does reside, and whether, in fact, there is such a thing as self-government. I have long ago given up an hope of mentioning the privileges of self-government to ordinary electors in England. I doubt whether the ordinary Member of the House of Commons has any effective voice in self-government.

We are proposing to confer benefits of this kind upon the peoples of India. What will they actually get out of it? I think that they may in time realise that they are not getting so much freedom or liberty as they expected to get. At the same time they are, no doubt, keen on clamouring for it, because they believe it will make a substantial improvement in their conditions of living. Reference has been made this afternoon to the Salt Tax, and I should like the hon. and learned Gentleman who is to wind up the Debate to-night to say whether he really believes that any native or Indian peasant will get a remission or revision of the Salt Tax with regard to these proposals. Will it really be the case that anyone will get such a period of self-government as to be able to say that it will reconcile him to a remission or revision, or will he, as I believe to be the case, get a substantial increase? Who is going to get his money's worth out of these reforms?

The Indian politician, the man who will be elected to this new Parliament, will have it in his power to shuffle all the blame of anything that goes wrong on to our shoulders. It is impossible to hope that we shall have secured any substantial gain in good will. On the contrary, it is almost certain that there will be a substantial increase of ill-will. It is the case, unhappily, that there are a large number of people in India who are unfriendly to us. If my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping had been born at Benares instead of Blenheim, it is possible that he might have been a home ruler, and he might have been in gaol. I might possibly have been in the same position in similar circumstances. Can it really be urged by the Government that these reforms are going to secure a substantial increase in good will? I find it impossible to believe that a Measure which is going to cost money, which is not going to bring about any substantial improvement in conditions—I have never heard that claimed for it—which is going to bring about no increase in good will, is going to reconcile the Indian, whether he be the simple voter outside or the Indian politician, to a condition of affairs in which he will certainly have to pay more taxation and will, as far as I can see, have little, if any, authority, because we in this country after all these years have not got it for ourselves.

My right hon. Friend made no reference to finance. I should like to ask a definite question on that subject. It is not denied that this scheme is going to cost appreciably more than the present system of government in India. How exactly is it going to be financed? What sources of revenue in India are

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untapped? Where is the money coming from? I have always found it prudent in dealing with architects or decorators to double their estimates, and I treble or quadruple the politician's estimates of cost. How is this scheme to be financed? How is the difficulty which arises over the representation of the Indian States going to be dealt with? You get into a very difficult situation when you have representatives of British India having no power to vote taxation for the States, while the States will have power to vote taxation for British India, on which in some cases they will, I understand, have quite substantial claims. How is that difficulty to be dealt with? I should like to know, also, how the difficulty about dissolution will be dealt with? Our whole Parliamentary system depends upon the power of dissolution. The Prime Minister who cannot carry on can advise the Sovereign to dissolve Parliament, and it is tolerably certain that in most cases a new Parliament having definite authority from the people will be returned. The system of franchise in India makes it unlikely that if a deadlock has been reached there will be any change whatever in the representation on a dissolution. That is a very serious constitutional difficulty which my right hon. Friend did not deal with in his speech to-day.

Another difficulty which seems to me a substantial one is that you have in the same House nominated and elected Members sitting side by side. I do not believe that that can possibly be regarded as a stable system. It is impossible. Admittedly, this is a transitional stage, but I do not believe that you can maintain a Parliamentary system in which nominated Members sit side by side with the elected Members but cannot claim that they represent the popular franchise. You cannot maintain a system under which Members sitting together in Parliament represent an entirely unequal franchise. These are practical difficulties about the scheme which lead me to believe that it cannot endure as a system of government. It will relieve no grievances, and there are grievances. It will cost more. I cannot imagine that any single Indian, after we have debated this Bill perhaps into next summer, will feel that his aspirations towards real self-government have been satisfied. He will have more burdens to bear and it is only too likely that he will have a less satisfactory and less efficient Government to deal with.

I find it hard to believe that this is a solution of the problem, and it is for that reason that I join with my Noble Friend the Member for Aldershot (Viscount Wolmer) in hoping that the Government will confine this "great experiment," to quote the words of the Secretary of State, to provincial autonomy. That is going a long way. It is more than satisfying any hopes which Indians had formed up to a few years ago. It is going further and is going more quickly than any Indian ever thought of 10 years ago. Provincial autonomy would be going a very long way but it would not be an irrecoverable step. It is a step that could be recalled. If we go the distance which the Government contemplate going we shall have taken a step which we cannot retrace without measures which we should hardly like to contemplate and which we had better not discuss. We shall be going too far to retrace our steps. We are imposing upon the peoples of India a burdensome charge. We are not solving any problem. We are not satisfying any aspirations. We are taking a step which is full of difficulty and danger to millions of people who owe us everything. India owes us a certain debt. We have done a very great deal for India and we are, at least, entitled to some recognition. We have some right on our side. We ought not to go so far that we cannot retrace our steps. It is admitted by the Government that federation cannot take place for at least five or six years. What should we lose by making this step one of provincial autonomy, with a provision that federation will come along if and when provincial autonomy has been a success? I hope the Government will realise that they are losing very little but possibly gaining a great deal if they only go so far as provincial autonomy, so that if ill results follow they can retrace their steps.

9.24 p.m.

Sir JOHN WARDLAW-MILNE: No one who listened to the speech which my Noble Friend made the other day at the meeting in the Queen's Hall, a meeting which has been referred to more

than once this afternoon, could fail to be impressed by the clear manner in which he put forward his case on that occasion. I was delighted to hear him speak to-night, but I am sorry that he should be in such a pessimistic frame of mind. It will probably be the experience of all of us that in these Debates there will be something said on all sides with which we can agree. We can all agree about the gravity of the problem, for example, the danger of any move that we make, and we certainly can all agree with what my Noble Friend said as to our splendid record in India. But as I listened to my Noble Friend I felt that he did not see any hope for India at all. There appears to him to be danger if we go ahead, danger if we stand still, danger if we go back. I wondered, as I have wondered throughout the Debate this afternoon when I heard those who are opposing the report, what it is they really propose should be done.

Another Noble Friend, the Member for Aldershot (Viscount Wolmer), made a speech which for destructive criticism could not, I think, be surpassed. I think it was a most excellent speech considered in that sense. At the end of it, having listened very carefully, I wondered when we were coming to what it was that my Noble Friend really wanted done. He said, for example, that we were starting a Constitution which nobody in India will accept. The first question that occurs to one, naturally, is whether India would accept what he is proposing—if indeed he is proposing anything at all. I am, I fancy, correct in assuming that he supports what might be called the Minority view in the Select Committee. If that be correct, it is not unfair to ask him, if his argument against the Majority view is that India is not likely to accept their proposals, whether he thinks India is any more likely to accept the proposals put forward by the minority?

Viscount WOLMER: If they will not accept anything we propose, is it not better to propose something which will work instead of something which will not work?

Sir J. WARDLAW-MILNE: My Noble Friend gives an excellent answer if what he was proposing would work. But I hope to show him before I sit down that, in my humble opinion and with some little experience of India, it is perfectly hopeless to expect it to work. He spoke of the trouble which will arise regarding the Army Budget and said that there would be an immediate attack upon it by all the unofficial Members, and so on. That exists to-day. There is nothing new about that. That does not arise out of the report of the Joint Select Committee. These conditions are commonplaces of to-day. The first great mistake, I suggest, which is being made in connection with the consideration of these reforms is to think that there is something new and completely revolutionary in what has been put forward in the report of the Joint Select Committee. That is not really so at all. It has been a steady process. It is perfectly true that the report suggests a new system of Government in the sense that it suggests for the near future something what was put forward by the Simon Commission as possible in the dim and distant future. But the whole progress of reform has gone on steadily, and dates back to the days of the East India Company. In 1861 we began allowing Indians to have a share in the Legislative Assembly; and in the Minto-Morley Reforms we gave them the right to criticise the Budget. This was followed by the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, so that it has been a perfectly regular system that has been followed. The only real question now is the extent to which we are going on. There is no other dispute between those who hold different views on the present proposals.

As I understand it, there is nobody who suggests that we should go back. I have always made it perfectly clear in this House, speaking entirely for myself, that to my mind no pledge given by any Secretary of State or any Viceroy has any real legal bearing on the matter at all. The only thing that Parliament is really bound by is the Act of 1919 in which we clearly state that after a certain time and after the necessary inquiries it is left to Parliament to decide whether we should go forward, whether we should stand still, or whether we should go back. As I say, nobody to-day suggests that we should go back. I do not think it is worth arguing about that. I have never met anybody who knew anything about India who suggested that you could continue indefinitely the system of dyarchy put forward as a temporary measure in the Montagu-

[Sir J. Wardlaw-Milne.]

Chelmsford Reform scheme. Nobody at that time considered that it could be permanent. In spite of breakdowns, dyarchy has worked in the Provinces better really than could have been expected. The surprising thing to many people is that it should have worked as well as it has done. It does not therefore seem to me to be a reasonable argument to say that we should stand still merely because India has not made a success of dyarchy. Very few of us ever thought it could be successful over a very long period.

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: The scheme before the House contains a proposal to institute dyarchy at the Centre.

Sir J. WARDLAW-MILNE: I am just coming to that. I think it perfectly clear, therefore, that the question before us is the question of the extent to which we shall go forward; and the proposal of the Joint Committee undoubtedly is to institute a form of dyarchy at the Centre. I do not think there is any point in our ignoring or passing over the fact that the system of Government at the Centre, if the Bill which the Government introduce carries out the recommendations of the Committee's report, will be a system of dyarchy. I think we ought to tell India quite definitely and plainly that we propose that because we cannot go further at the present time. Whether at any future time it will be possible to go further is a matter nobody can foresee to-day. It is no use ignoring that it is a definite system of dyarchy at the Centre which we propose and it is far better that India should understand, as I am sure she does understand, that this country can only make this advance at the present time and that we must keep in our own hands such powers as the control of the Army and control of the relationship between the Princes and the Crown. These reservations are essential in present conditions both for India and for ourselves. It is not necessary or desirable, perhaps, that those who sat so long on the Joint Select Committee should deal in detail with the provisions of the report. What those of us who believe in the majority view think is contained in the document itself.

But I should like to refer to one or two points which have been continually urged against the reforms in the last two years when some of us have not been able to speak on these matters at all. There has also been misrepresentation, and these matters, I think, should be put right. At least I will endeavour to put my view of them before the House. One thing constantly said is that we need not go on with federation now. Start with provincial autonomy, it is said, and gain experience, waiting for federation at some future time. It has been already said to-day by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, in a far better way than I can say it, how impossible a system of provincial autonomy with bureaucratic Central Government would be. I can assure the House that in my view for what it is worth such a system is perfectly impossible. I do not hesitate to say that I would very much rather the House of Commons threw out provincial autonomy altogether rather than set up a system of provincial autonomy with a bureaucratic Central Government. It simply means that the whole of the time of the Provincial Assemblies will be devoted to finding fault with the Centre. Everything that goes right they will take credit for; everything that goes wrong will be blamed on the Central Government. That system will never do. If I am convinced of one thing in connection with this question of reforms I am convinced of that.

Another point made is that we should gain experience by introducing provincial autonomy first. But should we gain experience? We should gain no experience in the Central Government and if it is a question of bargaining, which it is not, or a question of considering purely our own interests, which it is not, I very much doubt whether you will be able to impose on India ten years hence as good terms as you can get to-day in connection with federation at the Centre. Again, it has been continuously claimed, even up to the other day, that the Princes would never come into this scheme, and above all, it has been constantly said that they were jockeyed, pressed and persuaded into it when they had no desire to join in it at all. I ask the House to allow me to give two references which, in my view, will put this matter beyond dispute. They are well-known references but I hope the House will forgive me for quoting them rather fully. This is from

"The Times" of 27th October, 1933, reporting the proceedings of the Joint Select Committee:

"Sir SAMUEL HOARE asked if the representatives of the Princes who were present would substantiate what Mr. Churchill had said—namely, that the action of the Princes was due to pressure, direct or indirect, from here?

Sir MANUBHAI MEHTA said, 'We deny absolutely categorically.' Mr. Y. Thombare joined in this repudiation of pressure.

Sir AKBAR HYDARI: 'May I also state that so far from there being any pressure from the political departments of the Government of India on the different States in favour of Federation, I believe British India at any rate was afraid that the pressure would be exerted the other way, in tearing up Federation. I think that the Government of India in this matter have really—let me assure you, Mr. Churchill—behaved with absolute impartiality.'"

The other reference to which I desire to draw the attention of the House appeared in the "Times" of 28th June, 1933, in the form of a letter signed by A. Hydari (Hyderabad), Mirza M. Ismail (Mysore), V. T. Krishnama Chari (Baroda), Y. A. Thombare (Sangli), Manubhai N. Mehta (Bikanir), Liaqat Hyat (Patiala), P. D. Pattani (Bhavnagar) and C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar—(Travancore)—a fairly comprehensive list, I think the House will agree, of representatives of the leading Princes of India. They said:

"In the report of the "Times" of Monday, 26th June, of Mr. Winston Churchill's speech at Gloucester on 24th June, the following statement appears: 'The Princes are being subjected to enormous, subtle, and improper pressures.'

The members of the States' delegation desire to point out that this statement has no foundation. We regret that sweeping statements of this character should be made without any substantiation. We are individually or collectively always at the disposal of those who wish to ascertain the views of the Princes on matters arising out of the White Paper."

Duchess of ATHOLL: Does the hon. Member remember Sir Akbar Hydari, at the end of the last Round Table Conference, stating that the Government were relentlessly pushing the Princes into Federation? Does not that seem rather a more spontaneous statement?

Sir J. WARDLAW-MILNE: I was not aware of it, but if that is an accurate statement of Sir Akbar Hydari's views at that time, I have given you his views expressed quite clearly two years later. I can only say that if he has changed his views he has done so—as many hon. Members have changed their views since the Report of the Joint Select Committee—and in that body of changing opinion I hope the Noble Lady will shortly find a place.

Sir A. KNOX: Are the views of Sir Akbar Hydari of any value, seeing that he contradicts himself deliberately within two months?

Sir J. WARDLAW-MILNE: The hon. and gallant Member will not expect me to enter into the merits of the views of any representative of the Princes in India. All I can say is that Sir Akbar Hydari was one of the most useful and valuable representatives of the Princes before the Joint Select Committee. He did a great deal of valuable work, and up to the present moment I have never heard that his views were not very fully worth consideration. Again, it has been constantly said that British India will never work these reforms. To-day we have heard a great deal about what is going to happen when Congress gets into power. I may be wrong, but I would remind the House that in the well-known business of bargaining, Indians do not require to come to this country to learn anything. They are very well accustomed to asking a good deal more than they expect to get, and there is no Member of this House who can open his mouth so wide in bargaining as the Indian trader. I do not mean to say that there is anything unnatural or unreasonable in the attitude the politicians have taken up. They are not satisfied with what the Joint Select Committee has suggested. I am not sure that I should be satisfied if I were in their place, but that is no real argument I think for the suggestion that they will not, in the end, work the reforms, if they cannot get anything better. It is more than likely that they will work them. It does not impress me in any way that everybody in India is shouting against the reforms. That is exactly what I should have expected.

Another point which is continually made is that the safeguards in connection with the police and terrorism are merely paper safeguards. The expression "paper safeguards" conveys absolutely nothing. I know of no safeguards in the form of legal provisions which could not be so described. What safeguards have you

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in India to-day which are not paper safeguards? The method of fulfilling these safeguards in India is the actions and work of the loyal Civil Service, the police, and other services throughout the country which carry out the laws and therefore the orders of the constitutional Government which is in power. The position after these reforms are carried into effect will be precisely the same. Let us assume that the Viceroy finds that a Government is not working in accordance with what he believes to be essential and necessary for the security and good Government of India, and that he has to dismiss that Government altogether and cannot find another to take its place. Then, in the last resort, he can take over the Government of the country. Is it suggested that the Civil Service and the police will then refuse to carry out the legal orders of the Viceroy? If that is suggested you are in a state of mutiny, and there is nothing left but the Army. Precisely the position you would be in to-day if the Civil Service refused to carry out legal orders. There is no difference between the paper safeguards of to-day and the paper safeguards of the future; they are precisely the same. There has been more misrepresentation on the question of safeguards than on anything else. To put it in one sentence, if you assume that the Civil Service are not going, in the case I have described, to carry out the Viceroy's orders as they do to-day in the case of legal orders of the Governor-General in Council, then you are in a state of mutiny, and there is nothing left but to call out the troops.

It has also been said that no Viceroy will be able to carry out his immense duties. I suggest that this is a very exaggerated view of the matter. In the first place, it is sometimes forgotten that the Viceroy will have three councillors specially to deal with the departments of which he has himself complete control, so that to a large extent he will be relieved of that detail work. All these assumptions, these criticisms suggest that the whole system of government through Ministers will immediately break down. I do not believe anything of the kind. I think that the sweets of office appeal to politicians in India just as they appeal to people in this country, and that if one set of Ministers refuses to act another set will be found anxious to step in. From my own experience of India, which, I admit, is rather out-of-date, but which I hope to renew unofficially in a few days' time, I know that there are, perhaps, more Indians—I say it without offence—than there are people in this country who are desirous of taking office, and I cannot believe all of those concerned in India are suddenly going to combine and refuse to take office or act in accordance with the Constitution. But if they are, I do not think that the Viceroy will be over-burdened. On the contrary, I think he will be less burdened than when they are working the Constitution, because then a great deal of his time will be taken up in examining all the problems with them and giving a little friendly and fatherly advice here and there, whereas if they refuse to act altogether—an unlikely contingency I think—he suspends the Constitution and takes over the whole system. We really need not worry seriously about it. I believe there will be people who will aspire to hold these great offices in India in the future as in the past.

I think the time has really come when we might drop the misrepresentation of the actual position in India and face the fact which all of us have to face whatever our views are—that we are taking a very grave step. No man can be dogmatic as to what the future has in store for us. There is not the smallest doubt that the statement will be made by those with whose views I am not completely in accord, that this is a very serious step forward and with that I agree. But it is the only possible solution of the present situation. For 100 or 150 years we have led India definitely to expect to take steadily an ever-increasing share in the management of her own affairs. I beg the House once and for all to get into their minds this one fact, that if we are going to give India responsibility in one direction we must often give her responsibility in another. I do not want to see the British element in the Government of India getting all the kicks and none of the halfpence. I want India to face the fact that if she wants national building services and money for them, she has also to find the taxation to pay for them. The Indian in that connection must have both ends of the stick to hold. I am certain that no system of reform which does not put that responsibility upon them, has any hope of success.

I have not heard in any of the speeches here, or in any of the speeches outside against the proposals of the report, any really constructive alternative to the proposals of the Select Committee. I took the trouble to look up what I said publicly in this House at the time the White Paper was first under discussion. I said then that there were a good many matters referred to in it which gave me great concern. I have sat through nearly two years of consultation in connection with this scheme, and in my own mind I am perfectly confident that the scheme which the Joint Select Committee has put forward, though I do not claim it to be by any means a perfect solution, is the one which is most likely to bring peace in India and through that peace to give us prosperity at home. I believe it to be in the best interests of India and of the Empire.

9.48 p.m.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: My right hon. Friend and Leoder has told me that if I speak now I must make it quite clear that I do not speak for my colleagues on the Labour benches. I hope that by the time I have done my right hon. Friend will eat his words. I do not appeal to anyone here from a sense of loyalty, but I appeal to their heads. At the start I suffer from a serious disability. I have a fatal weakness for the Lord President of the Council. From that weakness I think that most hon. Members around me also suffer. I have also a specially deep sympathy for hon. Gentlemen opposite, a sympathy which they have required during the last six months. So, if I had been at the Queen's Hall meeting I might even have voted for this report. We have heard statements that if this constitution is not carried we shall lose India in two generations, and that if it is carried we shall save India for the Empire for all time. If that were the alternative I think everyone would vote for the Bill. But, alas, I believe that the passage of the Bill and its being put into operation will have exactly the reverse effect, that we shall lose India in two generations instead of, as we might, preserve India's friendship. The real evidence of that is in India to-day.

I do wish the House would realise, in the first place, that all India is not only against this Measure, but is increasingly terrified of it. Secondly, there are serious ground for India fearing this Measure. Is India against it? They have just had the elections there. It is true that they took place a week or two before the publication of the report, but the chief alterations in the White Paper were perfectly well known beforehand to the public in India. The remarkable thing is that in every single constituency the general electorate has voted for the people who are opposed to this scheme and actually refer to it the *status quo*. I should not have believed that to be possible, and it would not have been possible six months ago. It is the change and the growing hostility to this Measure that is really serious.

I take the case of the general constituencies. I should explain that a general constituency in India is one for which all those vote who have not got special electorate. The Mohammedans have special electorates, and the Sikhs, and the Mahratas to a certain extent. The general electorates are overwhelmingly Hindu. I think that 57 out of the whole House of 150 have voted in general constituencies, and in every single case the man who is most opposed to the proposed Constitution has been elected. They are not all Congress men, but in a large number of cases they have been Pandit Malevya's party, who are far more opposed than even Congress is to this scheme. Those 57 members are now elected to vote against the introduction of this Measure into India. In addition you have another 40 or 50 seats of elected members. Of these the two Sikh seats are almost certain to go with the Hindu, because their fear of this scheme is the same of that of the Hindus. In addition there have been two Mohammedans elected who are not on the All-Moslem League list and are likely also to be against the scheme.

One cannot tell what the rest of the Indian Assembly will do in the matter. There are a large number of special electorates. The landlords have special representation, and so have the Chambers of Commerce. There will be some Chambers of Commerce which will vote for the scheme and others voting against it. There you have already a certain majority of the elected members against it. You have the Mohammedans for it, a large number of Chambers of Commerce and landlord representatives for it, and an overwhelming majority of the general

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members already pledged against it. That is a pretty serious position. But it is growing worse. The most significant election of all was Madras City, with its population of 1,250,000. It constitutes one constituency, and ever since it has been started it has been almost a pocket borough of the non-Brahmin party. The Brahmins of the southern province of Madras are a small minority, and they have all been fought by the non-Brahmins' Justice party. This is the first time that the Justice member, Mr. Mudaliar, has been hopelessly beaten—I think it was by 13,000 to 7,000. The elected member is Mr. Satyamurti, who is very well known to my colleagues as he has been over here several times. Six months ago, he was more or less hostile to this scheme, but accepted it as inevitable and as something that would have to be worked.

Each of these candidates was as hostile to this Constitution as the other and the only difference between them was on the question of a definite pledge to vote against its introduction in the India Assembly. There you have an extraordinary case of an electorate reversing the view which it had held for 15 years, solely on this question, turning out a man who had come over here and had given evidence before the Committee and replacing him by a rather younger man of rather more extreme politics—one of those extreme Congress men who, when we come to know them over here, we find to be as good fellows as anybody. Why is India so terrified of this Constitution? What is bringing about this great swing of public in India? It is fear. It is all very well to denounce England in the abstract but there is one thing that everybody is more afraid of than England and that is somebody else. There is not the slightest doubt that the Mohammedan is afraid of a Hindu majority and this proposal of Federation plus this new compulsory concentration of power in the hands of one race in each Province is causing consternation.

We have had the petition of the people of Tangaseri not to be deprived of their British citizenship and handed over to Travancore. We have Bangalore terrified at being handed over to Mysore. We have the Berars terrified of being handed over to the Nizam. In all India there is the same terror of being handed over to somebody else who may be infinitely worse than the British Government. This fear is founded upon two features in the report which, I am afraid, is would be hopeless to try to amend. First of all, there is the fear of communal representation. Communal representation divides a country for all time. It introduces a cleavage which can never be repaired. If you try to start a democratic system in two water-tight compartments in the way that is proposed here, there can be no democracy in India for all time. What is it that makes things tolerable in this House? How is it that hon. Members opposite suddenly discover in the course of a Parliament that these Labour reptiles on this side are not half as bad as they at first thought them? What is it that makes even my hon. Friends on this side sometimes discover good points in hon. Members opposite? We meet at dinner and we find that the other fellows in many cases are almost impossibly decent people. But you will not find that in the Assembly at Delhi where the one man is a Mohammedan and the other a Hindu.

What is it that gets us together here? Why is it that however extreme we are on the soap box or at the street corner—not only hon. Members here but hon. Members opposite—when we come here we become so moderate? The obvious reason is because we have a mixed electorate. I have quite a number of Conservatives who regularly vote for me, and no doubt the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) thinks that he has a number of Labour people who vote for him. But we depend for our existence here on all sorts and conditions of electors. If the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping represented only those who had £1,000 per annum or more he would be much more poisonous than he is.

Mr. CHURCHILL: And I have been cheering the right hon. and gallant Gentleman's speech.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: Let me put it this way. If I depended solely on the vote of those who are on the dole I should be more poisonous than I am. If we represent only a class or a category then we have no common ground with those who represent another class or another category. Therefore, we cannot

hope to work together, and in those circumstances democracy cannot work. The reason why we have got on so well in this country is that by some accident we devised this excellent system of constituency representation, but when you have people who hate each other to start with, and you introduce among them this awful system of communal representation, the prospect is hopeless. There is no right hon. Gentleman on the Government Front Bench, there is no Member of the Joint Committee who really believes that communal representation is better than a general electorate. Nobody believes it, not even the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin (Mr. Isaac Foot). The system cannot be defended. The Prime Minister at the Round Table Conference argued until all was blue against the Mohammedan demand for communal representation. It is no protection for a minority not to be able to vote for the people who are going to constitute the majority Government. Consider the situation as it is in Sind. In Sind there is, I think, 5 per cent, or 7 per cent. of Hindus in the population.

Sir S. HOARE: Much more.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: I will not argue as to the figures, but say there is 20 per cent. Under this system they may only vote for Hindus. The Mohammedans being 80 per cent. must necessarily always have a majority. The Hindus must only vote for a Hindu and therefore they have a statutory minority, while the Moslems are in a permanent majority. The Government will always be Mohammedan and they will have permanent control of police, education, justice and all these other matters. People who are in a statutory minority are in a hopeless position. The Hindus in Sind and the Punjab begged to be allowed to vote on the general lists, although they are in the minority, because they saw that their only salvation was in being able to choose between two Mohammedans. The Mohammedans would then modify their views on certain questions in order to get the votes of the Hindus. Naturally therefore the Hindus of Sind are terrified, as they are also terrified in the North-West Frontier Province. They put their views before the Joint Committee but they did not carry weight.

Of course we have seen the remarkable results of the last elections in Bengal where there is a very small statutory majority for the Moslems. There the elections have gone overwhelmingly against this constitution. Again, in the Punjab where Malaviya won his principal victories the terror of being in a statutory minority has impressed upon those people the urgent need before everything else of defeating this scheme. Hon. Members in this House go about saying, "That is bargaining; they only want to get as much as they can." They have got far beyond that stage. They are terrified, and I think they are terrified with just reason. After all, they have seen all over Europe the growing power of dictatorships to bully and make life intolerable to minorities. Ten years ago we should not have believed possible what is going on in Europe to-day. The Indians are quite alive enough to know what goes on in Germany, and what it is to be an outcast, outlawed community. No doubt throughout the whole of India you have got the Mohammedans, not liking the scheme, but at any rate satisfied that it will be all right for them, but you have got your Hindus increasingly terrified at the idea that this thing, this moon that they have been crying for so long, should actually be put into their hands with this bomb inside it destroying the liberty they enjoy as British subjects and subjecting them in the future to an indefinite but very possible tyranny. Communal representation will never be accepted by the Hindus in India, and quite right too. It is true they have had it so far in some measure, but it has been the cause of the riots and of most of the bad working of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms; and here you are doing something to consolidate it for ever, for what we pass in this constitution is final so far as England is concerned.

Then there is the question of Federation. Hon. Members talk about whether the Princes will come in. I can tell hon. Members that the Princes will certainly accept this, and why should they not? As you see India to-day, you see the intelligent people, the intellectuals, more and more terrified of the Princes taking our place as the rulers of India. I have said before on many occasions that the Princes of India are just about where the German princelings were in the

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eighteenth century—not much worse and certainly no better. Their power over the 70,000,000 people in their States is absolute. There is no *habeas corpus* there. The lives and liberty and property of the 70,000,000 inhabitants of the native Indian States are not theirs, but their Princes'. The one ambition of every Indian in an Indian State is to get out of that State and to achieve British citizenship. Conceive of the horror that these people have of being put back under the control of these Princes. No papers in these States are allowed to criticise the Government. Anyone can be interned without any trouble. Their property is at the mercy of the Princes, and they have no rights. Just across the frontier in British India there are rights, and that is very well known to the inhabitants of these native States, whose petitions to Parliament, whose protests, have reached this country in increasing numbers during the last six months. It is very difficult to get Congress to do anything against the Princes or anything in favour of the inhabitants of the Indian States.

Why do you want Federation? Who wants Federation? I will tell you. It is the *pukka sahib* who wants this scheme, in order to get rid of British control and to substitute the control of the millionaires and Rajahs of India—the *pukka sahibs* who worship at the shrine of Mussolini and Hitler and do *poojah* to the old college tie. Those are the people who back this scheme. They want to get rid of Parliament, and to substitute their friends. That is the last reason why India is growing afraid, and why the people of this country should be afraid too. You are handing this country over to rich men on a narrow franchise. In Madras under the present system about 15,000 people vote, and there are 1,250,000 people there. Under this scheme about 40,000 people will vote in a population of 1,250,000. I beg hon. Members to observe that the 14 per cent. will prove to have dwindled to less than 10 per cent. in the working out. The people who are elected to these councils pay fabulous sums to get elected. This is a fairly rich body, judging from results lately, but the Indian Assembly and council are far more wealthy. They pay anything up to £40,000 in election expenses, and the proportion of wealth on the benches in that Assembly is enormous. Are you going to hand over India to 125 Princes and to the millionaires, whether they be lawyers, or millowners, or whether they be, as they more likely will be, the zemindars and the talukdars, with their special representation?

If you are going to hand India over to these people, do it with your eyes open. It means that for all time you are committing 350,000,000 poor people to the direction of, I will not call them a gang, but a band of capitalists and landlords. We are bad enough, but that is worse. They will be handed over without any appeal. We can never undo the wrong we are doing. In Japan there are 60,000,000 people under an autocratic Government working day and night producing the goods, competing with our people and putting them out of work. I warn you that in two generations you will have in India under this scheme exploitation by the rajah and the millionaire. You will have 350,000,000 people working for less than ours and putting our people out of work and ruining them—except those who are living on dividends from Indian companies. There are these three fears which are growing in India—communal representation with the risk of tyranny; the control of India by the Princes with the impossibility for ever of those who are now under the control of the Princes becoming free; and the risk of exploitation by a narrow electorate and the results of that exploitation, the ruining of India, the ruining of us.

10.15 p.m.

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir Donald Somervell): In the course of her very interesting and forcible speech, the hon. Member for Dundee (Miss Horsbrugh) made a strong appeal that the discussions on this matter now and in future might be confined within limits and be conducted without animosity. My right hon. Friend has taken note of the former appeal, and, speaking for myself, although I shall ask the patience of the House for a little time, I will do my best to accede to the latter appeal, and I hope that nothing which I shall have to say will show any signs of animosity. The speech of the Noble Lord the Member for Aldershot (Viscount Wolmer) made clear, what perhaps was clear before, that the attacks which are made

by the Noble Lord and those associated with him are concentrated on that part of the Joint Committee's proposals which deal with and recommend a Measure of responsibility at the Centre. It is with that part of their proposals that I am anxious to deal this evening. This is a very large subject, and this Debate will continue after this evening, and I hope that right hon. Gentlemen and hon. Gentlemen who have spoken to-day and in particular dealt with other points—I might refer, for instance, to a considerable portion of the speech made by my right hon. and gallant Friend who preceded me—will acquit me of any discourtesy if I confine my remarks broadly to the question of federation. There will be other speakers from this bench, and it is perhaps convenient that they should confine themselves to certain particular aspects of the problem. The fact that I do not specifically refer to any point that has been made will not indicate that it has been lost sight of.

In criticisms which have been made of the White Paper and these proposals by the Noble Lord and those associated with him a phrase has very frequently occurred: "abdication at the Centre." I pick up that phrase, and I might connect with it a reference to defeatism, which I saw in the report of a speech by my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) two or three days ago, in order to reinforce an argument which I wish to place before the House. It seems to me that that type of phrase would be controversially relevant only if this recommendation for responsibility at the Centre were put forward and was sought to be justified primarily as a concession to Indian political sentiment. If it was put forward on those lines one might accept it or disagree with it, but it is only if that were so that such a phrase as "abdication at the Centre" would be applicable at all. That sentiment, the desire by Indians to take an increasing part in the management of their own affairs, is a sound sentiment. That we should understand it and sympathise with it, and meet it to the limits of what is practicable will, I think, be accepted by the vast majority of, if not by all, the Members of this House.

That the granting of a measure of responsibility at the Centre is desired by Indians who hold this sentiment is obvious, but—and this is the point I would like to emphasise—that ambition is not the reason put forward primarily, in the forefront of their recommendations, by the Joint Select Committee. The reason which they put forward is a solid, practical reason, which I should have thought would have appealed even to those who are most apprehensive as to the effects of granting a measure of responsibility, whether in the Provinces or at the centre, and it is that solid, practical reason, put forward by the Joint Select Committee in support of their recommendations for a measure of responsibility at the Centre, with which I would like to deal this evening. But be is understood that if I emphasise that aspect of the matter I am not in any way seeking to minimise the importance of the other aspects of this question, and in particular the importance of understanding and sympathising with Indian sentiment in regard to the changes which are to be made.

It is important at the outset to emphasise what has been mentioned by speakers this evening, and in particular, I think, in a speech which impressed the House very much from my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Chippenham (Captain Cazalet), that first of all what we are considering is Federation on an All-India basis. The Joint Committee do not make it any part of their proposal to recommend a measure of responsibility at the Centre without and apart from the Federation of a substantial number of the States. That is to say, we are not considering a recommendation for responsibility at the Centre apart from an All-India Federation. There is a second point of equal importance, that the Princes have stated in their declaration.

> "That they are willing now to enter an All-India Federation but only if the Federal Government is a responsible and not an irresponsible Government."

That is the phrase which so much angered my Noble Friend the Member for Aldershot.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Do you adopt it?

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL: I am quoting the Joint Select Committee's Report.

Sir H. CROFT: Can we have the date?

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL: I am quoting paragraph 32 of the Joint Select Committee's Report.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Can we have the date when the Princes made that declaration?

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL: I am reading a quotation from paragraph 32 of the Joint Select Committees' Report, and I will read it again:

"The Princes have, therefore, stated clearly in their declaration that they are willing now to enter an All-India Federation, but only if the Federal Government is a responsible and not an irresponsible Government."

Sir H. CROFT: What is the date?

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL: I am quoting——

Mr. CHURCHILL: What is the date?

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL: The date is not given in the passage I have quoted. It is probably in the appendix to the report, but surely my right hon. Friend does not expect me to pause in my speech to dig that out.

Mr. CHURCHILL: But surely the hon. and learned Gentleman knows the date of this passage which he is quoting and to which he is attaching so much importance.

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL: I am quoting, and surely it is perfectly legitimate for me to quote, a passage from the Report of the Joint Select Committee. In the passage there is a reference, without giving the date, to the declaration of the States. I do not think that I am in any way to blame because I have not at my fingers' ends all the dates of every declaration which is quoted by the Joint Select Committee.

The practical desirability of this measure of responsibility is the point which I wish to develop. That is not the sole, but it is undoubtedly the main, reason put forward by the Joint Select Committee for their proposal. Why is it so practically desirable? A glance at the map of India affords the answer. Perhaps I may be forgiven for two sentences of history. Prior to 1813, or about then, the policy pursued by this country through the East India Company in India was run on the basis of no conquest or annexation. It was expected that the large States would settle down as completely independent and friendly to this country, but that expectation was not realised. War and anarchy led us into conquest and annexation, and in the course of the ensuing years British territory was extended, and every State in India was bound to the Crown by alliances, treaties and agreements. As a result, two Indias have grown up, British India and the Indian States, with different histories, different characteristics and, as the House knows, different methods of rule.

The characteristics of the States are familiar to every hon. Member. The States are not British territory. They have transferred their foreign relations to the Crown and are subject to the powers and rights of the Crown as paramount power in regard to treaties and agreements, but otherwise they became in varying degrees internal sovereigns. They are not concentrated in one place, but are spread out from Kashmir in the north to Travancore in the South, from the mouth of Indus on the west, to Manipur on the frontiers of Burma on the east. The Balfour-Butler Committee on the Indian States said that interwoven in the map of India were large patches of yellow which represented the Indian States, and in the same paragraph they add:

"Geographically, India is one and indivisible, made up of the pink and the yellow, and the problem of statesmanship is to hold the two together."

May I emphasise the economic interconnection of the States of British India by one sentence taken from the report of the Statutory Commission? No one sentence could put the economic interdependence between the two areas higher. The report states:

"Economic forces are such that the States and British India must stand or fall together."

The proposals of the Joint Select Committee, as I see them, afford a means of solving that problem of reconciling, as the hon. and gallant Member for Chippenham put it in his speech, those two Indias which we have allowed to grow up, and for the special characteristics of which we are responsible. I would like, if the House will allow me, to give certain instances of the difficulty of the problems which arise under the present state of government and conditions in India. The first example I will take is that of a case where an Indian State or States are not asked themselves to do anything, but where the question is one

in which the State is vitally affected by what is done in British India, and demands an effective voice in the decision of such questions.

The receipts from Maritime Customs, and the policy with regard to Maritime Customs, are referred to in all reports on this matter. These Customs at present are imposed by the Government of British India, by a British Indian Legislature in which no Indian State has any representative or any voice; and yet, of course, they vitally affect the States, which include nearly half the area and, I think, nearly a quarter of the population of India. Some 10 or 12 years ago the Government of India adopted a policy of what may be called discriminatory protection, as a result of which the receipts from Customs duties were multiplied some tenfold, and—I take this fact from the report of the Harcourt Butler Committee—the Indian States were not consulted as to that policy, though clearly they were vitally affected by it. It has been calculated that probably about one-seventh of the goods affected by these Customs duties are consumed by inhabitants of the Indian States, and yet that policy was adopted without consultation with them, and, of course, they get no direct share of the duties which are raised. Such things as this obviously lead to friction and dissatisfaction, and, more than that, may very well lead to the economic policy most in the interest of India as a whole not being adopted.

Reference has already been made in the course of this Debate to urban and agricultural interests in India. The States, of course, are mainly, if not wholly, agricultural in their interests. We can, perhaps, imagine what might happen in this House if we had here Members for only half the agricultural constituencies in this country. The result would be that not only would my right hon. Friend the Minister of Agriculture receive only half the information that he does at present as to agricultural conditions, but it might well be that this House would be more prone than some people think it has been in the past to disregard the legitimate interests of agriculture in the supposed interests of the urban population. That point, I hope, will be noted by the hon. Member for South-East Essex (Mr. Raikes), who rightly emphasised the importance of the interests of the small holders and agriculturists in India. Take another case of the inconveniences that arise from the present position. If the Government of British India desire to impose an Excise duty, they have to effect agreements with every single Indian State in which the article in question is or might be manufactured to levy a corresponding duty to that which they propose to levy themselves. I am told that recently, when it was thought desirable to impose an Excise duty on matches, it took at least two years to effect the necessary agreements with States whose action might have made the imposition of the duty wholly ineffective.

To pass from that to another matter, the practical desirability of a central authority with power to enact a common policy on railways, aviation and through waterways, does not need elaboration. It is here again worth noting that in the matter of aviation there have to be separate agreements with all the States involved, and it took the Government of India some 12 years to get the necessary agreements for facilities for the construction of aerodromes and ancillary matters. As the States of British India develop economically it will become increasingly desirable that there should be a law common to all India on such matters as banking, insurance and copyright.

Mr. DAVID REID: Would it not be necessary to negotiate with each State separately for all these matters now?

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL: We shall negotiate once for all and, if we succeed in getting a substantial number or all the States in on a substantial number or all the items, we shall then have one authority which will deal with these matters for all India. It is also inevitable that, when disputes arise, as they do and must arise to-day, there is a strong feeling that in many of these matters as between the States and British India the Government of British India is both party and judge in its own cause. A Legislature containing only representatives of British India cannot but be thought to be influenced by that fact by the other party to the dispute. It is with regard to these All-India matters that the Joint Select Committee propose that there shall be a central federal authority. What I may describe as the practical case for getting the

[The Solicitor-General.]

States into the federal authority which has power to deal with these matters, is overwhelming, and I could weary the House with citations from this report, and indeed from the report of the Statutory Commisison, on this point. I will content myself with one only from the report of the Joint Select Committee. They say:

"The existing arrangements under which economic policy vitally affecting the interests of India as a whole have been formulated and carried out are being put to an ever-increasing strain as the economic life of India develops."

Later in the same paragraph they state their opinion that the proposals which they make will mark a long step from confusion towards order. But it is said —and it was said by the Noble Lord the Member for Aldershot and by the Noble Lord the Member for West Derbyshire (Marquess of Hartington)—that this proposed federation has anomalies. The point was also made by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme (Colonel Wedgwood). It will contain representatives of autonomous provinces and of States governed by personal rulers. It will contain elected representatives and nominated representatives. It is contemplated that the States will probably need care in the first instance to insist as to the list of subjects in the concurrent lists and that some States will be allowed to exclude or qualify the full exercise of federal powers as to some items in the federal list.

My Noble Friend the Member for West Derbyshire referred to the financial anomalies of the position and again to the further anomaly that outside the federal sphere the States will remain with their own rights of autonomy and sovereignty subject to their treaties and agreements, and the rights of the Crown, which are paramount now. Let all that be conceded, but where does it lead to? It leads to this. The anomalies are inherent in the present circumstances in India. They are inherent in the fact that in this single geographical unit we have not only the provinces of British India, but hundreds of autonomous territories, islands of yellow in the sea of pink. The States' sovereignty is admitted, and it is from that fact that the anomalies flow. But any step which sets up a central authority is one which removes anomalies from the existing position. Those who feel so acutely the existence of anomalies will find, I submit, much more ample scope for their critical faculties in the present unfederated State of India than they will find in the proposals of the Joint Select Committee.

The Committee make some reference—and reference was made in one of the speeches this evening—to the future. The Committee say that these anomalies are not only a necessary incidence of federation to-day, but of its introduction at any time. I think that it might be put higher and that if this opportunity is lost, and if autonomous Provinces develop as such over a period of years, and a further body of all India law uninfluenced by representatives of the State comes into existence, federation at a future time will not only be very much more difficult than it is to-day, but may become impossible. I entirely disagree with the Noble Lord the Member for Aldershot that federation will be simpler if you postpone it. If you do not take this opportunity that is now offered, you may find it impossible to obtain the result which is desired by all those who have investigated this question of India federation.

In this connection and in connection with some of the speeches made this evening I should like to refer to a letter from His Highness, the Maharajah of Patiala, writing as Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, which was published recently in the Press, addressed to a number of prominent Conservatives in England, in reply to a letter from them expressing sympathy and good will. As the House is aware, there are some important States which are not working in this matter through the Chamber of Princes. Many States, and States of importance are working through the Chamber of Princes. The letter, in effect, states that if certain conditions for which the States have pressed are not embodied in the report the States will be free to consider the question of Federation *de novo*. I should like to give the history of the matter to the House, having regard to the publication of the letter. After the publication of the White Paper there were proceedings at a meeting of the Chamber of Princes of India in March, 1933, and His Highness, the

Maharajah of Patiala, spoke. He referred to the omissions from the White Paper which the Chamber regarded as fundamental, and referred to remarks made by His Excellency the Viceroy to the effect that the White Paper was not final and that the whole matter would be considered by the Joint Select Committee. In reference to the Safeguards, to which he had referred, he said:

> "They will, in due course, be placed before the Joint Select Committee by the witnesses who will appear on our behalf, and by our representatives, who will work with the Joint Parliamentary Committee and in the main, they may be classified as follows:—
>
> (*a*) respect for the autonomy, sovereignty and treaty rights of the States;
>
> (*b*) limitation of Federal sources of revenue, to indirect taxes only;
>
> (*c*) liberty of action for the States to enter Federation individually or collectively through a Confederation."

Those representatives of the States appeared, and the points which they raised will, I think, be found to have been dealt with in the report. With regard to the main points referred to by His Highness, the first one (*a*) in respect of the autonomy, sovereignty and treaty rights of the States, no one can read the report without being conscious that the most absolute regard both in form and substance has been paid to the autonomy, sovereignty and treaty rights of the States. It is made abundantly clear that there can be no question of compulsion, and that their accession to a Federation cannot take place otherwise than by the voluntary act of the ruler, and, further, that outside the limits in which a State by its voluntary act chooses to federate, its existing internal autonomy and its relations to the Crown will be unaffected.

As far as the second point (*b*) is concerned, that of indirect taxation, it will be found dealt with in paragraph 247 of the report, and made subject to certain limitations which it is understood are acceptable to the States. In regard to the third point, (*c*), provision is suggested for the pooling of seats to secure continuous representation, which it is thought meets the point. It is incorrect to say, as has been stated in some of the comments on the letter, that there is any difference between the report and the White Paper so far as the Princes are concerned. It is perhaps sufficient to refer to the very important recommendation to the effect that unless a sufficient number of States accede they should be allowed increased representation pending the accession of 90 per cent. of the whole. His Highness's letter was written, I think, without having seen the report. He cannot, I think, mean it to suggest that the Chamber, which is to meet to consider this matter in January, is not going to give consideration to the opinions expressed by the Committee on the various points which the representatives of the Chamber put before it. I cannot but believe that the Chamber, when it comes to consider the report in January, will be struck by the scrupulous regard that has been paid and the consideration that has been given to the representations which they made. It would, I think, be wrong to say more at the moment. Some of the Diwans of the States are meeting next week and the Chamber will meet in January. We are confident that the Princes will approach the report in the same broad and statesmanlike spirit that they have shown in previous discussions, having, as they are entitled to have, due regard to the sovereignty of their States and their own position, but also with a sense of the greatness of the issues involved, affecting so vitally the country of which the States are a part.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Do I understand the hon. and learned Gentleman to say that the Maharajah in question, the Maharajah of Patiala, has clearly not read the report from the statement he made?

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL: I do not want to have an argument with the right hon. Gentleman, but I read the letter as written by someone who, if he had seen it, had not had time to study the report. He said that if these matters were not contained in the report the Princes would have certain rights. Nobody who had had time to study the report in detail——

Mr. CHURCHILL: Yes, but the letter was written four months before; and permission to publish the letter was given since the publication of the report.

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL: The letter to which I am referring is dated 28th October, 1934. That is the later letter which seems, as it is later in time, the important one to refer to.

[The Solicitor-General.]

I have said very little as to three arguments which are referred to in the report. First of all, there is the argument as to the stabilising effect on the central authority of the influence of representatives of the States. That argument is familiar. There is also another strong practical argument, which Members of the House will remember, in which the Joint Select Committee state their very definite view that, a line having to be drawn between responsibility to the Legislature and non-responsibility to the Legislature, they are satisfied that in their proposals they have drawn the line in the best place on practical grounds. They have set out three suggestions—that you should draw it in the Provinces, excluding law and order; that you should draw it between the Centre and the Provinces; or that you should draw it where they draw it, in the Centre, reserving defence and finance, but keeping responsible Ministers both at the Centre and in the Provinces, broadly speaking for the social and economic life of the country.

I have no time to deal with the argument which is based on the weakness of the present Centre. As the Committee point out, the present Centre is not responsible in the constitutional sense, although it is necessarily affected by opinion expressed in the legislatures and as a result you get the worst of both constitutional worlds. The members of the legislatures have not that steadying effect which is conduced by a consciousness that they may be called upon to justify their criticism and put into force the policy they advocate. The executive, who may in fact be acting in accordance with the wishes of the elected representatives, get no credit for that, because, although they are represented in fact, they are not represented in a constitutional way. Let me conclude not with words of my own but with a passage from the Statutory Commission, and another passage from the report of the Joint Select Committee. It cannot be too much emphasised that these proposals have their origin in the view which was taken of the problem as a whole by the Statutory Commission. They say:

"We are inclined ourselves to think that an easier and more speedy approach to the desired end can be obtained by reorganising the Constitution of India on a federal basis, in such a way that the individual States, or groups of States, may have an opportunity to enter as soon as they wish to do so."

What more is contained in that than in the proposals of the Joint Select Committee, having regard to the further information which has come to light and which could not be, and was not, available to the Statutory Commission, as to the attitude of the Princes and the conditions under which they were prepared to come into an All-India Federation? Finally, let me summarise the arguments which I have tried to put before the House, by quoting a passage from the Joint Select Committee:

"The question for decision is whether the measure of unity which can be achieved by an All-India Federation, imperfect though it may be, is likely to confer added strength, stability and prosperity to India as a whole."

To this question we think there can be only one answer, an affirmative one, and that is the answer which we shall ask the House to make on Wednesday next when this Motion goes to a Division.

Ordered, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—[*Mr. C. Edwards.*]

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

The remaining Orders were read and postponed.

INDIA (TANGASSERI AND BANGALORE).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—[*Captain Margesson.*]

11.2 p.m.

Mr. ANNESLEY SOMERVILLE: May I express to the Under-Secretary of State for India my regret that he should be called upon to undertake another task at the end of a strenuous day? There is a great deal to be said and little time in which to say it. My hon. Friend wishes for 12 minutes at the end of my statement and he ought to have it. The question is one which concerns two British communities and two important Indian States. The communities are the small settlement of Tangasseri, in the south-west corner of India, contiguous to Travancore, and the other is a much

larger community, that of Bangalore, which is an enclave in the State of Mysore. Let me make this general observation: Although the government of Indian States may be good and often is—the Government of Mysore is a good government—still it is autocratic and depends very largely on the character of the ruling Prince. These communities, both of them, express a preference to remain under the stable government of the British Raj rather than be transferred to the government of Indian Princes.

Take the small settlement of Tangasseri. It is a settlement of 2,000 families, all Roman Catholics except one, and they have been under European government for 500 years, first under the Portuguese, then under the Dutch, and for the last 139 years under the British. Recently they have heard that they were to be transferred to the native State of Tranvancore, and immediately with one voice they protested. I have here their petition to His Excellency the Viceroy. These two States of Travancore and Mysore are two of the most important States in India in point of area, occupation and revenue, and the House will readily appreciate that my right hon. Friend is anxious to obtain the adherence of these States to the scheme of Federation. The petition to the Governor-General says:

"It was quite unexpectedly that we were informed that there was a proposal to transfer our historic small territory to the adjoining State of Travancore. At once the whole of us with one voice protested against the idea, and wrote to the Deputy Collector, who brought the news to us, that the proposed transfer was not at all acceptable to the people of Tangasseri."

It also mentioned that there was a small counter-petition got up at the instance of some servants of the Travancore Government who were residing there. The petition goes on to say:

"The inhabitants of Tangasseri are not in favour of the idea of transferring their direct allegiance from His Majesty the King-Emperor to the Maharajah of Travancore. They consider it a grave and undeserved punishment to be thus forced to exchange citizenship under the enlightened British Empire for that of a small subsidiary State."

Then they go on to explain how education, their political position and matters of justice will be affected.

I turn to the question of Bangalore. I cannot go into the history of Mysore, but it is a story of the age-long struggle between Hindu and Moslem. It is a Hindu state ruled by a Hindu Prince. Its government in the beginning of last century was bad and corrupt and had to be taken over by the Indian Government. For 50 years it was administered by British officers who introduced British modes and succeeded in producing an excellent government. In 1881, "the year of rendition" as it is called, the father of the present Maharaja, then a boy of 18, was placed on the throne and a treaty was made with Mysore. One of the articles of the treaty was that a tract of land for a civil and military station was conceded to the Government of India or rather, I should say, to the Secretary of State for India and, in return, Mysore received the island of Seringapatam. Provision was made that if at any time the military were withdrawn from that station, the tract would revert to Mysore.

The present proposal is not that the military station should be closed but that the civil station should be handed over to Mysore. What does that mean? It means handing over 135,000 British citizens to native rule. When the treaty is made this ground was sparsely occupied by a collection of mud huts. It is now a garden city of 135,000 inhabitants. Thousands of Anglo-Indians and other Europeans have settled there because the climate is admirable—it is between 2,000 and 3,000 feet up. Now it is proposed to hand over to the native state of Mysore, those people and the land which they have bought and which they got free hold from the Secretary of State of India. The Government of a native State may be good and often is, but it depends upon autocratic rule and cannot have the same permanence and stability as government under the British Raj. It is contended that the land is Mysore territory. Lord Reading said so in 1923, but with due deference to so great an authority I think he was mistaken. In the first place there is the condition in the treaty that the land was not to revert unless the military station was removed but it is not going to be removed. We have also this testimony. I have here the indenture under which the inhabitants of Bangalore

[Mr. Somerville.]

have the freehold of the land on which they have built their houses, and it states:

"Whereas the hereditaments hereinafter described in the schedule were acquired by the collector of the civil and military station at Bangalore for and on behalf of the Secretary of State for India in Council."

One reads that as meaning that the land belonged to the Government of India and was dealt with by the Secretary of State for India. The indenture is signed by the President of the Municipal Commission of the civil and military station at Bangalore and the municipal commissioner. There are two Bangalores. There is the Mysore Bangalore, which is contiguous to the garden city of which I spoke and is of much the same size. The deputation of the business men of Bangalore asked for an interview with the Prime Minister of Mysore, and they asked, "Is the question of retrocession definitely settled?" He replied to the effect that partial retrocession had been decided upon, and there were certain details connected with it that needed further discussion with the Government of India, and he added—and I am quoting from a reproduction of a long interview in a Bangalore paper which reported it:

"You can tell the mercantile community of Bangalore Cantonment that they need have no fears about their future as citizens of the Mysore State."

They would become citizens of Mysore State. The deputation thanked him for their reception, and said they would place the matter before the general body of the citizens, with the result that they presented this petition to the Governor-General from the four leading bodies representative of all interests in Bangalore—the Bangalore Trades Association, the Bangalore Ratepayers Association, the Southern Division Ratepayers Association, and the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association. This is a strenuous protest against the proposed cession, and they say:

"Are we being sold for a consideration? . . . There surely must be some reason, and whatever this may be, we have a moral and a legal right to demand that we may be frankly informed what it is. Although we have never been told, it is common knowledge that Mysore, who has so far declined to enter the federation, has now consented to do so, provided the annual subsidy is abolished and the c. and m. station handed over to her. This we know is what she has been urging for some time past, culminating with a definite stipulation as the price of her participation in the new federal scheme."

Mr. CHURCHILL: A vulgar bribe.

Mr. SOMERVILLE: They give the grounds on which they protest against becoming citizens of Mysore State, and they end by saying:

"We have been asked by the Government of India through the British Resident to submit such safeguards as we may deem necessary in the event of retrocession becoming a *fait accompli*. We however consider that the question of safeguards does not arise as yet and should therefore find no place in this memorandum, the sole purpose of which is to protest, by every means at our disposal, against retrocession. We feel the people of the Civil State should have been given a full and fair opportunity of entering into the discussions and expressing their views on a matter of such vital importance to them. To hand us over to Mysore without rhyme or reason, is to force a measure upon an enlightened and loyal people which would not be applied to uncivilised races or tolerated anywhere else in the British Empire."

But that is not all. The Mussulmans in Bangalore to the number of 30,000 sent in a petition against cession to Mysore, protesting against it on the grounds of religion, culture, justice and special position, and they say:

"Thirty thousand Mussulmans unanimously urge against the indisputable right of subjects with regard to their inherent free choice in this respect and declare in no uncertain manner that they do not wish to transfer their allegiance from the British to the Hindu Raj. . . . Finally they assert with all the emphasis at their command that they do not for a moment wish to exchange their rights so far granted to them as full-fledged British subjects for those of a dependent State. If Federation is to come, they honestly prefer to be linked to Madras rather than to Mysore, or submit themselves to any other Government that would guarantee the rights hitherto enjoyaed by them as full British subjects for all practical purposes."

I will only add that it seems a strange thing that British communities under British rule should, against their will, be forced to become subjects of a native State. I would plead that before a decision is arrived at such communities should have the right of appeal to the Imperial Parliament.

11.16 p.m.

Duchess of ATHOLL: I only wish briefly to add two things to what my hon. Friend has said. The first is that it should be known that this question has occasionally been raised in former years

by the Mysore Government but without obtaining any response whatever from the Government of India. The second thing that it is important to know is that because the main conditions precedent of Federation is not the adherence of a majority of the States, but of States including not less than 50 per cent. of the whole population of the States, it is actually the fact that the nine largest States in India can bring abou Federation, whatever the rest of the hundreds of States may desire. When we realise that Mysore, to whom it is proposed to transfer Bangalore, comes second on the list of nine, and that Travancore, to whom it is proposed to transfer Tangasseri, is third, we cannot but believe that there is only one reason for these transfers, namely, to bring about Federation whatever the majority may wish.

11.18 p.m.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Butler): A great deal of information has been given by hon. Members on these subjects. I cannot help feeling that, if they had listened to some of the answers which may right hon. Friend has given to questions, they would be more fully in possession of the facts than they have illustrated themselves to be. There have, I think, been more questions on these subjects than on any other matter that I can remember in recent years. I can understand the legitimate anxiety of hon. Members in such matters and it is for that reason that I am ready to answer the points that have been raised. We are all seized of the importance of the problem of the future federation of India and other questions such as this. The Noble Lady has shown an interest in this subject on many previous occasions and we have tried to satisfy her with voluminous material, but I fear with very little success from what she has said to-night. She has carried on the imputation of motives which my hon. Friend who raised the subject included in his remarks. From my experience, which does not equal that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill), I have learnt not to impute motives to my adversaries.

When hon. Members hear some of the arguments which I hope to adduce in answer to those raised, it will be seen that there is absolutely nothing in the baseless charge that has been made to-night against the Government. The question of Bangalore was raised on several previous occasions. It was raised in 1912, in 1924, and again in 1932. The question of Tangasseri was raised in 1860, in 1882, and again in 1884 over some problem of a reservoir, and again in 1927. On these many occasions it will be seen that these two subjects were raised on their own merits, and I fail to see why hon. Members should consider that just because they are being raised in this particular year they are being raised in order that the Government may have an opportunity of bribing these particular States into an Indian Federation.

It is perfectly natural that at so great a moment in India's history as this there should be certain subjects raised for settlement. It is certainly natural that any subjects that have been raised on previous occasions should be raised by the States on such an occasion as this. These two subjects have been raised by the States of Mysore and Travancore, and it is in response to submissions from them that we are attempting to investigate the request made to us.

The contrast between the cases of Bangalore and Tangasseri is rather striking. In Bangalore it is a question of an assigned tract, assigned by the Mysore Durbar in the year 1881 for military purposes. In answer to my hon. Friend who raised the matter, I would reply that there is no doubt that this assigned tract is Mysore territory. My hon. Friend said that 135,000 British citizens were, under our proposals, to be transferred to native rule. That is a typical example of the inexactitude with which hon. Members are approaching this subject and on which they base most of their arguments. The hon. Member must have realised from the answers which my right hon. Friend has frequently given, that in reality there are 125,000 persons, approximately, in the assigned tract, and the House has been told on repeated occasions that over 100,000 of these are actually considered and believed to be subjects of the State of Mysore. I wish to be perfectly straight with the House. I confess that at Question Time to-day, when attempting to answer this very confusing question——[*Interruption*]. They are on the outskirts of a very large city, and while I cannot give the House the exact figures I believe that in saying that

[Mr. Butler.]

100,000 out of the 125,000 are Mysore State subjects that is as nearly exact a figure as I can in all honesty give. That, I think, disposes of the claim of my hon. Friend that 135,000 British subjects are to be transferred to Mysore rule.

As regards the anxiety which hon. Members feel about this question of British subjects, as my right hon. Friend has told the House on many occasions, what picks out this question from the question of Tangasseri is that this assigned tract is Mysore territory. If a retrocession is decided on these British subjects cannot, as far as we can see, lose their British citizenship or British nationality. As regards Mysore State subjects they will be transferred to the jurisdiction of the Mysore State, and in reality would not alter their position very much. In fact they would slightly improve it, because according to the undertakings which have been given they would be given representation in the Mysore State legislature.

As regards titles to property, about which hon. Members have felt some anxiety, I am authorised to say that if there is any doubt about the validity of the titles, and if the question of retrocession is decided, the validity of these titles should be placed beyond any question or possibility of doubt. The present state of negotiations is that the Government of India are still considering terms on which, subject to suitable safeguards for the civil inhabitants, as well as for the occupation by the military authority of the land required for troops, it might be possible to meet the request of the Mysore Government for retrocession of a part of the present assigned tract.

I think it would be advisable if in the next few minutes I paid attention to the other question of Tangasseri which has been raised. That differs from the question of the assigned tract in Bangalore by the fact that this small area of 99 acres in the vast bulk of India is actually British territory. Naturally, although it be only 99 acres and though it has only 1,733 inhabitants we should, in the Imperial Parliament, pay as much attention to this small enclave as we would to a larger body of British citizens in any part of the world.

Certain parts of the administration of Tangasseri, such as the liquor trade and one or two other matters, have been administered by the State of Travancore, and it has been a perpetual subject of dissension between the Governments of Travancore and of Madras for several years, owing to the difficulties of administering this small British territory from a district headquarters some 70 miles away. There are other small enclaves in this district. There are 50 pattanus, which are even smaller areas of land and which have caused considerable difficulty in the details of administration. The House can well understand the difficulties of administering such a small area from 75 miles away—the district headquarters—and that they are liable in administration to be extremely embarrassing. This is one of the reasons why the subject has been so frequently raised.

Of these 1,733 inhabitants the majority I believe are Christians. I do not think the House should take it for certain that, when these Christians realise that a third of the inhabitants of Travancore are Christians, they would be so averse as they appear to be to being transferred to Travancore. I think that ought to relieve the anxiety of hon. Members about these British citizens. His Majesty's Government have not the views of the Government of Madras or of the Government of India, and I feel that at the present stage of the negotiations I have very little more to say on the subject of Tangasseri until I receive, or my right hon. Friend receives, the representations of the two Governments involved.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: Did the hon. Gentleman in answer to a question not say that he would consult the people of the areas concerned?

Mr. BUTLER: I am coming to that point. I have spent some time to-day, in the intervals of other activities on so important a day in connection with India in Parliament, in investigating the past history of this district of Tangasseri, and I find that on previous occasions when this question has been raised great attention has always been paid to the wishes of the inhabitants; and I think the House may take it for granted that there will be no attempt on the part of the Government to go against the ineradicable oppo-

sition of those inhabitants. That has been the past history of the case, and I have no reason to suppose that it will not be its future history. His Majesty's Government have already informed the House, through my right hon. Friend, that the final decision will certainly come to them, and therefore I think that hon. Members need not be so anxious on this subject as, certainly at first, appeared from the very alarming nature of some of the speeches made.

In conclusion, may I say that I do not bear any ill will that these subjects should have been raised. I consider that the Imperial Parliament is perfectly right to pay every attention to them, and I or my right hon. Friend will be willing to come to this House at any time and answer the legitimate doubts of the hon. and gallant Gentleman who raised these subjects and of hon. Members who are very right to take an interest in such important districts. I do not doubt that, if there should be any proposal that would be offensive to hon. Members, or would cause anxiety to hon. Members, an opportunity would always be given in this Parliament to state their views and express their anxieties to the House, and in any case, when any decision is taken, I feel sure that Parliament will always be informed. I hope that with these few words I have done something to allay the anxiety of hon. Members, which I wish could have been couched in terms which imputed less motive to those of us in His Majesty's Government who feel that we have as high motives in approaching the Indian problem as hon. Members have themselves.

It being Half-past Eleven of the Clock, MR. SPEAKER *adjourned the House, without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.*

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 11th December, 1934.

[OFFICIAL REPORT.]

The House met at a Quarter before Three of the Clock, MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair.*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH PROVISIONAL ORDER (GUISBOROUGH JOINT SMALL-POX HOSPITAL DISTRICT) BILL,

"to confirm a Provisional Order of the Minister of Health relating to the Guisborough Joint Small-pox Hospital District," presented by Sir Hilton Young; read the First time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 14.]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

SCOTLAND.

FISHING HARBOURS.

1. **Sir MURDOCH McKENZIE WOOD** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland whether his attention has been drawn to the difficulty which many of the harbour authorities at Scottish fishing ports are experiencing in meeting their financial liabilities as a result of the long-continued depression in the herring industry; whether he is aware that many fishermen have been unable to go to sea on account of their inability to pay the harbour dues on their boats; and whether he will now cause a further review of the financial position of these fishing harbours to be made?

The SECRETARY of STATE for SCOTLAND (Sir Godfrey Collins): I am aware that a number of Scottish herring fishery ports are in financial difficulties, but so far as I can learn it is not the case that fishermen have been prevented from going to sea owing to inability to pay harbour dues. As regards the last part of the question, the position was comprehensively reviewed as recently as 1929 when remissions of debt amounting to £280,000 were made. In the circumstances it would be premature to undertake a further general review at present.

Mr. BOOTHBY: Is my right hon. Friend not aware that the situation has greatly deteriorated since 1929, and could he not at least consider the question of consulting the Public Works Loan Commissioners as a preliminary step in this matter?

Sir G. COLLINS: I am aware that the situation has deteriorated since 1929, but, in view of the forthcoming legislation, I think it would be as well to wait.

Sir IAN MACPHERSON: Will not my right hon. Friend consider certain specially hard cases?

Sir G. COLLINS: It is very difficult directly one opens the door to some cases to close it to other cases. I am well aware of the difficulties, but I think it would be better to wait to see the result of the operations of the forthcoming Bill.

HOUSING.

4. **Mr. ANSTRUTHER-GRAY** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland, what steps are being taken to rehouse those persons at present living in condemned houses at Whiterigg, Lanarkshire?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for SCOTLAND (Mr. Skelton): I am informed that new houses are to be provided at Plains for the accommodation of families to be displaced from condemned houses at Whiterigg, Lanarkshire.

Mr. ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: Is my hon. Friend aware that this district of Whiterigg is a community in itself, and that there is the strongest possible local feeling against being transfered to another authority where the prospects of work are no better?

Mr. SKELTON: If I understand it aright, the village of Plains is about a mile and a-half from Whiterigg. It is a question exclusively for the local authorities where the replacement houses should be built and one in which I have no *locus standi.*

Mr. ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: Can my hon. Friend give an undertaking that local feeling will be taken into consideration?

Mr. SKELTON: That, one would suppose, is primarily a question for the local authority, who must be closely in touch with local feeling.

6. **Miss HORSBRUGH** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland how many houses of the five-years slum-clearance scheme have been completed in Dundee; how many are under construction; and for how many more tenders have been approved but building not yet begun?

Mr. SKELTON: At 30th November, 1934, the latest date to which information is available, no houses forming part of the local authority's slum clearance programme for the five years 1934-38 had been completed. The number of such houses under construction at that date was 197, and building had not been begun on a further 38 approved. During the present year, however, 199 houses for replacement of unfit houses were completed under approvals given prior to 1934.

Miss HORSBRUGH: Can my hon. Friend suggest any steps which should be taken by the local authorities to expedite the matter, seeing that it is only replacement houses on schemes several years old that have been built, and the five years programme has not been really attacked?

Mr. SKELTON: My information is that in the course of the present month the Department will receive tenders for 618 houses, and that a scheme for a further 700 houses at Beechwood is being expedited.

7. **Miss HORSBRUGH** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland what percentage of houses included in the slum-clearance scheme have been completed, are in process of construction, and for which tenders have been approved in Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Perth and Aberdeen, respectively?

Mr. SKELTON: As the answer involves a number of figures, I will, with my hon. Friend's permission, circulate it in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following is the answer:

It is assumed that the percentages desired are those relating to the slum-clearance programmes for the five years 1934-38, and the figures given in columns (3), (4) and (5) of the following table are based on these programmes. The figures for Glasgow and Perth are for the period to 31st October, and for Dundee, Edinburgh and Aberdeen, to 30th November, the latest dates to which information is available.

Local Authority.	Needs. Houses. (1)	Programme. Houses. (2)	Tenders approved. (3)	Houses completed. (4)	Houses under construction. (5)
			Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Dundee...	3,603	2,000*	11·7	Nil	9·9
Edinburgh	5,000	5,000	20·2	1·0	17·1
Glasgow	15,000	8,000*	62·6	15·4	33·8
Perth	214	214	100	Nil	87·9
Aberdeen	3,159	2,000*	27·9	2·7	18·0

Note.—The figures in (4) and (5) are included in those given in (3).

* The Local Authority has agreed to build as many more houses in excess of this number as they can.

10. **Mr. McGOVERN** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland the number of houses in Glasgow which have had closing orders passed on them and the number of condemned house at present?

Sir G. COLLINS: 1,188 houses, which are still occupied, have been made the subject of demolition or closing orders or other equivalent action under the Housing (Scotland) Act, 1930. With regard to the second part of the question, it is estimated that there are at present between 10,000 and 11,000 houses in Glasgow which are unfit for human habitation.

Mr. McGOVERN: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of bringing renewed pressure to bear in connection with private houses, owing to the danger to child life arising from this situation?

Sir G. COLLINS: I am sure that the Glasgow Corporation are fully alive to

the necessity of dealing with the matter. I can assure my hon. Friend that they are very anxious to push forward with these matters at a very early date.

Sir JOSEPH NALL: Is it the practice in Scotland to order clearances before the alternative houses are available, or are the clearances suspended until the new houses are available?

Sir G. COLLINS: I should not like to answer that particular question directly, but I understand that the two matters go hand in hand.

METHYLATED SPIRITS (DRINKING).

5. **Miss HORSBRUGH** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland which local authorities in Scotland have reiterated their appeals to him during the last six months for further regulations to deal with the growing evil of the drinking of methylated spirits?

Sir G. COLLINS: During the last six months I have received a representation on the subject from a conference of representatives of the burghs of Aberdeen, Clydebank, Edinburgh, Falkirk, Glasgow, Greenock, Inverness, Paisley, Perth and Stirling.

Miss HORSBRUGH: Is my right hon. Friend going to take any action in the matter?

Sir G. COLLINS: I am arranging to receive a deputation on the subject at an early date, and I will wait to hear what is said by that deputation before making a further statement on the subject.

ROAD SAFETY (SCHOOL LECTURES).

8. **Mr. ANSTRUTHER-GRAY** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland whether, in view of the fact that children have been found to pay great attention to lectures delivered by uniformed police officers on road safety, he will consider introducing occasional lectures of this sort into the regular school curriculum?

Mr. SKELTON: The Scottish Education Department have twice communicated with education authorities with a view to encouraging the instruction of school children in the avoidance of traffic dangers, but the particular methods to be adopted have been left to the education authorities to decide according to the circumstances of their areas.

Mr. ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: *In view* of the fact that this method of lectures by uniformed police officers has been found very satisfactory, will not my hon. Friend recommend that it should be extended?

Mr. SKELTON: I find that out of four cities two, Edinburgh and Glasgow, already have such lectures by uniformed police officers, and in a third city, Aberdeen, the question is under discussion. I will consider whether in the case of Dundee and other towns the steps suggested should be taken.

Mr. LOGAN: Is it part of the curriculum for policemen to give lectures?

Mr. SKELTON: Any lecture or teaching on whatever subject may, I think, be described as part of the curriculum.

Mr. T. SMITH: Is the value in the uniform or in the lecture itself?

Mr. SKELTON: *I gather that the value* of the lecture is re-inforced by the presence of the uniform.

Mr. McGOVERN: Will not the hon. Member consider the advisability of opening the schools to the Minister of Transport as part of his new publicity campaign?

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION.

37. **Mr. JOHN WALLACE** asked the President of the Board of Trade the emigration figures for Scotland for the years 1911, 1912, 1913, 1929 to 1933, and the immigration figures for 1932 and 1933?

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (Dr. Burgin): As the answer contains a table of figures, I will circulate it in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following is the answer:

The numbers of British subjects who were recorded in the passenger returns *furnished to the Board of Trade* as leaving permanent residence in Scotland to take up permanent residence in non-European countries during the nine months April to December, 1912, and during the years 1913 and 1929 to 1933, and the numbers of such persons who were recorded as leaving permanent residence in those countries to take up permanent residence in Scotland in the years 1932 and 1933, are shown in the following table:

Period.	British Emigrants from Scotland.	British Immigrants into Scotland.
1912 (Apl. to Dec.).	56,979	—
1913 ...	68,202	—
1929 ...	42,911	—
1930 ...	25,971	—
1931 ...	5,866	—
1932 ...	3,444	16,623
1933 ...	3,412	11,289

Particulars of the number of migrants, as distinct from other passengers, were not obtained prior to 1st April, 1912. Residence for a year or more is treated as permanent residence for the purposes of this classification.

SCOTTISH OFFICE (FLAG-POLE).

9. **Mrs. SHAW** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland whether he will consider having the flag-pole on the Scottish Office removed from its present position to a more prominent place above the main entrance to the Scottish Office in Whitehall?

Sir G. COLLINS: After consultation with the First Commissioner of Works, I do not think that it would be desirable to alter the position of the flag-staff. Dover House consists of a high building facing the Horse Guards Parade and a low building facing Whitehall. The flag-staff is in the centre of the roof of the former building and this is the most prominent position, particularly when viewed from the West.

Mrs. SHAW: Will not my right hon. Friend again consider this matter, so that the appearance of Whitehall may be enhanced by the flag of St. Andrew flying from a horizontal pole?

Sir G. COLLINS: I will consider that matter.

COAL INDUSTRY.

EXPORTS TO POLAND.

11. **Mr. GEORGE HALL** asked the Secretary for Mines whether he can now make a statement as to the terms of the agreement arrived at between the British and Polish coalowners?

The SECRETARY for MINES (Mr. Ernest Brown): No, Sir. I can add nothing to the replies I gave in the House on the 6th December.

STONEDUST.

12. **Mr. TINKER** asked the Secretary for Mines whether he is aware that complaints are being made by workers in the mines respecting the harmful effects on health through inhaling the incombustible dust that the roadways have to be treated with; and can he say if such dust is tested before use to see if it is dangerous to the health of the workman?

Mr. E. BROWN: The stonedusting of colliery roadways has been generally enforced for nearly 14 years past, and I have no evidence that the practice has been injurious to health. The suitability of the dusts used is constantly watched by H.M. Inspectors of Mines and steps are taken to prevent the use of unsuitable materials. If the hon. Member will give me particulars of cases where harmful effects are alleged I shall be glad to have them fully investigated.

Mr. TINKER: If such cases are reported to the hon. Gentleman when the test is made, will he report to the workmen what the test is?

Mr. BROWN: I must ask the hon. Member to put that question down, because I should like to consider the terms of it.

Mr. T. SMITH: Is not this matter under investigation by somebody in the Department?

Mr. BROWN: There are a good many committees on these subjects, and the reason I ask the hon. Member to put the question down was that I would like to consider which point it is that he was raising.

NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL BOARD.

13. **Mr. TINKER** asked the Secretary for Mines whether he is in a position to make a statement regarding the Coal Mines National Industrial Board, seeing that in a recent industrial dispute the coalowners refused to accept the decision the board arrived at; and what steps he proposes to take to make it more effective?

Mr. E. BROWN: As the hon. Member is aware, both I and my predecessors in

office have done our best to secure the co-operation of the coalowners in making the board an effective instrument within the limits prescribed in the Act, but so far without success. I would remind the hon. Member, however, that it was never intended that the board's findings should carry any compulsory power, and that in certain cases the workmen themselves have declined to accept them. The board as constituted must depend for its effectiveness upon voluntary co-operation by all concerned, and I can at present see no way of securing such co-operation.

Mr. BATEY: Seeing that the coalowners continue to refuse to attend this board, does not the Minister consider the time has come when fresh legislation should be introduced to compel them to do so?

Mr. BROWN: As I have informed the House on many occasions, I see no halfway between this and compulsory arbitration, and that would not be acceptable to either party?

Mr. TINKER: Has the hon. Gentleman received a communication from the Chairman of the board expressing his dissatisfaction?

Mr. BROWN: I have had some correspondence with the Chairman of the board.

Mr. BATEY: Will the Minister say upon what authority he makes the statement that the miners would not agree to a compulsory board?

Mr. BROWN: I did not say that. What I did say was that on one or two occasions there had been decisions which the workmen would not accept, and that is a fact.

Mr. GEORGE GRIFFITHS: Could the hon. Gentleman say what was the reply of the Chairman?

Mr. BROWN: I could not give that information now. The correspondence is not yet complete.

DEEP MINES (TEMPERATURE).

14. **Mr. TINKER** asked the Secretary for Mines whether he will give the name of the colliery where the ascertained depth is 3,800 feet and the temperature 103 degrees dry bulb and 80 degrees wet bulb; and will he say if his Department have given consideration to what the temperature must be before bringing about a reduction of the hours worked in hot and deep mines?

Mr. E. BROWN: These particulars apply to one district in the Arley Seam at Parsonage Colliery, Lancashire. The hours of work are bound up with the question of wages and employment and it seems to me better, therefore, that they should be considered in the first instance between employers and representatives of the workmen, though I am ready, of course, to consider any general representations that may be made to me on grounds of health.

Mr. TINKER: Is not this a great opportunity to get the powers where they are absolutely needed?

Mr. BROWN: In reply to that, I would ask the hon. Member to convey to those locally that the best way of dealing with any problem arising here is by local discussion.

Mr. TINKER: We have met the employers, and they have refused to do anything.

SAFETY REGULATIONS.

15. **Mr. DAVID DAVIES** asked the Secretary for Mines whether it is the intention of his Department to introduce a new Mines Bill, or regulations to make provision for increasing the safety of the mine workers, in view of the greatly increased use of mechanical appliances?

Mr. BROWN: I cannot make any statement at present regarding the introduction of amending legislation. As regards regulations, the hon. Member will be aware that new regulations and orders have been made from time to time, that it is only a few months since new regulations were made to secure improved lighting, and that proposed regulations for the provision of firedamp detectors are about to be published. Other matters in respect of which new regulations may be required, or existing regulations may need revision, receive constant attention.

Mr. DAVIES: Is the Minister aware that the stone dust regulations need to be brought up-to-date, and that in the last report the Chief Inspector of Mines drew the attention of the Department to the fact that stone dusting is not compulsory in the places where stone dust is most dangerous?

Mr. BROWN: There are a number of points which I have to look into, if and when the occasion arises.

Mr. T. SMITH: Are we to take it that the negotiations are completed?

Mr. BROWN: Not quite, Sir.

CLOSED PITS (WATER ACCUMULATION).

16. **Mr. D. DAVIES** asked the Secretary for Mines whether his attention has been drawn to the danger of water accumulation resulting from the closing down of collieries in the South Wales coalfield; and whether he can indicate the steps he proposes to take to protect the mine workers from such danger?

Mr. E. BROWN: In February last I received representatives of the South Wales coalowners, and in March the coalowners set up a committee, called the South Wales Coafield Drainage Inquiry Committee, for the purposes of making a complete inquiry into the whole subject, and thereafter reporting to the Government.

Mr. G. HALL: Has the committee's report been received?

Mr. BROWN: I think that the committee have completed their investigations, but I have not received the communication yet.

Mr. DAVIES: Is the Minister aware of the potential danger of the old abandoned workings being struck into by workings that are now in operation, and, in view of the fact that last year there were five inundations of water in my constituency, will the Minister take steps to see that the regulations are carried out?

Mr. BROWN: In the conference I had with the South Wales coalowners in February last year, the whole of the ground was surveyed, and, as a result, this action was taken.

STATISTICS (YORKSHIRE).

17. **Mr. G. GRIFFITHS** asked the Secretary for Mines the number of mineworkers employed in South and West Yorkshire, respectively, on the latest date available, and the comparable figures for 1929, 1930, and 1931?

Mr. E. BROWN: At the end of November, 1929, 1930, 1931 and 1934, the number of wage-earners on colliery books in South Yorkshire was 118,400, 114,900, 108,200 and 95,100, respectively. The corresponding figures for West Yorkshire were 52,800, 50,600, 50,000 and 43,700.

SUBSIDENCE.

18. **Mr. PALING** asked the Secretary for Mines whether the Government have considered the question of the introduction of legislation, as recommended by the Royal Commission on Mining Subsidence in June, 1927, giving right of surface support and compensation for damage and, in cases of dispute, easier and cheaper facilities for legal proceedings; and whether such legislation may be expected during the lifetime of the present Government?

Mr. E. BROWN: I would refer the hon. Member to the answer which I gave to a similar question by the hon. Member for Westhoughton (Mr. Rhys Davies) on 1st November last, of which I am sending him a copy.

Mr. D. DAVIES: Would the Secretary for Mines take advantage of this opportunity to introduce regulations making stowing in mines compulsory in order to prevent the subsidence which is taking place?

Mr. BROWN: The hon. Member knows that that is only one of very many complicated questions involved in this matter.

Mr. PALING: Is it the intention of the Government to introduce legislation?

Mr. BROWN: The answer is no.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

19. **Mr. LLEWELLYN-JONES** asked the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs whether he is in a position to make any statement as to the policy of His Majesty's Government in connection with the appeal of the Government of Western Australia to be permitted to secede from the Commonwealth of Australia?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the DOMINIONS (Mr. J. H. Thomas): As hon. Members will be aware, a delegation from Western Australia is at present in London with a view to the presentation of petitions, including one addressed to this House. I am not at present in a position to make any further statement.

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

SOUTH AFRICA AND GERMANY.

20. **Sir WALDRON SMITHERS** asked the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs whether he can give any information of the details of recent trading agreements made between the Union of South Africa and Germany; to what extent do they affect the Ottawa Agreements; and what steps does he propose to take to safeguard our own export trade affected by these agreements?

Mr. J. H. THOMAS: I understand that details are not yet available for publication, but that the negotiations respecting German purchases of Union wool have been solely concerned with arrangements on lines similar to those followed in the recent agreement between the United Kingdom and German Governments. I also understand that no stipulation is being made in the Union-German arrangement as to quantitative regulation of trade or as to the diversion to Germany of purchases by the Union of South Africa. I am awaiting fuller information, and pending its receipt I am not in a position to reply to the second and third parts of the question.

Sir W. SMITHERS: May we take it therefore that the Ottawa Agreements are in no way infringed by these agreements?

Mr. THOMAS: If, as I am informed, those are the facts, we certainly may.

GERMANY.

24. **Mr. GRANVILLE GIBSON** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether the Anglo-German trade agreement is working satisfactorily; and whether he is aware that exporters are finding it difficult to do export trade with Germany owing to the difficulty on the part of some German importers of obtaining import certificates?

Lieut.-Colonel J. COLVILLE (Secretary, Department of Overseas Trade): It is the case that certain difficulties of the character referred to by my hon. Friend were experienced in connection with the early working of the Anglo-German Payments Agreement. These points have, however, been taken up as they arose with the German authorities through His Majesty's Embassy in Berlin, and I understand that the agreement is now working, on the whole, satisfactorily. I can assure my hon. Friend that the operation of the agreement will continue to be closely watched by the Board of Trade.

Mr. GIBSON: Is the Minister aware that great difficulties are being experienced at the present time in the North of England and the difficulties are so great that barter agreements have been come to in some cases?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: If the hon. Member wishes to bring any conditions to my notice I shall be glad to receive them.

TURKEY.

25. **Mr. GIBSON** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he has any reason to believe that satisfactory arrangements can be made for a resumption of normal trade relations with Turkey and a cessation of trade discrimination against this country?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: I would refer my hon. Friend to the answers which my right hon. Friend gave on 29th November to the hon. and gallant Member for Blackpool (Captain Erskine-Bolst) and on 4th December to the hon. Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Mander). I cannot at present usefully add anything to those replies.

Mr. GIBSON: Is the Minister aware of the fact that for one or two years large quantities of goods have been lying in the Customs in Istanbul and that it is impossible to get them to Turkey, although the goods have been made specially for that market; may I also ask if he could give us a more hopeful answer than the one to which he has just referred if I put down another question?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: If the hon. Member looks at the answers to which I have referred, he will see that active steps are being taken to find a solution of this difficulty. Instructions have been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the subject.

RUMANIA.

26. **Mr. GIBSON** asked the President of the Board of Trade the value of debts frozen in Rumania owing to traders in this country for which no exchange is being provided; and if the Government

[Mr. Gibson.]
intends to take any steps to press the Rumanian Government to release these debts either by a compensation system or the establishment of a clearing-house scheme?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: I have seen an estimate which puts the figure of outstanding trade debts in Rumania at over £2,000,000, but I have also seen lower estimates. As my right hon. Friend has already stated, this matter is receiving the earnest consideration of His Majesty's Government and arrangements have been made for discussions to take place in London next week with a representative of the Rumanian Government. For the purpose of these discussions, the Board of Trade are taking steps to obtain more definite information as to the amount of the debts.

Mr. GIBSON: While thanking my hon. and gallant Friend for his reply, may I ask him further, in view of the fact that there is a very strong balance of trade in favour of Rumania with this country, that he will remember to bring pressure to bear upon Rumania if she is not prepared either to bring into operation a compensation scheme or to co-operate, and if she is not willing, that he will make a clearing-house scheme to ensure that she pays to our nationals nearly £2,000,000 which is frozen at the present time?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: All considerations will be borne in mind in the discussion that will take place next week.

Mr. PALING: Is our trade in such a state that we have to bring pressure to bear upon every country to trade with us.

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: There is no reason why we should not bring pressure to bear if we are not treated fairly.

GRANITE SETTS AND PAVEMENT KERBS.

27. **Mr. BURNETT** asked the President of the Board of Trade the imports of granite kerbs and setts from Mysore for the years 1931, 1932, 1933, and 1934?

Dr. BURGIN: Separate particulars of the imports into the United Kingdom of granite setts and pavement kerbs from Mysore are not available, but the quantity consigned from British India as a whole was 3,609 tons in 1931, 1,892 tons in 1932, 11,364 tons in 1933 and 2,633 tons during the first 10 months of 1934.

Mr. BURNETT: Will the Parliamentary Secretary bear in mind, in connection with this matter, the extent to which the industry of sett-making is declining in certain localities and men are losing their skill?

Dr. BURGIN: The question relates to imports from India.

IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY.

28. **Mr. D. DAVIES** asked the President of the Board of Trade the imports of iron ore into the ports of Newport, Cardiff, Port Talbot and other Welsh ports, during the years 1932, 1933 and the nine months ended the 30th September, 1934?

Dr. BURGIN: As the answer involves a number of figures I will circulate it in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Mr. DAVIES: Do the figures for this year show an increase or a decrease as compared with 1932?

Dr. BURGIN: They show an increase.

Mr. DAVIES: Will the hon. Gentleman make representations to his Department to try to come to some arrangement to fix a quota of men producing iron ore in this country who, particularly in my division, are now unemployed?

Dr. BURGIN: If the hon. Member will look at the answer, he will see what are the figures for the different ports in the different areas, and then, perhaps, he may like to put down another question.

Sir J. NALL: Are the Board of Trade taking any note of the increasing adverse balance of trade, or are they just carrying on as usual?

Following is the answer:

The following table shows the total tonnage of iron ore (except chrome iron ore and pyrites) imported into the United Kingdom at ports in Wales (including Monmouthshire) during the years 1932 and 1933 and the first nine months of 1934.

Port of importation.	1932.	1933.	Jan. to Sept., 1934.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
Newport (Mon.)	462	—	6,305
Cardiff (including Barry Dock and Penarth)	114,087	196,696	136,002
Port Talbot (including Briton Ferry, Neath Abbey and Porthcawl).	377,479	505,667	372,042
Other ports in Wales	1	—	4,582
Total at Welsh ports	492,029	702,363	518,931

36. **Mr. HALES** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the increase in imports of iron and steel as compared with the imports of 1933; and whether he will initiate further steps without delay to make the protection of this industry more effective?

Dr. BURGIN: I would refer my hon. Friend to the reply which was given to the hon. Member for Croydon, South (Mr. H. Williams) on the 22nd November.

LINSEED.

30. **Mr. MANDER** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that since the imposition at Ottawa of a 10 per cent. tax on Argentine linseed, which enables India to charge nearly 10 per cent. more for her seed, the crush of linseed in England has fallen by nearly 50 per cent. and is still declining; and when a report may be expected from the Import Duties Advisory Committee, which has been considering the matter for many months?

Dr. BURGIN: A revised scheme of drawback of duties on linseed and linseed oil was put into force on 21st November on the recommendation of the Import Duties Advisory Committee. I have no doubt that, should the committee be satisfied that a further change is required in any matter within their scope, they will make a recommendation to that effect.

BRITISH COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS (LICENCE FEES, SCANDINAVIA).

32. **Mr. SALT** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he will endeavour to obtain a withdrawal by Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland of their enforcement of licence fees which are now levied upon British subjects visiting those countries as commercial travellers, since such licences tend to hinder our export trade and Great Britain enforces no similar impositions?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: Considerable modifications of these fees, advantageous to the United Kingdom, were secured in the commercial negotiations of last year with these countries, and I do not think that this question can be usefully reopened at present.

IRISH FREE STATE.

33. **Mr. McGOVERN** asked the President of the Board of Trade the total amount of exports from this country to the Irish Free State during 1934 and for a period during 1930, 1931, 1932 and 1933; and the value of boot and coal exports during 1934 and each year since 1930?

Dr. BURGIN: The declared value of the aggregate exports of merchandise to the Irish Free State during the first nine months of the years in question is given in the issues of the "Accounts relating to Trade and Navigation of the United Kingdom" for October, 1932, and October, 1934. The latter issue also contains particulars of the exports of coal and of leather boots and shoes to the Irish Free State during the first 10 months of this year, while the annual particulars for each of the last five years appear in Volume III of the Annual Statement of Trade for 1933.

Mr. McGOVERN: Thanks for the information.

WAR MATERIAL (EXPORT LICENCES).

34. **Mr. DOBBIE** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he will publish a statement giving particulars of the arms and munitions and naval and military stores, not including sporting arms and munitions, in respect of which he has issued licences to export to

[Mr. Dobbie.]

Colombia, Argentina and Brazil in 1932, 1933 and 1934; whether any licences have been refused; and, if so, in which cases?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: I will circulate in the OFFICIAL REPORT a statement of licences issued for the export of war material to Argentina, Brazil and Colombia during the period referred to by the hon. Member. During that period one licence to export war material to Brazil was refused.

Mr. DOBBIE: Is the hon. and gallant Gentleman aware whether any arms or munitions are being re-exported to Bolivia or Paraguay?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: I should require notice of that question.

Following is the statement:

STATEMENT showing War Material covered by licences issued for export to Argentina, Brazil and Colombia in the period 1st January, 1932 to 30th November, 1934.

Country.	Material.	Date Licence issued.
Argentina ...	10,000 time fuzes	18th January, 1932.
	500 4·7″ practice projectiles	22nd January, 1932.
	1 75 m.m. landing carriage	19th February, 1932.
	16 assembled buffer cylinders	
	100,000 Prideaux links	24th February, 1932.
	20 kilograms tetryl	8th June, 1932.
	10 metres flexible shafting for 120/45 guns	10th May, 1932.
	25 76 m.m. used empty cartridges	9th May, 1932.
	20 kilograms wet fulminate of mercury	3rd June, 1932.
	220 lbs. tetryl	9th January, 1933.
	6 depth charge throwers	3rd May, 1933.
	2,205 lbs. T.N.T.	11th September, 1934.
	4,410 lbs. picric acid	
	2 depth charge throwers	16th November, 1934.
Brazil... ...	78 lbs. tetryl in pellets	23rd May, 1932.
	165 20 m.m. machine gun cartridges	1st July, 1932.
	8,000 electric primers	20th July, 1932.
	200 cordite charges	
	20 7 m.m. aircraft machine guns	22nd September, 1932.
	50,000 20 m.m. machine gun cartridges	29th September, 1932.
	40.000 fuzes for 20 m.m. machine gun cartridges ...	
	5 Wimperis bomb sights...	24th September, 1932.
	20 aircraft gun mountings	24th September, 1932.
	10 aircraft mountings for gun sights	
	10 sets single type interrupter gear	
	20 aircraft gun mountings	31st October, 1932.
	10 aircraft mountings for gun sights	
	10 sets single type interrupter gear	
	15 Wimperis bomb sights	31st October, 1932.
	20 7 m.m. aircraft machine guns	2nd November, 1932.
	3 7·65 m.m. rifles...	13th December, 1932.
	3 ·455″ revolvers	
	6 empty Mills bombs	
	1 7·65 m.m. machine gun	
	1 ·303″ machine gun	
	20 adapters for 7 m.m. aircraft machine guns ...	27th March, 1933.
	3,000 fuzes for 20 m.m. machine gun cartridges ...	7th June, 1933.
	20,000 ·45″ automatic pistol cartridges	18th July, 1933.
	3 ·303″ aircraft machine guns	27th September, 1933.
	3 aircraft gun mountings	
	1 set double type interrupter gear	
	Armament fittings for one aircraft	11th January, 1934.
Colombia ...	2 7 m.m. machine guns with mountings	14th August, 1934.
	1 ·303″ machine gun with mounting	
	15,000 rounds ·303″ ammunition	17th August, 1934.
	800 4″ propellant charges	6th September, 1934.
	1 7 m.m. machine gun barrel	16th October, 1934.
	Armament fittings for one aircraft	19th November, 1934.
	3 belt fitting machines for 7 m.m. machine guns ...	16th August, 1932.
	36,000 7·9 m.m. rifle cartridges	28th October, 1932.

Country.	Material.	Date Licence issued.
Colombia—*cont.*	12,000 7·9 m.m. rifle cartridges	6th January, 1933.
	500,000 7·9 m.m. rifle cartridges	7th February, 1933.
	2,819 kilograms T.N.T.	2nd March, 1933.
	230 fuze lighters	
	20,000 13·2 m.m. machine gun cartridges	17th March, 1933.
	13,000 lbs. T.N.T.	29th August, 1933.
	830 lbs. fuze lighters	
	2,000 primers for 3 and 6 pounds Q.F. cartridge cases	10th October, 1933.
	5 clinometers	1st May, 1934.
	30 depth charges with pistols	
	24 smoke floats and igniters	
	6 ·22″ rifles	
	24 ·455″ revolvers	
	24,000 rounds ·455″ revolver ammunition	
	100,000 rounds ·22″ rifle ammunition	
	500 rounds 4·7″ ammunition with semi-armour piercing shell.	30th May, 1934.
	2 4·7″ breech blocks	1st June, 1934.

ANGLO-GERMAN PAYMENTS AGREEMENT.

35. **Sir EUGENE RAMSDEN** asked the President of the Board of Trade what steps have been taken in regard to the operation of the Anglo-German payments agreement so far as relates to the liquidation of frozen debts?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: I apologise to the House for the length of this answer, but the matter is one of some importance to traders in this country.

The House will be glad to know that the Anglo-German Payments Agreement made on the 1st November last is so far working satisfactorily, and that, including the £400,000 paid when the Agreement was signed, an amount of approximately £1,400,000 has now been made available by the German Government towards the liquidation of outstanding trade debts. Further sums will become available from time to time in accordance with the terms of the Agreement.

The replies received by the Board of Trade to the circular issued to traders immediately after the signature of the Agreement have now been examined and tabulated. The total of the debts which fell due between 1st March and 31st October, 1934, is approximately £4¾ millions, of which about £3¼ millions represent debts in the period 1st March to 19th August, i.e., prior to the operation of the Anglo-German Exchange Agreement, and about £1½ millions represent debts in the period 20th August to 31st October.

On the recommendation of the committee which my right hon. Friend appointed, under the chairmanship of Lord Plender, to advise on this problem, he proposes that a first distribution should now be arranged on the debts which fell due in the period 1st March to 19th August, 1934, inclusive; and the German Government have been asked to allot exchange, out of the funds available, sufficient to provide, in respect of these debts, for a payment of 30 per cent. on the total debt due to a creditor from each of his debtors, subject to a minimum payment of £100. Each creditor will receive this week from the Board of Trade instructions as to the procedure which he should adopt to secure payment.

It is estimated that £1,200,000 will be required for this distribution, leaving a balance of approximately £200,000, which, together with the monthly 10 per cent. allocation under Article 6 of the Anglo-German Payments Agreement in respect of December, will be available towards payment of a similar distribution at a later date on the outstanding debts due between the 20th August and 31st October, inclusive. The distribution on these latter debts has had to be deferred, pending the closing of the Sondermark Account established under the Anglo-German Exchange Agreement of 10th August, as in many cases United Kingdom creditors are not yet aware whether the sums due to them are to be paid through the Special Account or not. As soon as such cases can be distinguished, arrange-

[Lieut.-Colonel Colville.]

ments will be made for a distribution of 30 per cent., with a minimum of £100, on the debts due between the 20th August and 31st October, and my right hon. Friend hopes that this will be possible in January.

The Anglo-German Payments Agreement provides that claims in respect of debts due before the 1st March, 1934, are to be subjected to a special examination by the two Governments. Details in regard to certain of these debts were given to the German Government in the course of the recent negotiations in Berlin, and the Board of Trade propose to issue an announcement shortly with a view to securing a complete return.

CARPETS.

31. **Mr. ALAN TODD** (*for* **Sir JOHN WARDLAW-MILNE**) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the imports of carpets from Belgium for the 10 months ended 31st October have increased by about 60 per cent. since 1932 and now amount to 1,359,000 square yards; and whether he will consider the possibility of negotiating a reciprocal agreement with that country to deal with these increasing imports, which are restricting employment in the carpet trade here?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: I am aware of the figures referred to, but would refer my hon. Friend to the reply given to the hon. Member for Croydon, South (Mr. H. Williams) on 26th November. I would also point out that in the early months of 1932 imports were exceptionally low on account of the imposition of a duty of 50 per cent. ad valorem under the Abnormal Importations (Customs Duties) Act. I do not think that negotiations for the purpose which my hon. Friend has in mind would be likely to achieve useful results.

Mr. PERKINS: Does not my hon. and gallant Friend consider that the correct way of dealing with this large increase of foreign imports is to increase the duty on those imports; and can he say whether there has been any move in that direction by the Department?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: That is a matter for the Import Duties Advisory Committee.

FIXED INVESTMENT TRUSTS.

21. **Sir CHARLES CAYZER** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the issue of further invitations to the public to subscribe to fixed trusts in which all the names of individual managers, personally, and the amount of managerial or directorial expenses for the flotation and administration of the trusts are not disclosed; and whether he will take steps to prevent a continuation of non-disclosure of such material information in view of the necessity to protect the public against exploitation?

Dr. BURGIN: I am not sure what particular invitations my hon. Friend has in mind, but the Board of Trade have no power to require disclosure of the particulars indicated, and I would refer him to the answer which was given to the hon. and gallant Member for West Birkenhead (Lieut.-Colonel Sandeman Allen) on 27th November.

HEARTS OF OAK ASSURANCE COMPANY.

29. **Mr. ROBINSON** asked the President of the Board of Trade how soon he expects the inquiry into the Hearts of Oak Assurance case will be concluded; and whether he can yet state what action his Department proposes to take in the matter?

Dr. BURGIN: The inquiry into the affairs of this company cannot be completed and a report thereon made to the court by the Official Receiver until the legal proceedings which have been instituted by the liquidator against third parties have been concluded. I am informed that these proceedings are now about to be set down for hearing.

BRITISH ARMY.

OFFICERS' EMPLOYMENT BUREAU.

38. **Mr. MANDER** asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he will give an assurance that the new officers' employment bureau at the War Office will not include amongst its duties the offering of positions in armament firms to retired officers?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Douglas Hacking): If an armament firm requires a retired officer for any particular position, I see no reason why this employment bureau should not recommend suitable candidates in exactly the same way as it might recommend them for other civilian posts.

Mr. MANDER: Are there not certain dangers in developing too close a connection between Government Departments and private armament firms?

Mr. HACKING: These officers have retired and become civilians again. I see no reason why a civilian who has been an officer in the Army should not have the same number of jobs open to him as any other civilian who has not served in His Majesty's Forces.

Mr. COCKS: Will the right hon. Gentleman take steps to see that these posts are not given to serving officers?

Mr. HACKING: The answer to the following question deals with that point.

ARMAMENT FIRMS (APPOINTMENTS).

39. **Mr. COCKS** asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he has made further inquiries into the matter of the correspondence of 20th, 26th and 30th June, 1931, relating to the appointment of an arms salesman; whether the missing letters have now been found; and whether he can make a further statement on the subject?

Mr. HACKING: I have now had the advantage of seeing in the Press copies of the letters to which the hon. Member refers, and of getting into touch with the officers who wrote them. Now that I have seen them, it is quite obvious that they were written as personal, not official, letters, and that is the reason why they were not filed at the War Office. The writer of the letter of 30th June, 1931, evidently did allude to serving officers, but it is neither the policy nor the practice of the Department to recommend serving officers for civil posts of this nature.

Mr. HERBERT WILLIAMS: Has my right hon. Friend made any inquiries of the then Secretary of State for War as to why he permitted such correspondence?

Mr. ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: Is it not a fact that these letters were written when the late Socialist Government were in office?

Mr. HACKING: Yes, Sir, that is so; and, consequently, if the hon. Member still thinks that this correspondence was of an official character, and desires to attach any blame, the blame must be put on someone else and not on us.

Mr. COCKS: Does the right hon. Gentleman suggest that I doubt his word?

Mr. HACKING: No, Sir, not in the slightest.

POST OFFICE (LETTER DELIVERIES, MERIONETHSHIRE).

40. **Mr. HAYDN JONES** asked the Postmaster-General when he proposes to provide a daily delivery of letters for all rural districts in the county of Merioneth?

The ASSISTANT POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Sir Ernest Bennett): My right hon. Friend hopes shortly to introduce arrangements which, with the exception of a small locality with three inhabitants approachable only at low tide, will afford a daily delivery to every place in the county.

EDUCATION.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS (SPECIAL PLACES).

41. **Mr. G. GRIFFITHS** asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education, how many local education authorities have based their income limits in regard to special places in secondary schools on family income and how many on parental income?

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of EDUCATION (Mr. Ramsbotham): Twenty-two local education authorities have adopted the former arrangement and 124 the latter.

MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCES.

42. **Mr. T. SMITH** asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education what is the scale of maintenance allowances made where children are exempt from special place fees; how many

[Mr. Smith.]
local education authorities make these allowances; and how many children are affected?

Mr. RAMSBOTHAM: The scales of maintenance allowances to pupils in secondary schools, in respect of whom no fees are charged, vary as between one local education authority and another. In the financial year 1932-33, 142 local education authorities in England and Wales granted such allowances, and 110,438 children received them.

HOMEWORK.

43. **Mr. RADFORD** asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education whether he will set up a committee to inquire into the prevalence and incidence of compulsory homework for scholars in secondary and other schools which receive financial assistance from the grant for education voted by Parliament?

Mr. RAMSBOTHAM: My Noble Friend sees no occasion for setting up such a committee. Though there may be individual instances of excessive homework, he considers that the matter is one which can safely be left to the good sense of local education authorities, governing bodies, and teachers, and to the vigilance of His Majesty's inspectors, who are at present paying special attention to this aspect of school work.

Mr. RADFORD: Is my hon. Friend aware that, in many schools whose names I could give him, bright, intelligent children have to work two and a-half to three hours every night to get their homework done?

Mr. RAMSBOTHAM: I can assure my hon. Friend that the Board's inspectors are keeping in very close touch with the matter.

Mr. PALING: May we take it that, in cases where the inspector finds that excessive homework is being done, he will have power to reduce it or to suggest its reduction?

Mr. RAMSBOTHAM: I have no doubt he will bring the attention of teachers to that aspect of the matter.

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS, STAFFORDSHIRE.

44. **Mr. ALAN TODD** asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education whether he is satisfied that the present regulations of the Staffordshire County Council with reference to the summer school holiday period are justified by the present conditions on the hopfields in Worcestershire and Herefordshire; and whether he has any observations to make on the summonses recently served on parents in South Staffordshire who have been forced to absent their children from school by reason of their service in the hopfields?

Mr. RAMSBOTHAM: The settlement of the dates of the holidays of public elementary schools is a matter entirely within the discretion of the local education authority, who are familiar with the circumstances and needs of their area. As regards the latter part of the question, my Noble Friend is not in a position to make any comments.

NORTHERN IRELAND (LAND PURCHASE ANNUITIES).

45. **Mr. McGOVERN** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can state the total amount owing by Northern Ireland for land annuities?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Chamberlain): No amount is owing by Northern Ireland for Land Purchase Annuities. The amount of such annuities in respect of purchase agreements entered into after the passing of the Government of Ireland Act, 1920, is recovered each year by deduction from the Northern Ireland share of reserved taxes. The amount of annuities in respect of purchase agreements prior to that date is not recoverable. Full details are give in the annual Estimate for the Land Purchase Commission, Northern Ireland (Class III: Vote 20).

COLONIAL LOANS.

46. **Mr. BOOTHBY** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he proposes to take any steps to facilitate the conversion of Colonial loans to a more equitable basis, in view of existing and potential money rates?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I would refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the hon. and gallant Member for the Ardwick Division (Captain Fuller) on 28th November.

MONETARY POLICY.

47. **Mr. BOOTHBY** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is the policy of His Majesty's Government to maintain cheap money?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Certainly, Sir. The maintenance of cheap money continues to form an essential part of the policy of His Majesty's Government.

Sir J. NALL: Does the right hon. Gentleman realise that the low return on investments coupled with the present high rate of taxation is severely crippling spending power?

Mr. BOOTHBY: Does the right hon. Gentleman also realise that the only chance of a further reduction of taxation is to make money as cheap as possible?

GERMANY (CREDIT).

48. **Mr. BOOTHBY** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he intends to sanction the proposed loan by the Bank of England to Germany.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I assume that my hon. Friend is referring to the credit which has been arranged by the Reichsbank in order to expedite the liquidation of outstanding German trade debts to United Kingdom creditors. I am satisfied that the operation is in the national interests, and it therefore has my approval.

OLD AGE PENSIONS.

49. **Mr. WEST** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer what would be the cost of granting pensions at the rate of £1 per week when single and £1 10s. for married couples on retirement after 60 years of age, assuming that 50 per cent. of those eligible take advantage of the scheme in 1935.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Very full information on this subject was given by the then Financial Secretary in his speech in the House on the 21st February last. The hon. Member will no doubt appreciate that calculations of this sort involve very considerable labour. I hope, therefore, that he will again study the speech in question and consider whether the figures there given showing a net cost of £279,000,000 a year, though based on rather different assumptions, do not really give him in general the information which he requires.

UNEMPLOYMENT.

STATISTICS.

50. **Mr. LEONARD** asked the Minister of Labour whether he will state the total number of separate persons who during 1933 registered at Employment Exchanges, respectively, in England and Wales and in Scotland; and the number registering for statutory benefit and transitional benefit, respectively?

The MINISTER of LABOUR (Mr. Oliver Stanley): Statistics showing the total number of separate persons who registered for employment at Employment Exchanges during 1933 are not available, but the number of insured persons aged 16 to 64 who made claims for unemployment benefit or transitional payments was about 4,600,000 in England and Wales, and 600,000 in Scotland. These totals include persons who claimed, during the year, unemployment benefit only or transitional payments only, and also persons who claimed unemployment and transitional payments at different rates in the course of the year, but statistics are not available as to the numbers in each of these categories.

AGED WORKERS.

51. **Mr. WEST** asked the Minister of Labour how many persons over 60 years of age are employed in insurable occupations; and how many persons of that category are now unemployed?

Mr. STANLEY: For persons aged 60 to 64, the latest available information relates to 1932, when it was estimated, on the basis of a sample inquiry covering one in 300 of the persons insured against unemployment, that the number of insured persons of those ages in Great Britain was approximately 463,000, of whom about 143,000 were unemployed at 28th November, 1932. For persons aged 65 and over it is estimated that the number employed, at some time during the year, in employment which is insurable under the Unemployment Insurance Acts is approximately 200,000. The number of such persons in employment at any particular date is substantially less than this figure.

DISARMAMENT.

53. **Mr. MANDER** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is proposed again to approach the French Government with a request for information as to what kind of guarantees for the execution of a disarmament convention would interest them?

The SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir John Simon): I made a statement in the House on 22nd November last regarding disarmament negotiations. I would prefer to make no further statement for the present on this subject.

Mr. MANDER: Is it not possible that the present French Government might take a different view of the matter from its predecessor?

Sir J. SIMON: I am sure my hon. Friend has given much thought to this matter, but so have other people.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

Swimming Baths.

54. **Sir C. CAYZER** asked the Minister of Health whether he has, with the help of the medical profession, obtained data to enable him to ascertain whether the use of swimming baths enclosed or open, or otherwise constructed and available for the general public, increases the risk of ear or throat trouble, or microbic infection of a kindred nature?

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the MINISTRY of HEALTH (Mr. Shakespeare): I am sending my hon. Friend a copy of a report issued by the Ministry in 1929 summarising the information available on the subject and recommending certain courses of action. My right hon. Friend is advised that the conclusions in the report are confirmed by subsequent experience.

Sir ARTHUR MICHAEL SAMUEL: Is there any truth in the allegation that these public baths are definitely the cause of ear and throat trouble?

Mr. SHAKESPEARE: Yes, unless there is frequent filtration and continuous chlorination, trouble may occur.

Children (Model Diets).

55. **Mr. SALT** asked the Minister of Health whether, in order to avoid malnutrition in children of school age, he will consider the drawing up and publication of model diet schedules to serve as a guide to parents?

Mr. SHAKESPEARE: The preparation of diet schedules is a matter in which account has to be taken of local food customs and other circumstances, and it would be impracticable to produce any schedule of universal application. My hon. Friend will, however, find most of the information required for the construction of suitable diets for any groups of persons in the published reports on the Criticism and Improvement of Diets and on Diets in Poor Law Children's Homes which have been made by my right hon. Friend's Advisory Committee on Nutrition.

Mr. LOGAN: Is it possible for the Minister to advise public assistance committees to give a higher money scale of relief?

Mr. PALING: Would not malnutrition be avoided if the majority of these persons had the means with which to buy food?

Hop Pickers, Worcestershire and Herefordshire (Conditions).

56. **Mr. ALAN TODD** asked the Minister of Health whether he can give a report as to the conditions under which hop pickers in Worcestershire and Herefordshire have been carrying out their labours during the recent hop-picking season; and how their conditions compare with those existing in these districts a year ago?

Mr. SHAKESPEARE: The conditions found by the medical officer of my right hon. Friend's Department who visited these areas during the recent hop-picking season showed noticeable improvement as compared with the conditions found on the last occasion on which the areas in question were visited by a medical officer of the Ministry. There are still, however, certain matters which my right hon. Friend proposes to bring to the notice of the responsible local authorities.

Mr. TODD: Can the hon. Gentleman give any indication as to the particular matters that he has mentioned?

Mr. SHAKESPEARE: I think I would rather not.

PALESTINE (AERODROME SITES).

57. **Mr. JANNER** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government of Palestine has yet been able to consider the expert views with regard to new aerodrome sites in Palestine; and by what date he anticipates a move will be made towards the establishment not only of a new aerodrome better situated than Gaza for the through air route, but of aerodromes for internal purposes adjoining the chief centres of population, such as Tel-aviv, Haifa, and Jerusalem?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister): This matter is still under the consideratoin of the High Commissioner for Palestine.

EAST AFRICA (ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE).

58. **Mr. LLEWELLYN-JONES** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies what action he proposes to take with a view to giving effect to the recommendations contained in the recently issued report of the commission of inquiry into the administration of justice in Kenya, Uganda, and the Tanganyika territory in criminal affairs?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: It is not possible within the limits of a Parliamentary reply to state in detail the action taken on each of the 47 recommendations of the report. Of these, however, 20 were immediately concurred in by the three Governments concerned, and I approved of their being carried out. As a result of discussion at the Governors' Conference in May, agreement was virtually reached in respect of 17 further recommendations and these were generally accepted by me. I am communicating with the Governors regarding certain recommendations which affect only individual territories. I am causing copies of my despatches to the Governors, in which my decisions are set out, to be placed in the Library of the House.

REGENT'S PARK.

59. **Sir CYRIL COBB** asked the First Commissioner of Works whether, in order to improve the present appearance of the Broad Walk with the Biblical fountain in Regent's Park and to tidy up the derelict spaces in the old Botanical Gardens, he will invite the Royal Horticultural Society to help him to convert these spaces into public pleasure gardens and shaded paths, in view of the fact that his Department has no public funds available?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Ormsby-Gore): I do not agree that the walk requires such treatment as my hon. Friend suggests, and I have received no offer from the Royal Horticultural Society to provide money for altering it. As I have stated in reply to other questions, the work of improving the Inner Circle Gardens is proceeding steadily as funds are available.

Mr. BURNETT: Will my right hon. Friend bear in view, when spending money, the desirability of making Broad Walk a little less like a funeral path leading to a cemetery?

Mr. CROSSLEY: Will my right hon. Friend say what is the Biblical fountain referred to?

Mr. H. WILLIAMS: Will my right hon. Friend arrange with the Lord Provost of Aberdeen to have a flag day on behalf of the funds?

UNITED STATES (BRITISH DEBT).

Mr. LANSBURY (*by Private Notice*) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether any communication has been received from the United States Government on the subject of the British War Debt?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: On the 22nd November the United States Government addressed a Note to His Majesty's Government transmitting a statement of the amounts due under the provisions of the Funding Agreement of 1923 and the Moratorium Agreement of 4th June, 1932. The Note also conveyed an assurance that the United States Government were fully disposed to discuss through diplomatic channels any proposals which His Majesty's Government might desire to put forward in regard to the payment of this indebtedness, and that such proposals would receive careful consideration with a view to eventual submission to the American Congress. Yesterday there was communicated to the United States Government a reply to this Note to the following effect:

[Mr. Chamberlain.]

His Majesty's Government welcome the assurance mentioned above, but they recall the statement in the British Note of June last that in view of recent events there appeared at that time to be no prospect of usefully renewing discussions as to the final revision of the War Debt Settlement. They go on to express their regret that the considerations which governed their decision six months ago apply with equal force to-day, and their conviction that it would be useless and consequently unwise to initiate negotiations at present. They add, however, that they will continue to watch for any effective opportunity of taking steps in that direction.

A White Paper containing the terms of the United States Note and of the reply will be available in the Vote Office immediately after Questions.

Mr. LANSBURY: There is nothing I want to say at this moment on the statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, except to wish him success in bringing about negotiations for a proper settlement of the debt between ourselves and America.

YUGOSLAVIA AND HUNGARY.

Mr. LANSBURY (*by Private Notice*) asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can give the House any information as to the Yugoslav-Hungarian dispute?

Sir J. SIMON: I am very happy to report to the House that the Yugoslav appeal to the League of Nations which has been before the Council of the League for several days, and which at times threatened to give rise to sharp differences of view, has now been dealt with in a way which should lead to reconciliation and appeasement. His Majesty's Government have been exerting themselves throughout in all useful quarters to urge moderation, and the report and resolution presented to the Council yesterday by my right hon. Friend, the Lord Privy Seal, who acted as rapporteur, were unanimously adopted late last night. I take particular satisfaction in dwelling upon the important part which my right hon. Friend, in co-operation with other members of the Council, has played in this matter. The rather long text of the resolution appears in this morning's newspapers; I need not occupy time by reading it now, but will ask that it should be printed in the OFFICIAL REPORT. The outcome now largely depends on the local situation as between Yugoslavia and Hungary, and it is sincerely to be hoped that this will improve. But there can be no doubt that the favourable position which has been reached from a situation which so recently appeared to threaten grave consequences, is due first and foremost to the existence and the effective use of the League of Nations.

Mr. LANSBURY: I am sure that every Member in the House will congratulate our Minister—if we may be allowed first to congratulate our own Minister—on the part he has played in these transactions, and I also very earnestly say that we hope with the Foreign Secretary that the arrangements already come to may lead to a permanent settlement of this dispute.

Following is the text of the resolution:

1. The Council—

convinced that it interprets the sentiments of the whole League of Nations, unanimously deploring the crime which occasioned the loss of the lives of the knightly King Alexander III of Yugoslavia the Unifier, and of Monsieur Louis Barthou, condemns this odius crime, associates itself with the mourning of the Yugoslav nation and of the French nation, and insists that all those responsible should be punished.

2. The Council recalls

that it is the duty of every State neither to encourage nor tolerate on its territory any terrorist activity with a political purpose,

that every State must do all in its power to prevent and repress acts of this nature and must for this purpose lend its assistance to Governments which request it,

is of opinion that these duties devolve in particular on the members of the League of Nations in view of the obligations of the Covenant in relation to the engagements they have undertaken to respect the territorial integrity and the existing political independence of the other members.

3. The Council

desirous that the good understanding upon which peace depends should exist between members of the League, and expressing its confidence that they will avoid anything which might be of a nature to compromise it,

noting that as a result of the discussions which have taken place before the Council and of the documents which have been communicated to it, in particular the diplomatic correspondence exchanged between the Hungarian and Yugoslavian Governments from 1931 to 1934, various questions relative to the existence or the activities outside Yugoslav territory of terrorist elements have not been settled in a manner which has given satisfaction to the Yugoslav Government,

being of opinion, as the result of these discussions and documents, that certain Hungarian authorities may have assumed, at any rate through negligence, certain responsibilities relative to acts having a connexion with the preparation of the crime at Marseilles,

considering on the other hand that it is incumbent on the Hungarian Government, conscious of its international responsibilities, to take at once appropriate punitive action in the case of any of its authorities whose culpability may be established,

convinced of the good will of the Hungarian Government to perform this duty,

requests it to communicate to the Council the measures it takes to this effect.

4. The Council considering that the rules of international law, concerning the repression of terrorist activities are not at present sufficiently precise to guarantee efficiently international co-operation in this matter,

decides to set up a committee of experts to study this question with a view to drawing up a preliminary draft of an international convention to assure the repression of conspiracies or crimes committed with a political or terrorist purpose,

decides that this committee shall be composed of eleven members, each of the Governments of Belgium, United Kingdom, France, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Rumania, Spain, Switzerland, U.S.S.R., Chile, being invited to appoint a member,

refers to this committee for examination the suggestions which have been presented to the Council by the French Government and requests other Governments which may wish to present suggestions to send them to the Secretary-General, so that they may be examined by the committee,

invites the Committee to report to the Council so that the latter may apply the procedure laid down in the resolution of the Assembly of the 25th September, 1931, concerning the drawing up of general conventions negotiated under the auspices of the League of Nations.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

NEGOTIATIONS, POLAND (SHIPPING INDUSTRY).

Sir C. BARRIE asked the President of the Board of Trade whether, in the negotiations with the Polish Delegation, arrangements are being made so that British shipping will be fully protected?

Dr. BURGIN: At the outset of the present negotiations my right hon. Friend informed the Polish Delegation of the great importance which the Government attached to a satisfactory settlement in the matter of shipping, and this is being kept constantly in mind by those taking part in the present discussions.

RUSSIA (TRADE AGREEMENT).

Mr. LIDDALL asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he can furnish a statement showing the present balance of payments between this country and Russia under the provisions of the latest Trade Agreement?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: The Trade Agreement with the Soviet Union provides that the balance of payments between the two countries shall be in certain ratios in respect of calendar years as a whole, and until the statements specified in the Agreement have been received from the Russian Government after the expiration of each year, it is not possible to calculate the actual ratio in respect of that year.

ARTIFICIAL SILK YARN (EXPORT FOR PROCESS).

Mr. ENTWISTLE asked the President of the Board of Trade the monthly figures of yarn made from flat silk of English manufacture sent abroad for creping process and re-imported from France and Italy into this country after having undergone a creping process abroad; and whether, if such figures are not immediately available, he will consider such classification in the future, as such yarn is at present charged only with an ad valorem of 25 per cent. and not subject to the specific duty of 1s. 3d., and therefore the figures of such re-imports are readily available?

Mr. COOPER: I am not clear as to the meaning of the term "flat silk," but it is presumed that the question relates to British artificial silk yarn. The only figures readily available are for artificial silk yarn (British or foreign) exported to all destinations to undergo any process, including creping. These figures are as follow:

Wholly artificial silk yarn.	Quantity lbs.
September, 1934	31,419
October, 1934	33,155
November, 1934	50,573
	115,147

To extract detailed statistics, as suggested, would involve an amount of labour which I am advised would not be justified.

PHORMIUM (IMPORT DUTY).

Sir J. NALL asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury why a consignment of phormium grass staple fibre is detained in the Port of London for payment of Import Duty; and under what authority is phormium grass or the products thereof liable to Import Duty?

Mr. COOPER: As regards the first part of the question, if my hon. Friend will furnish me with particulars of the case he has in mind, I will have inquiries made. As regards the second part of the question, the authority for charging duty on phormium imported as such is the Import Duties Act, 1932, and the authority for charging duty on any particular product of phormium depends upon the nature of the product.

QUEBRACHO EXTRACT AND MYROBALANS (IMPORTS).

Mr. ROBINSON asked the President of the Board of Trade the imports of ordinary quebracho extract and myrobalans into the United Kingdom during the years 1926 to 1933, together with the highest and lowest annual price in each case?

Dr. BURGIN: The following table shows the total quantity and declared value of the imports of the undermentioned commodities into the United Kingdom during each of the years 1926 to 1933, together with the average declared value per cwt. of imports in each of these years.

Year.	Quebracho extract for tanning.			Myrobalans.		
	Quantity.	Declared value (c.i.f).	Average declared value per cwt.	Quantity.	Declared value (c.i.f.).	Average declared value per cwt.
	Cwt.	£	s. d.	Cwt.	£	s. d.
1926	394,666	394,939	20 0	625,689	311,540	9 11
1927	376,153	459,280	24 5	677,978	344,002	10 2
1928	526,331	679,923	25 10	659,913	358,700	10 10
1929	208,532	276,178	26 6	497,010	249,812	10 1
1930	301,673	371,685	24 8	603,476	276,192	9 2
1931	420,460	370,230	17 7	577,294	234,014	8 1
1932	422,945	249,824	11 10	613,654	236,516	7 8
1933	397,161	233,266	11 9	598,056	232,265	7 9

SCOTLAND.

MARR COLLEGE, TROON.

Mr. KIRKWOOD asked the Secretary of State for Scotland when the Marr College, Troon, is to be opened for educational purposes; and, in view of the fact that this college, which cost £210,000, has been standing derelict for four years, he will consider the advisability of introducing legislation to take the college from the Marr Trust and hand it over to the Ayrshire County Council for administration as a public school so that it may be available for the use of students in the county?

Mr. SKELTON: I am informed that the question of the government of the college and the date for its opening is at present under active discussion between the trustee and the Ayrshire County Council. I trust that a satisfactory agreement will soon be reached and

that thereafter the college will be opened as soon as possible; but the matter is now one outside the jurisdiction of my right hon. Friend. With regard to the last part of the question, my right hon. Friend does not propose to submit to the House legislative proposals of the nature suggested.

HOUSING (LEGISLATION).

Mr. KIRKWOOD asked the Secretary of State for Scotland when the Government intend to introduce new legislation to enable local authorities in Scotland to deal with houses to relieve overcrowding and to meet the normal growth of the population, in view of the general refusal of local authorities to build houses under the 1933 Act because of the inadequate subsidy?

Mr. SKELTON: It is hoped to present the Bill before the House rises at Christmas, so that it may be made available to Members during the Recess.

DRUGS (THEFTS FROM CARS).

Mr. THORNE asked the Home Secretary whether he is aware of the growing increase of thefts from unattended cars of doctors' bags containing drugs; and if he intends taking any action in the matter?

Sir J. GILMOUR: I am aware that there have been a few such thefts, but I have no grounds for thinking that they are other than ordinary cases of petty larceny, and I do not think that there is any action I can usefully take in the matter. The remedy is for medical practitioners and others who have drugs in their possession to take reasonable steps to avoid the risk of their being stolen, and I hope the publicity now given to the matter will lead to greater care being taken.

ARTICLED CLERKS (STAMP DUTY).

Mr. POTTER asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, having regard to the heavy cost of Stamp Duty payable on registered articles of clerkship in the legal profession, and to the cases of hardship arising therefrom, he can see his way to make a reasonable concession in respect thereof?

Mr. COOPER: I am unable to make any concession in this matter.

COAL INDUSTRY (MINERS' HOURS AND WAGES).

Mr. GRUNDY asked the Secretary for Mines, owing to the increased use of mechanical appliances in the mines, whether it is his intention to introduce a Bill to limit the hours of labour to not more than six hours per day and to guarantee a weekly wage to all miners of not less than £4 per week?

Mr. E. BROWN: No, Sir.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

INDIAN CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM.

Order read for resuming adjourned Debate on Question [*10th December*].

"That this House accepts the recommendations of the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform as the basis for the revision of the Indian Constitution and considers it expedient that a Bill should be introduced on the general lines of the report."—[*Sir S. Hoare.*]

Question again proposed.

3.38 p.m.

Mr. MORGAN JONES: Yesterday the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India invited the House to approve the recommendations made by the majority of the Joint Select Committee. We continue this afternoon the discussion initiated by him, but before I do so I wish to associate myself and my colleagues on this side of the House with the tribute which was paid yesterday, both by the Secretary of State for India and the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin (Mr. Isaac Foot), to Lord Linlithgow the Chairman of the Committee. I speak as one who belonged to a minority in the Joint Select Committee, and I can say honestly and earnestly that the Lord Chairman's courtesy and tact were unfailing. His patience was inexhaustible, and his willingness to listen and to assure to all points of view a fair, full, frank and free expression of opinion was such that more than that none of us could expect of a chairman, and less than that the Lord Chairman did not give. He has earned from us all our abiding gratitude and our respect.

The report of the majority of the Joint Select Committee deals with a vast range of subjects and, naturally, it strikes different people in different ways. While that is natural, I might add that it would have been equally natural to anticipate that those who are in the habit of collaborating together might have arrived at some common judgment on the matter. However, that is not the case. For instance, Lord Rothermere, speaking of the White Paper and the report, has come to the conclusion that the emblem of those who support the report should be a white flag. The right hon. Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) thinks that it ought to be a red flag. I very much doubt whether either of these gentlemen is accurate in his judgment. Perhaps they are both colour blind. Pleasantries apart, we are all keenly interested in this question.

There are strong differences of opinion, and in these various currents of opinion we can discern three schools of thought. There is the school associated with the right hon. Member for Epping, who say: "Thus far and no further," meaning by "thus far," Provincial Autonomy, with certain limitations. The second school is represented by the Government, whose views are contained in the Majority Report of the Joint Select Committee. The third school is represented by those of us who belong to the Labour movement, and who joined in the minority report. There is a fourth school represented by our anarchist Friend the right hon. and gallant Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme (Colonel Wedgwood), who has been able on this occasion once more to provide a school of one, constisting of himself. I want to discuss these three approaches to the problem without any asperity. I entirely agree with a letter which appeared in the "Times" some weeks ago from Sir Francis Younghusband, who begged us to discuss this matter with as little feeling as we possibly can.

There is a considerable measure of hesitancy in the minds of a good number of people. Some are wondering whether there ought to be any change. For those who object to any change there is no consolation in the discussion taking place in the House this week, for it is a very significant fact attaching to the Debate that so far that everybody advocates some change. Everybody is convinced that we cannot remain as we are. Everybody says that we must register some advance on the present situation. Therefore, I take it we are all agreed as to the inevitability of change, even though it may mean in the minds of some people the inevitability of gradualness. The hesitancy that some people show arises from a feeling of apprehension regarding the fitness of the Indian people to govern. I am going to be very frank with the House. If that proposition is to be advanced, may I respectfully ask whose fault it is? Who is to blame if

the Indians are unfit for government? The late Lord Birkenhead, in recommending that the Simon Commission should be sent to India, said that they would be going as a jury. Who would be judged by the jury? Who would be in the dock?

It is appropriate to recall some simple historical facts. To begin with, before this country formally undertook the government of India as part of the British Empire, the East India Company had been there pushing, by methods of penetration, its business interests in India for something like 250 years. Hon. Members will not question the statement that there were events, incidents and manoeuvres in connection with that period of 250 years which were so disgraceful in character as to bring a blush of shame to the cheek of every decent Englishman. Since that regime came to an end we have had four score years of responsibility for British Government in India. What has happened in that period? I lay down this proposition strongly, and I make no apology for it. It is one of the concepts of the critics of the report and the White Paper that the Indians cannot undertake the responsibility of government, because they are unfit for it. Since the Indian Mutiny a portion of the Indian people have been definitely shut out from the possibility of accepting military responsibility in India. Even now I think we mainly draw our resources in men from certain sections of the Indian population. It is also argued that the Indian people are not literate. After four score years of British Government in India even at this moment not 10 per cent. of the Indian population can be said to be literate. Who, therefore, is to blame if the Indian people on these two grounds are not able to accept responsibility for their own well-being?

I do not deny, it would be foolish to deny, that much has been done for India by the British during our occupation of India. I cordially and freely confess that. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Thank you!"] No one need thank me for that. I make that statement categorically and freely. Hon. Members opposite ask the Indian people to be grateful for what we have done. Are they to be grateful for illiteracy? If not, is that to be a ground of complaint against the Indian people? Let us grant that we have built bridges, made roads and effected all sorts of modern improvements during our occupation of India. I would recall what I have said before on this point. I remember a late leader of the Labour party saying this rather striking thing, that the bird does not sing more sweetly because you gild the bars of its cage. Are you to expect the Indian people to be grateful for these things and to be satisfied? *Grateful certainly, but satisfied,* no, because it is an essential part of freedom as we understand it that people should be adequately equipped for the business of self-government in all its manifestations. We have done great things, but, as the old English adage says, "You cannot turn the mill with the water that has passed."

We have to approach the future with the consciousness that we must equip the Indian people afresh in order that they may discharge the duties of citizenship. As we have kept the Indian people in a state of defencelessness and illiteracy it is unjust to use that as an argument, as a reason, against their being called upon to discharge a further measure of self-government. While it is impossible to deny the proposition that there are not 10 per cent. of the people who are literate, let alone educated, you cannot use that argument as a reason for denying them the opportunity of a measure of self-government. Let me put this proposition to hon. Members. I admit that ignorance is a terrible bar in the exercise of self-government, or in the discharge of any government, but what is our position in this country? Will any hon. Member deny that on the average there are not 100 people in any constituency in this country who could give more than six simple propositions concerning Indian life? They know that there is a Viceroy, a Governor-General, but so far as the details of Indian life are concerned I assert that there are not 100 people in any constituency who could give a connected account of Indian life and customs.

Brigadier-General Sir HENRY PAGE CROFT: That is not true.

Mr. JONES: I think it is true, at any rate, that is my opinion. We, in the main, an uninformed people, declare that Indians shall not have self-government. Let me carry my challenge a little further. Take this House. I wish to speak with every respect of hon. Mem-

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bers, I do not desire to be impertinent, but hon. Members know that in private they are telling each other that they do not know anything about this problem at all, that they have never studied it. As a consequence this House, knowing nothing of the Indian problem, declares to the Indian people who know much more about it that they are not fit to govern themselves. Of course, I acquit our own people generally of any culpability in the matter. We are 6,000 miles away from India—a very serious bar to an intimate knowledge of the country. It comes to this, we are literate, they are illiterate, but we are literate without knowledge while they are illiterate with knowledge. I would much prefer to allow people without any claim to academic distinctions to work out self-government for themselves so long as they have a knowledge of the practical life and problems of their country.

Mr. GEORGE GRIFFITHS: That has got it home.

Mr. JONES: Let me turn now to another side of the argument. There are in this House, I grant it freely and readily, hon. Members who have a close, detailed and intimate knowledge of India. What of it? There are Indians equally endowed intellectually who have passed through English universities as triumphantly as any one of them, who can maintain their argument in debate, and did so in the Joint Select Committee, and who in India, where they have been called upon to perform tasks of government, have done it as well as any white people.

Major-General Sir ALFRED KNOX: No.

Mr. JONES: It was not denied in the Joint Select Committee that the men who staff the Services in the States are for the most part Indian people, and they have performed their services just as efficiently as any white man in British India. Therefore, I say that we are not entitled to argue that these people are unfit for self government. How in the main is the Civil Service in India staffed? There are some few thousands of Britishers at the head at the centres of government, but all over India the people who staff the Civil Service are not white men but native Indians, and they are discharging the functions of administrative government as efficiently as white men. There is a further point. Hon. Members on public platforms are a little prone to accuse the Indian people of all sorts of vices in connection with government. I followed up this point rather closely when the charge was formally made before the Joint Select Committee. I challenged the gentleman who made the accusation to prove his point, and in the course of the discussion three ex-Viceroys, one after the other, responded to the appeal made to them by Sir Tej Badahur Sapru, and declared that as far as they were concerned they had been efficiently served by all the officers under their immediate command.

Sir A. KNOX: Surely they are at the top of the tree. The people who come under the Executive Council of the Viceroy do not take bribes.

Mr. JONES: Let me tell the hon. and gallant Member that the charge of bribery was definitely made and that all we could get in reply was that it was sheer rumour, some one's aunt told some one else's cousin. There was no evidence given which we could challenge in any way. The point of my argument is that if a lack of knowledge is a bar to Indian self government it is equally a bar to our continuing the government of India, for our people do not know much about it. If knowledge is a qualification, then Indians possess it. If experience is essential they have acquired it, and the universities in India and in this country, year after year, are turning out thousands of young Indians who are intellectually as well equipped as the most efficient white men that we can send out to India. Now what is it they lack? It is not fitness. What they lack is opportunity, and I want to quote, not from a supporter of mine, but from a passage in a book written by Sir Walter Lawrence entitled, "The India We Served." He says:

> "I know from experience what Indians can achieve when they have the real chance. Side by side of the British the Indian seems to shrink from initiative. He is very different in the Indian States, and there is hardly an Indian State in which there have not been men of outstanding ability, great thinkers and men of initiative and action; men of the same race, caste and religion as those working in British India, but worlds apart, solely by reason of opportunity."

It is because we want to emphasise this point of the provision of opportunity for self-government that we take such objection to the main spirit of the Majority Report. If we are agreed that opportunity is the point at issue, the question arises, To what degree shall this opportunity be afforded? Our colleagues who composed the majority of the committee took their stand upon the declaration in the Preamble of the 1919 Act, and they used these words, which appear on Page 6, Volume 1 (Part 1) of the report:

"But, above all, in the Preamble to the Act of 1919, Parliament has set out, finally and definitely, the ultimate aims of British rule in India."

And this is the important point:

"Subsequent statements of policy have added nothing to the substance of this declaration, and we think it well to quote it here in full."

Frankly, I controvert that proposition. I do not accept it; it is not true. The hon. baronet the Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) seemed to cheer that passage, presumably because he adopts it. Surely he will agree with me that the most specific pledges—not indefinite pledges—have been given in pronouncements by Ministers at all periods since the War concerning India's future status. I am not going to discuss this matter at great length. The right hon. Member for Epping was a member of the Ministry in 1921. He was in that Ministry as Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Dominions, and in that dual function he made a speech, to which his attention was directed at a meeting of the Joint Select Committee. It was a speech given at the time of the Imperial Conference, in 1921, and in the presence, therefore, I should add, of representatives of the Dominions and of India. That is most important, because language used to those people there would be used in accordance with the understood interpretation of the phrases presented to them. The right hon. Gentleman used this phrase—I quote from page 1,792 of the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Joint Select Committee in reply to a question put by Lord Irwin (now Lord Halifax):

"You then went on: India was now coming into our affairs and councils as a partner, a powerful partner. We well knew how tremendous was the contribution which India made in the War in 1914, how, when there was no other means of filling a portion of the Front by men from any other part of the whole world, there came the two splendid Indian corps, who were almost annihilated in the mud and the shell fire of that terrible winter in Flanders."

He went on to say—and this is the vital part—

"We owed India that deep debt, and we looked forward confidently to the days when the Indian Government and people would have assumed fully and completely their Dominion status."

Now that phrase was used, and the right hon. Gentleman has never troubled to deny it. But in the meantime the right hon. Gentleman has been denouncing the whole process of moving in the direction of granting Dominion status to India. One day, the right hon. Gentleman will recollect, from his place in this House he accused Ministers of using language somewhat lightly and loosely, whereupon I reminded him that he himself was guilty of the same fault, if fault it be, since he had used the phrase "Dominion status" in 1921. Then the right hon. Gentleman sent in a memorandum to us in the Committee and for the first time, as far as I know—I speak subject to correction—the right hon. Gentleman came forward with a distinction between Dominion status and Dominion constitution.

Mr. CHURCHILL: My hon. Friend is wrong. I made a very full statement on this subject in December, 1931, in debate.

Mr. JONES: Yes. I know on that occasion the right hon. Gentleman explained that he used the words "Dominion status" in a ceremonial sense, but he gave us a fuller explanation of the distinction in a Memorandum which he presented to us. He said that he thought Dominion status to be rather different from Dominion function. I accept the right hon. Gentleman's statement of his view. I am not arguing that. All I say is, what is the difference between status and function? What is the good of a status at all unless it expresses function? What is the point of it? Let me put it in a homely way. The right hon. Gentleman will have heard the story of the duke and the dustman twitting each other, one with being over-dressed and the other with being under-dressed, and the duke called attention to the excessive dress of the dustman who said: "My lord, the difference between you and me is this. You have

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the pocket of a duke and the tastes of a dustman, and I have the pocket of a dustman and the tastes of a duke." The point is this. What is the good of a rich man having the status of a duke, shall we say, unless he can function, unless he can express it in some way? So with these people. It is no use the right hon. Gentleman presuming that he can satisfy the Indian people with mere status, or formularies and ceremonials. He must give it reality, and the only way to give it reality is by giving them Dominion self-government.

The right hon. Gentleman is not alone in this matter, for whatever he implied by the word "status" when he made his speech in 1921, as far as I know it was never repudiated by any one of his colleagues in the 1921 Government. There are many of them here; some were Cabinet Ministers, some were junior Ministers. Never once, so far as I know, was the right hon. Gentleman's statement about Dominion status challenged in 1921, and therefore it was fair for the Indians to assume that when he used that language he meant something specific by it. It is no good recanting or explaining it away. It was apparent that Dominion status implied Dominion function in 1921. It is now too late to go back upon that declaration. May I make one other observation upon this point? Hon. Members must not forget that over and over again in the last 80 years have phrases, has language, been used in respect of India by responsible statesmen here and in India. If not specific pledges, pledges were implied, and no one can complain of the Indian people if they feel a little sore when there seems to be a going back on pledges made by responsible Ministers since the War.

I now wish to say a word upon the first point which the right hon. Gentleman said was raised by the proposals, namely, the question of Provincial Autonomy. I am not going over the whole ground. I merely take the ground which is controversial. The great objection is to the transfer of law and order—the police—to the Provincial Governments. We take the view that much of the lawlessness—shall we call it for lack of a better term at the moment—in those areas arises not from viciousness or from the operation of any anti-social spirit. It really is there because of the existence of a sense of political grievance. We contend that if you would only remove this sense of political grievance, much of the lawlessness would speedily pass away. Therefore, if you give self-government, much of the grievance is thereby removed. There will remain, undoubtedly, a residuum of terrorism, as it is called. In regard to this, let me say quite frankly I believe that the best instrument or authority for dealing even with terrorism is the Provincial Government itself, and not the Governor, for if the Governor keeps on interfering I suggest that it will in time do an injury to the Governor's office. He will inevitably come within the realm of party conflict, and be held responsible, and the consequence will be that the acting Ministers in the Provinces will be able to absolve themselves from responsibility by pushing it entirely on to the shoulders of the Governor, which would be a bad step.

Similarly, I take objection myself, and I believe my colleagues also, to the provision that the Governor should preside at the meetings of the Ministers. There, again, I think that is a very bad step. I think that we should start right away with imposing upon these people complete responsibility for the acts of government within the borders of their own Province. If you keep the Governor presiding over a Minister's meeting, you will foist upon him the responsibility for what the Ministry itself should bear. There is another observation I should like to make. I am very sorry—and in this I associate myself with my hon. Friend who said so yesterday—that we have persisted in this imposition of second chambers all over the place. That is perhaps an exaggerated expression. I should have said in respect of five of the Provinces. I think it a pity that we should be giving to these people the feeling that we are erecting barrier upon barrier against democratic progress, against the exercise of the democratic will through the medium of the Provincial Lower Chamber.

Thirdly, I deplore very much the decision to disfranchise those who have been imprisoned in the previous 12 months. They are not anti-social people; they are not people who are vicious in intention. They are people who, like the people in Ulster some time ago, were

impelled by a deep sense of political grievance, and in this case perhaps of exaggerated nationalism. I do not say it is, but in any event it was a sense of political grievance that sent them to gaol. But who will deny that the idiosyncrasies of yesterday become the commonplaces of to-day, and the follies of to-day the merest wisdom of to-morrow? These people at the moment are driven into destructive activity. Why not bring some of them into constructive effort by giving them a chance to make a contribution inside these organisations of Government?

I turn from that point to say a word about the Centre. I am not going to pretend that I like this central organisation excessively. Everyone can see that it is a somewhat anomalous organisation. From the States you have delegates, not representatives. From British India you get representatives. The one set of people represent individuals, that is the Princes; others represent vast bodies of people, the electors. One is highly conservative in its outlook, and the other, perhaps obliged to be, a little more democratic in its outlook. It seems to me like mixing two entirely contradictory principles, as it were. Moreover, the coming of the Princes into the Centre will necessarily add an enormous weightage on the side of privilege and wealth. No one can deny that.

Those factors make me feel, I must confess, that I do not heartily like the Federation as it is built up. But I ask, what is the alternative? Men may argue that the coming of the Princes into the Federation will bring in a conservative element. I do not deny it. But in respect of the acceded subjects, the subjects which the Princes have acceded in respect of Federation, the territory of the Princes will be brought for the first time under the aegis of this new Parliament. That is a step in advance. Moreover, I cannot believe that the Princes, or the States of the Princes, will remain like rocks in the middle of this vast ocean all round without some erosion taking place in the course of the years. It is bound to follow that in some degree some will be influenced one way and some the other. But the main argument for the Federation is this: It does provide an opportunity for India to begin thinking as one, as an entity, for the first time. I do not like the conservative outlook, I confess. But in the absence of it Provinces will be apt to go their respective ways. in the absence of it there might be a tendency to another Federation, even less desirable perhaps than this form, on a purely communal basis, and that is something we ought to avoid if we can.

Let me turn to the great ground of difference between us and the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State. First there are the reserved powers. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Limehouse (Mr. Attlee) spoke of foreign affairs yesterday. I will therefore pass on to defence. No one can deny the proposition I made earlier, that the Indian people have been very largely kept out of access to officerships in the Army. General Rawlinson, who was then Commander-in-Chief in India, set up a committee in 1922 to discuss this question. That committee reported that it would be possible to Indianise the Indian Army in 42 years. It subsequently reviewed that proposition and its final conclusion was that it could be done in 30 years. That conclusion was unanimously endorsed by the Viceregal Council, at which there were present the Commander-in-Chief and Lord Reading, then Viceroy. In our view you are bound to take steps for the Indianisation of the Army much more rapidly than a period of 30 years represents, so that Indians can man the Army themselves and officer it too.

But there is another side. Hon. Gentlemen must not forget that Sir Walter Layton declared that something like 62 per cent. of the total revenues of the Centre are expended upon the Army, not one penny of it under the review of the Legislative Assembly as it now is. Their only order is "Pay, pay, pay." They cannot criticise expenditure, nor are they allowed to criticise it under this proposal. If you are going to take 12s. out of every pound for the Army there is only 8s. left for social services, and everyone will admit that in India neglect of the social services has been one of the greatest blots on administration in the last half-century. They cannot tackle their social problems when so much money is mortgaged for the Army. Consequently it cannot be long before you will find the keenest resentment against a proposal whereby they

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might not even discuss how much money shall be reserved for the Army at the Centre.

The third point is this: The hon. Member for Bodmin yesterday discussed at some length—I do not complain of it—the method of electing the Indian Lower Chamber. I still stand where I stood in Committee. It is quite true that there he and I voted together in favour of direct election and against indirect election. I was happy to find myself, as it were, in the same Division Lobby as the hon. Member. But that was one of the very rare occasions when I had that privilege. I have looked up the hon. Member's record, and I am referring to it now because I understand we are to have a campaign in the country, in which my hon. Friend the Member for Limehouse is to be held up as the one person who let down the barriers against reaction. Let me consider the record of the hon. Member for Bodmin, since we are to discuss records. The hon. Member voted against the abolition of second chambers. He voted against the abolition of special representation for landlords, chambers of commerce and industry. He voted against an increase of labour representation. He voted against definite provision for adult franchise after 10 years. He voted against our proposal whereby the wife of a qualified elector would be entitled to the vote. He voted against us when we desired to limit the special responsibility of the Governor-General. So I could go on. It does not lie in the mouth of the hon. Member for Bodmin, therefore, to accuse my hon. Friend the Member for Limehouse of failure to be democratic. When the hon. Member sets out on his campaign and when he delivers his speech I shall join issue with him and give some small share of his record in holding up the progress of democracy.

Mr. ISAAC FOOT: Seeing that my hon. Friend is so anxious to come on the same platform, would he prefer to discuss the question of indirect and direct election upon public platforms in the country?

Mr. JONES: Certainly, provided the whole area of differences is open to discussion the happier I shall be. All I am saying now is that if we are to have examination of each other's records, I shall be glad to be there to show how much more in favour of progress the hon. Member for Limehouse was than the hon. Member for Bodmin. I, like other people, deplore—that is scarcely an adequate word—the necessity for this communal award. I dislike the division of people on religious lines in this way. With the passing of the years the people of India will be compelled to find some other and better way. But I take a consistent line in this matter. I have always declared that if the Indian people could settle this thing I am prepared to accept what they can agree upon. The Prime Minister made an offer that if they could agree he would accept the agreement. This agreement was come to, and the Prime Minister made his award. Later on there came the Poona pact. I feel that, having got the Poona pact, it is impossible to go back upon it without creating a whole set of new controversies and difficulties. That does not make me love it any the more. I dislike it as thoroughly as ever. But I think that it is inevitable in the circumstances, and therefore I voted for it, though, reluctantly I admit.

One other word on the subject. Here again, I differ from the Secretary of State and his friends. I believe that we must Indianise more rapidly the public services in India, for it is only a fiction of self-government if these people are not themselves able to look forward to the time when they can man the services from top to bottom. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State yesterday, it seemed to me, betrayed little realisation of the fact that the most interested parties in this matter are the Indian people. He spoke, I thought, as a Conservative to Conservatives. After all, the right hon. Gentleman is not Secretary of State for India for nothing. As I conceive it, it is his business to represent the point of view of India to this House as well as to represent the point of view of this House to India. I do not feel that the right hon. Gentleman presented adequately the reactions of the Indian people to this whole problem since the beginning.

I said two years ago when we discussed the White Paper that it was like a barbed wire fence round the Indian people. The only change I have seen has been the addi

tion of a few extra strands to make the fence higher. I am sure that we cannot carry this scheme through successfully, even though we put it on the Statute Book, unless we rid ourselves once and for all of the sentiment of suspicion, of the lack of trust which runs like a sinister vein through the whole business. Do not, I beg of the House, give with one hand and take back with the other. I invite the House to give heartily and give with both hands. When Queen Victoria issued her proclamation on the occasion on the formal coming of India into the Empire she used these words:

"It is our further will that as far as may be our subjects of whatever race or creed be freely and impartially admitted to the offices in our service the duties of which they are qualified by education, ability and integrity duly to discharge. In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security and in their gratitude our best reward."

I myself, if I may say so, would accept those final words as an adequate guide to us in our present task. We are about to build a new constitutional edifice in India. It must weather the storms. It must withstand the rains of adversity. Though the biting winds of fierce criticism beat upon it, that edifice must stand. Its foundations must be well and truly laid. My colleagues and I have tried to fashion, crudely and incompletely it may be, an adequate foundation stone. That stone which we have sought to fashion is to be rejected, I doubt not, by the House to-morrow night, but I venture upon this prophecy—that the stone which the present builders will reject to-morrow, shall yet become the head of the corner.

4.34 p.m.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Butler): I am sure the House has appreciated the great sincerity with which the hon. Member for Caerphilly (Mr. Morgan Jones) has spoken, but I must ask him and the House to excuse me from following in detail the many interesting points which he raised. I propose this afternoon to take the House to a new country, that of Burma, and to consider the problems of the future in that country. There was one matter, in which I could not follow the hon. Member for Caerphilly and that was in his illustrations of what he regarded as the dire consequences of British rule. I almost thought that after his fulminations some natural phenomenon might be observed in the sky. I was reminded of an extract from to-day's "Manchester Guardian" in which we are informed that in Burma they have experienced the coldest week ever recorded in the annals of the country and, it is said:

"The superstitious declare that this unprecedented weather is the result of the proposed separation of Burma from India."

That is the sort of natural phenomenon which I should have expected to result from the great warmth of the hon. Member's speech. We are told on both sides in this problem of the red ruin and anarchy which may result from our plans. In the short speech which I propose to make, I shall attempt to show that the same guiding principles which were indicated by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State in his speech yesterday, animate us in considering the future of Burma. Burma received a great deal of consideration, as my hon. Friends will be able to testify, in the discussions at the Joint Select Committee. Those who wish to study the recommendations of the Committee will find them set out at length in the latter part of the Committee's Report. Like every one else who has had the privilege of visiting Burma I have had the experience of being entranced by her stately pagodas, her colour and her lively atmosphere, and I hope that those of us who are considering her problems will attempt to bring some of those qualities into the constitutional discussions on the subject.

It is right at the outset to consider briefly the association of Burma with this country. It is just over 100 years ago since the first portion of Lower Burma was added to the possessions of the Crown in 1826. In 1852 a further portion was added, and the longest and most comprehensive debates in the House on the subject of Burma took place in connection with the annexation of Upper Burma in 1886. In 1923 my right hon. Friend the Member for Horsham (Earl Winterton), who was then Under-Secretary of State for India, moved that regulations under the Government of India Act should be applied to Burma and from that date Burma has had a constitution equivalent to that of an Indian Province. During the whole of this time Burma has had close association with the Indian Empire of which she has formed a part.

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During this period, however, her individuality has been becoming more and more marked. She has grown in wealth, in trade and in status. Great trading corporations have identified themselves with Burma's future and have invested large sums of money in the country. The rich mineral deposits particularly in the Shan States are extracted by the Burma Corporation. These are lead, spelter, silver and precious metals. Rubies and jade are among Burma's gems, and large merchant companies export her natural products of rice, oil and teak wood. Why is it that when one discusses these matters with regard to politics and gives statistics referring to them, rubies seem to lose their sparkle? Why is it that rice, so green and refreshing when it is growing and so palatable in a curry, becomes indigestible when it is dealt with as an exportable commodity? Why is it that oil which illuminates in its natural activity, should render a speech so dull? And why is it that teak wood, which is hard enough to be used for the decks of our Navy should become harder still when referred to in any discourse of this character? Nevertheless, I am obliged to refer to these products, and, if my remarks appear tedious to the House, it will be because I have to consider the effect of these matters upon the relations between Burma and India. Burma has grown in wealth to this extent that her sea-borne trade, which just after the annexation of Upper Burma in 1886 amounted to £19,000,000, last year reached a total of £48,000,000. During this time, not only has Burma grown in individuality but a a great divergence of economic interests between her and India has become apparent. In the submission to the Statutory Commission by the Burma Government the following sentence appears:

"Burma is a province in which the incidence of both central and provincial revenue is far in excess of that in other provinces and which furnishes the central revenues with sums that in comparison with those furnished by other provinces are increasingly large and rapidly expanding."

This fact can best be illustrated by certain figures. In 1926-1927 Burma paid to the Central Government in customs, income tax and salt tax 635 lacs as against 5,470 lacs contributed by the rest of India—that is Burma paid about 10 per cent. of the whole, although her population, amounting to little over 13,000,000, is only about 4½ per cent. of India's total. She also paid more per head in Provincial revenues than any other Province in India, namely, 7.3 rupees as against 2.7 rupees, the average for the rest of India. That is per head of the population. These figures, I think, illustrate the growing divergence of the economic interests between the two countries and the growing demand which Burma feels is being made upon her by the Indian revenues.

Not only in economic questions, however, but in many other respects has the individuality of Burma been growing more marked. She has a religion to which over 84 per cent. of her subjects adhere—the Buddhist religion—and from that fact springs a certain homogeneity in her population and outlook which is not present in India. We are in Burma spared many of the difficulties which communal problems bring in India or in parts of India. We have only to consider the different minority races, such as the Karens, Chins and Shans who, however, only make up a small proportion of her population. Moreover, social conditions in Burma are totally different from those in India. My hon. Friends opposite will be glad to hear that there are very few landlords in Burma. There are no depressed classes and the general structure of the Burmese policy is much more democratic than that which is found in India or even, I believe, in this country. How little, therefore, it would seem, hon. Members opposite can find to attack in any remarks that I want to make about the Burma policy. In comparison with India, women in Burma take a greater part in public life; there is no child marriage and many of the social problems which we find in India will be absent from our consideration this afternoon.

Besides these social and economic differences there are naturally great political differences arising from the distinctions between India and Burma. The Burmese delegates have to cross the sea to attend the Assembly at Delhi. The Burmese delegates to the Legislative Assembly have done noble work in the past few years. We know how difficult they have found it to assimilate themselves to conditions on the Indian continent and the Simon Commission found that representa-

tives were, in fact, very hard to find. Meanwhile within Burma the national life has been growing up on individual lines. Burma has now her own university at Rangoon. She is proud of the abolition of slavery within her borders, and she is proud of the share that she has taken in the constitutional discussions which have been going on for the last several years. Burma sent her delegates to take part in the Burma Round Table Conference, and Burma sent her delegates to share that work with us on the Joint Select Committee. Here I would like to pay a tribute to the work that the Burmese delegates did when they came here to join us just over a year ago. Without any sense of manoeuvre and with complete frankness, they joined in our discussions, and one saw a very great deal. They have, in common with this country, what we like to regard as one of our most valuable assets, and that is a sense of humour.

Mr. McGOVERN: They will need it when they see this Bill.

Mr. BUTLER: They contributed very nobly to our discussions, and I should like, in all seriousnes—and I feel sure the House would like to associate itself with me—to pay them a very sincere tribute for the trouble they took in coming. I feel sure that they found an English winter even worse than the cold spell to which I referred in the opening of my remarks. We found that these delegates were all imbued with the same strong wish that Burma should develop her individuality, but just as we find differences of opinion among ourselves on political questions, there was difference of opinion among the Burmese delegates as to whether they should continue to throw in their lot with India or whether their way should separate from India. Broadly speaking, it seems to me that their conclusion was that they were almost all in favour of separation, provided Burma could have separation on her own terms, and those who styled themselves anti-separationists desired, I believe, to enter the Indian Federation provided they had the right to secede later, when they hoped they might get better terms for an independent Burma. I am sure the House will agree with me in saying that to set up a Federation and at the same time allow a right of secession would be absolutely impossible, and this was at the time made clear to the Burmese delegates. In the words of the Prime Minister at the Burma Round Table Conference,

> "If an Indian Federation is established, it cannot be on the basis that its members can leave it as and when they choose."

I have attempted, without going into the field of political speculation, to put the issue of separation as simply and clearly as I can. Those, I believe, were the arguments which led the Joint Select Committee, following upon the recommendation of the Statutory Commission, to recommend that Burma should be separated from India. Now if Burma is to be separated from India—and I have given the decision of the Joint Select Committee, which I feel that the House would wish to endorse when the time comes to-morrow night—what Constitution should Burma have, if she is to stand alone? I think it would be profitable at this stage to examine the success of Burma in administering the present Constitution, which she has had for the last 10 years. During this time, as I said earlier, Burma has had a Constitution equivalent to that of any Indian Province, but she has had something further. In 1923 the Forests Department was in Burma among the Departments transferred, and Burma, alone with Bombay, during these last 10 years has had the opportunity and the privilege of administering her own Forests Department. A Forests Inquiry Committee in 1925 reported that after examination of the working of the Burma Forests Department in its relations with the people, they found little that required remedy, and they were satisfied that the work of the Department was of a high order.

I have endeavoured to examine the reports on the other transferred Departments, and I have found that generally they may be said to have operated with great satisfaction and that an increasing amount of democratic support has been given to them in that operation. It may therefore be said that Burma has at the present moment a Constitution as advanced as, and in some degrees, as I have shown, more advanced than, that of any Indian Province. This was realised by pledges which have been given to Burma from time to time and which may be summed up in the words of Lord Peel at the Burma Round Table Conference, when he said that

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"the objective after separation will remain the progressive realisation of responsible government in Burma as an integral part of the Empire."

Throughout, pledges have been given to Burma that she shall, if separated, have a Constitution of this sort. Now the Constitution which we propose for Burma follows in its fundamental principles that which my right hon. Friend explained yesterday to the House in connection with India. It is a form of responsible government subject to certain safeguards and reservations, and I, therefore, will not go over the whole of the features of that Constitution, because I feel that my right hon. Friend has done it more ably than I could, yesterday.

There are one or two features upon which I should like to touch. The first is that the Burma Constitution will be unitary. The reservations in the federal field in the Indian Constitution and the special powers and responsibilities in the federation and provinces will be telescoped into one, into a unitary Constitution for Burma. There will be the same three reserved departments as are suggested in the case of India, but there is one special feature, due to the special circumstances of Burma, which do not seem to justify or to make necessary the establishment of a reserve bank for Burma. It is therefore proposed that Burma should continue within India's currency system, and it is thought that this will avoid some of the uncertainty and fluctuation which would be so undesirable at this stage of her development. The Governor of Burma is to be given control of monetary policy, currency and coinage for the reasons that I have attempted to explain. The Governor will also have the benefit of the advice of a financial adviser, who will be in touch with and available to the responsible Ministers.

In general, the other provisions follow those of the Indian Constitution. We had the same experience as in the case of India in attempting to arrive at the proper composition of the Burmese Legislature. We had to consider all the different claims, and we had a unique experience. Burmese women were offered three reserved seats in the Legislature, and through the mouth of their very able representative they rejected that offer and said they would rather not have any reserved seats, but preferred to find their own place in the general constituencies. That is the only experience we have had, I think, of an offer being refused, and I am sorry to say that the other communities and interests for whom reservation of seats has been arranged in every case asked for more. Many of us would have wished in the Burmese problem to have avoided the difficulty of separate electorates, but we have confined our recommendations in regard to separate electorates to the minority rights of the minority races, the Karens and others to whom I referred earlier in my speech. There is, however, not the same problem of communalism that we find in India. There is one detail arising out of the women's franchise which I would like to mention. Some 21 per cent. of the adult women of Burma will find their place upon the roll, and it was unfortunately found impracticable to include any more.

I have attempted to show hitherto the growth of Burman individuality and her tendency to wish to stand alone, but naturally during this period of association with India certain associations and ties have been contracted, and no act of separation should be too drastic or should leave too clean a cut. It is for this reason that the Joint Select Committee have recommended agreements for an interim period on the questions of trade and emigration. There is seen to be a necessity for this when one examines the volume of Burma's trade with India. Burma sends to India her rice, her oil, her teak, her rice and her silver, and gets from India jute bags for her rice, coal and coke, cotton piece goods, and yarn. Nearly half of Burma's total imports and exports are in trade with India, and the values of the two tables I have given approximate fairly closely to each other. At the same time India sends to Burma annually, in a great migration, some 300,000 coolies to extract and to handle those very natural products which India needs so much, and Burma in her turn does not want an excessive or an unregulated supply of this labour from India.

The House will therefore see that there is a distinct interaction between the two countries on their various interests in trade and immigration, and they will readily understand the reason why the

Joint Select Committee have thought it necessary to recommend agreements on these questions for an interim period. The features common to these two agreements are that they are conceived for the purpose of avoiding disturbance, until we see how things work out, and they are conceived with an idea not to interfere with the independence of the future autonomous Governments either of Burma or of India, when they are established after separation has taken place. Therefore, there must be agreements, and they must be for a restricted period. Let me illustrate the necessity for a restricted period and for not interfering with the future autonomy of the individual Governments of either Burma or India. In the case of labour, it cannot be denied that Burma or any other country should have the right to decide upon the composition of her own population and the control of immigration, and in trade neither Government can be denied the right to control in the future, when separated, its own fiscal policy. There are certain differences between the needs of India and Burma in fiscal policy. Burma exports natural products which are not always suited by the high tariff wall which at present surrounds the Indian Empire.

The House will see that these are very important issues, and I think it will be wise, in coming to a decision upon them, to accept the general recommendations of the Joint Select Committee and not to hurry a decision. These questions, very naturally, are being exhaustively considered by the Governments concerned, and I feel sure that the House will be kept in touch with the developments and will watch them with interest, in view of the importance of the issues involved. In both these questions of labour and trade there are provisions suggested for preventing discrimination. For instance, the Joint Select Committee have suggested that the prior sanction of the Governor shall be given to any legislation on immigration which would have an unfairly discriminatory effect. Annually there pass to Burma from India different types of Indians who carry on different trades and avocations, and who contribute very largely to the prosperity of Burma, and this provision has been suggested in order that there should be no unfair discrimination against any section of the populations of those countries.

In the same way, in trade, the Governor of Burma is to have a special responsibility to prevent penal tariffs on Indian goods, and the Governor-General of India is to have a special responsibility to protect Burmese interests. Both the Governor of Burma and the Governor-General of India are to have similar power in respect of British goods. This should, I think, allay the anxiety of those traders who are considering the future of British trade with India. In general, during the interim period of the agreement, to the extent to which it allows for the variation of the tariff schedules with third parties, it will be possible for British trade to find an outlet. British trade will have an opportunity in future when Burma's Government is established as an autonomous unit and is able to make her own fiscal policy. For the present her trade will be governed by any general agreement made by India as a whole with whom Burma at the present time naturally constitutes one fiscal unit.

There is one other very complicated issue to which I must refer. Separation would inevitably entail an apportionment of assets and liabilities between the Governments of India and Burma. Attention was directed to this problem from the time when separation was first advocated by the Statutory Commission, and the suggestion which the Government of India made in their dispatch of September, 1930, was endorsed by the first Indian Round Table Conference. Following on that a preliminary examination into this subject was made by Sir Henry Howard on behalf of the Government of Burma and Mr. Nixon on behalf of the Government of India. But their examination inevitably left some questions of principle outstanding. These will be required to be settled in principle by an arbitral tribunal and the Joint Select Committee conclude their report by recommending that steps should be taken for its appointment at as early a date as is reasonably practicable. The Secretary of State has lost no time in taking action upon this recommendation and, if the House adopts the proposal to proceed with legislation on the lines of the Committee's report, he is is in a position to proceed at once with the necessary arbitration.

[Mr. Butler.]

In conclusion, I think I can sum up saying that I have every confidence in recommending the House to proceed to deal with Burma's future on the lines suggested by the Joint Select Committee's Report. I have attempted to show the growth of Burma's individuality and how the Joint Select Committee approached the question of separation in a spirit of common sense. In the researches I have made into the history of the old kings of Ava, I found that when suits were instituted in the courts it was always taken as an axiom that both parties had a certain amount of right and that both parties were certainly partly at fault. The guiding principle in coming to a decision was that of common sense. We have attempted to deal with the question of separation on common sense lines, and we have suggested certain compromise arrangements for the interim period. We believe that in the transitional period the arrangements suggested will avoid confusion and lead to the greater stability of the relations of Burma with India and this country. It is a great moment for Burma, who is waiting the chance to develop her own individuality. I feel sure when she reflects that she is in effect going to be separated, but, at the same time, is going to enter a new triple partnership, she will feel that her separation from India will be a happy one in that she will take part in a new triple partnership of India, Burma and Great Britain, and will be included in a great Empire partnership which will be for her future interest and benefit.

5.5 p.m.

Sir H. CROFT: I am sure the House will be very grateful to the Under-Secretary of State for his most interesting speech on the important subject of Burma. I am certain that our loyal friends in Burma will be glad to think that in the midst of this tremendously important Debate the Under-Secretary has laid such great stress upon that side of the problem. I do not know what course the proposed legislation will take, but I hope that it will be possible for this subject to be dealt with in a special Bill and that considerable time will be given to the matter. As was indicated by the hon. Gentleman, this is a great problem which is vital to British and Indian interests, and I hope that any new Constitution for Burma will not be rushed through the House by Orders in Council or in the manner of the Ceylon Constitution, which will be injurious to her in days to come.

I feel that the opening of the Debate to-day if of a congratulatory character. We offer our solicitations to the people of Burma that they are not to be included in this new Federation, which some people consider to be of a ramshackle character. I am sure my friends will do everything to see that in the future Constitution for Burma we shall take steps to ensure that the people of Burma are not exploited, but that they have the freest possible trade between Britain and India—a reciprocal trade—and that they do not have to pay, as the Indians do in many cases because of the fiscal system, high prices for goods which cannot be suitably produced in their own country. I hope I may have the opportunity towards the end of next year of replying at length to the Under-Secretary's speech in regard to Burma's Constitution. The subject will require many days' discussion, and I hope my hon. Friend will not think it impertinent of me if I do not follow him on that subject, because the greater issue of India's Constitution must occupy all our efforts, especially as 44 other Members who share my views desire to speak, and I can only humbly attempt to represent their views.

In the report which we are considering there is no suggestion whatever that British rule in partnership with Indians has broken down or failed, or that the conditions for the masses in India will show any definite improvement by the transfer of Government and administration. There is no suggestion of inefficiency or corruption among the British administrators who are serving in India, and there is no criticism of the services of the police or the great Civil Service in that country. Indeed, the Committee refer in the early stages of their report to the majestic structure of the Government of India and refer to all its services in the most glowing terms. There is common agreement in the House about that. The Committee, however, as far as I can see, bases its real reason for these reforms upon what is described, and what has so frequently been described in this country, as meeting the aspirations of the

Indian people. The Committee frankly declared that those who entertain these aspirations are but a small fraction of the population. If I can prove that the whole of this small fraction is either definitely hostile to or frankly dissatisfied with the proposed reforms, and if I can prove, as I think I can clearly, that in fact India, with such voice as she has, has rejected these reforms, I suppose that the House will agree that the framework of the Committee's structure is not suitable and will have to be either pulled down or built up again.

Let me substantiate my case, not by opinions of my own, which I am afraid would not carry much weight in any section of the House, but by the facts as they are. I have made it my business during the last two and a-half years to ask the opinion of every expert supporter of what I might call White Paper principles to tell me what figure I can truthfully give as the number of persons who may be regarded as politically-minded in India. The answers which I have received have varied widely between 1,500,000 and 10,000,000 people. I desire to give every advantage to those who disagree with me and, I will therefore take the higher figure of 10,000,000 which, out of a population of 352,000,000, is less than 3 per cent. The other 97 per cent. of the people of India are inarticulate or have not been touched by the democratic urge or surge which we are told exists in some quarters. Therefore, it is my duty, if I can substantiate my case, to examine and dissect this 3 per cent. of the population who are admittedly by their education, by their political knowledge, which is great, and by their organising ability, which is by no means small, those who will control the democratic institutions which it is proposed to set up.

The Secretary of State, who conducted his case with such suavity and good temper and, we all agree, with immense sincerity through all these discussions, has divided the population of India who are politically minded into two sections. Firstly, I think he will agree that he used to lay the greatest stress upon the Liberals and Moderates, some of whose leaders were actively supporting the ideals of the right hon. Gentleman, at any rate, until recently; and, secondly, the Congress, whose influence the right hon. Gentleman, in a Debate about six months ago, begged us not to overrate. The Viceroy definitely voiced the opinion that Congress was the one great political force in India which was organised, and I beg the House to remember that immediately after the White Paper was published the Congress leaders decided to take part in the election for the Legislative Assembly and to make opposition to the White Paper the basis of their policy. In addition, I would remind the House that practically the whole of the Hindu Press denounced the White Paper.

The election is now completed, with the exception of seats in Burma and one or two others, and I suggest that it is imperative for us to realise precisely what has happened. Throughout India, with 106 elected seats, I think I am right in saying, on the analysis I have obtained, that only six Hindu Moderate candidates stood for election, and five of them were eliminated, suffering overwhelming defeat. I should have said six, but there is one ewe lamb who has gone astray, because I think the right hon. Gentleman did at least claim, when we interrupted yesterday, that at least one of these Liberal Moderates was returned. Whoever the ewe lamb may be, and wherever he stood, we gladly make the right hon. Gentleman a present of him.

But to get the true picture one must look at the actual results in the great Provinces of India. The right hon. Gentleman will perhaps forgive me if by any chance I make one or two mistakes, because these are cabled results received from India from time to time; at any rate, it will not alter the effect of the story. In Bengal not a single Moderate even stood for election. The field was left clear to Congressmen and to their allies, who, on the communal question, have expressed their determination to support Congress. These candidates swept the board in Bengal. The United Provinces sent eight Hindu representatives to the Legislative Assembly. Four of these representatives were returned unopposed and four were elected by huge majorities. All of them were Congressmen. Madras was the one hope of my right hon. Friend, because there was the Justice Party, which some people honestly believed was going to "cut some ice." It was the only party which stood up at all

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against Congress. The Justice Party has been completely wiped out in Madras. In the Punjab, of the Hindu representatives, one was a declared Congressman and two were Nationalists who have declared their support for Congress. In Assam both Hindu representatives were Congressmen. In the Central Provinces one was a Congressman and one a Nationalist Congressman. For Bombay I have not got the complete returns—I do not know whether complete returns are out—but here no Moderate ventured to stand, except Sir Cowasjee Jehangir, and what his fate was I do not know. Perhaps he was the ewe lamb.

The Select Committee, in their report, gave no indication whatsoever of this coming repudiation of the whole of their plan—because it has to be remembered that their plan is entirely based upon "the aspirations of the Indian people." I think they were, to a certain extent, led astray by the enthusiasm of friends of my right hon. Friend who came as delegates to the Conference, and who, I suppose, and not unnaturally, were mostly chosen because they were presumed to support these reforms. The Select Committee laid very great stress, however, upon the central body of opinion in India. They were relying upon that just as much as they rely upon the central body of opinion in this country. I hope their illusions will not be shattered in this country as they have been in India. Since the writing and the signing of the report the election has taken place in India, and the central body of opinion upon which they counted so largely for the fulfilment of their hopes has evaporated in thin air, and, in consequence, the basis of the case presented by the Committee to Parliament is very seriously damaged. Henceforth, if we have the smallest regard for realities, we cannot claim that there exist Liberals, Moderates, or a central body of opinion which can in any way help the Select Committee out of the profound difficulty in which they now find themselves.

This is only a part of this humiliating story. Hitherto, owing to the communal issue, Moslems have been more or less favourable to the policy of the Government as recommended by the Select Committee. But now no less than 10 Moslems have been returned in opposition to the White Paper. They include Mr. Jinna, Mantava Shankat Ali, Sherwani, Dr. Khan—Red Shirt Leader—and Mr. Ahmad Kazim, all leaders in the Moslem world. Out of the total number of 145 in the new House, therefore, as far as I can ascertain, there will be 53 Congressmen and their allies, 13 followers of Mr. Jinna and seven nondescripts, a total of 73 opponents of the White Paper policy. It is clear, therefore, that the Government can only avert danger on this question of the reforms with the help of the official members. If a vote is taken of the elected members only a section of the depressed classes, the Europeans, and certain Moslems—a majority of the Moslems—will vote for the Government, and three-quarters of the elected representatives will, in my opinion, be against the reforms. Therefore, "democracy," the word which these gentlemen have taught my right hon. Friend to utter so frequently——

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Sir Samuel Hoare): Never.

Sir H. CROFT: I am very glad to hear that the right hon. Gentleman never uttered it, but it has been used very loosely in many quarters. I am very sorry that I should have made such a terrible blunder. I always hoped that the right hon. Gentleman was not allowing himself to be carried along this stream of passionate verbiage about democratic India, when one knows that no possible form of democracy can exist in a caste-ridden country. I must therefore address myself to the Liberal benches. It has been shown that democracy in India is dead against them. The Government cannot get away from that fact, and if they persist in this policy they do so clearly in violation of the Indian electorate. I ask the question: Is His Majesty's Government going on with this Measure if the majority of the elected representatives in the Legislative Assembly decide against their reforms? I think we ought to have an answer to that question. To tell the House or the country that this policy meets the aspirations of the Indian people will, unless the facts which I have presented are completely wrong, be no longer true. The vast majority of the people want no re-

forms, and the particular few with political aspirations have refused the reforms.

We have also to face the fact that there is one more startling change in the Indian situation. My right hon. Friend puts his trust not, perhaps, in princes but in Indian Liberals, and, although they have not succeeded in getting elected to the Legislative Assembly, practically all of them have now denounced this policy. The Liberal Federation, presided over by Mr. J. N. Basu, went even further, and most unfairly, I thought, accused the British Government of a breach of faith and of dishonesty. Therefore, we have to face the fact that democratic India in both its branches, as far as it is vocal, has expressed itself against the policy of the Government. If the Secretary of State still doubts these facts which are staring him in the face, I invite him to take two immediate steps. First of all, in order to reassure the public of this country, let him get a document signed by ten leaders of the Hindus in India to state that they wish him to go on with the reforms. If he cannot do that, let him try to get six just Liberals who will sign such a statement. Secondly, I ask him to select any district in the whole of India, great or small, where Hindus predominate, and take a plebiscite of the people in that area on these reforms. If he is unable to do that I would remind him that three-quarters of the population of the Indian Empire are Hindus.

Now I come to the Princes. The bull point recently made at important gatherings outside this House, to which I hardly like to refer, was the desire of the Princes to come into this scheme, great stress being laid on the word "desire." We were told that we must not thwart the will of the Princes. My right hon. Friend the Member for Sparkbrook (Mr. Amery), with whom I have found myself in agreement on nearly every question except the Statute of Westminster for so many years, said: "We must not fob off the Princes for the Council." A great champion of the Princes was Lord Salisbury. Am I wrong in saying that the whole case for abandoning the recommendations of the commission which spent two years on this question under the chairmanship of the Foreign Secretary was the assumption that a new situation had arisen in the great desire of the great Princes to come into a federal scheme. The Secretary of State, speaking yesterday, said:

> "I have no reason to suppose that the Princes have in any way altered their position since they made that offer four years ago. Neither they nor I will be deflected by partisan propaganda. They are free agents."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 10th December, 1934; col. 59, Vol. 296.]

Never at any time, I submit, did more than a small number of the Princes seek this policy. I am quite aware that a great Prince, a man to whom every British citizen is in debt, the Maharajah of Bikaner, was infected by this desire, and at the first Round Table Conference he made a speech in favour of it, and we ought to pay very great attention to all that gallant, loyal, and distinguished citizen of the Empire may at any time say. His two principal supporters on that occasion were the Maharajahs of Alwar and Kashmir, of whose views I will not say more than that they would not carry quite the same weight. But it was only when a certain number of Princes saw that we were apparently determined ruthlessly to go on with self-government in the Provinces of India that some of them, fearful for their future, began to listen to the siren voice of Lord Reading, who is now claimed by the Liberal party as the real author of these reforms. A great Indian chief, speaking over here to a large gathering at which some of my hon. Friends were present, said:

> "When the lion is running with its tail between its legs, can you blame the lion cubs if they follow?"

Sir S. HOARE: Who was the chief who said that?

Sir H. CROFT: The Maharajah of Burdwan. At no time have the representatives of the Princes given unconditional acceptance of Federation. The commitments of 1930, which were referred to by the Solicitor-General, were negatived in the Chamber of Princes in March, 1933, upon the publication of the White Paper. During the present year the Princes have made it perfectly clear that they would not enter Federation unless all the safeguards that they had demanded through the Chamber were incorporated. If the House wants the exact words, I can read them, but I hope

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hon. Members will allow me to go straight on. The safeguards which the Princes demanded have not been incorporated in the report of the Joint Select Committee. These truths will out. Why were they not made clear in the great discussions which have taken place outside and here? You cannot count upon the Princes assenting to come in.

The Secretary of State for India talked about partisan propaganda. I am most reluctant to make any criticism of one who stands in the highest esteem of this House and who has done an immense deal for the restoration of order in the administration of India, but since he has made a political utterance I must, for one moment, make a political utterance in reply. The power of the Viceroy and his prestige among the Princes of India is, as everybody knows, very great. The Viceroy declared in India publicly that he could be trusted in this matter because he was a lifelong Liberal and Home Ruler. I confess I was staggered upon reading that. If any sovereign of any land were to say that he could be trusted on certain political measures because he was a lifelong Socialist or Conservative, that would be an impossible situation to contemplate. It gave very strong indications that he was somewhat partisan in his view.

Early in this controversy, the Secretary of State naturally wanted to get all the Princes to come in, and he varied his number of essentials for the success of the reform. I am not sure what is the exact number that are necessary at the present time, but it became clearly evident that if he were to count the noses of the subjects of the Indian States, he had to secure the support of at least two or three of the very biggest native States, such as Hyderabad or Mysore. So there suddenly emerged special talks and tributes, and one thing and another, with regard to those States. We are told that there was never any pressure, but I cannot help emphasising the fact once more that when the Prime Minister or the Nizam of Hyderabad, who has a great deal to say in regard to that State, was over here, he spontaneously burst out at the Round Table Conference and said that the Secretary of State had pressed them relentlessly. That spontaneous statement is not very much altered by the fact that the same gentleman signed a letter with five or six others before they went back to India, saying that they approved the scheme. First thoughts, spontaneously delivered, are best.

The Secretary of State is probably aware that running through all India at the present moment is an idea that a great deal of pressure has been employed. It would be very satisfactory, before the Debate comes to an end, if that matter could be cleared up. Would the Secretary of State empower somebody to tell us whether, in fact, the Viceroy has used his great position at any time to try to persuade the Princes to come into the scheme? Was he at any time instructed by the Secretary of State to do so? Has he interviewed many of the Princes on this subject? In view of the absurd rumours which are floating about and being broadcast in India, let the Secretary of State give an assurance to the House that there has been no promise of gun salutes, or precedence or anything of that kind. It would be very helpful for everyone if the facts were known.

Sir S. HOARE: Would the hon. and gallant Member allow me to interrupt him to ask if he will put this question as to gun salutes and precedence a little more precisely?

Sir H. CROFT: Throughout India at the present time—I have had, not one letter but scores of letters on the subject—there has been some question of gun salutes, which is a question of precedence. The question has been mooted in various circles that gun salutes have been brought in to the White Paper controversy. I will not put it any higher than that. Can the right hon. Gentleman give us an assurance that nothing of the kind has happened? Such an assurance would be very welcome.

Sir S. HOARE: I can give it in one sentence here and now. There is no foundation for any rumours of anything of the kind.

Sir H. CROFT: I am very glad that the right hon. Gentleman has been able to say that. He probably knows that it has been very widely stated——

Sir S. HOARE: The only rumours that I have heard are to the contrary, namely, that inducements have been held out to certain Princes to oppose Federation on

the ground that ultimately, sometime in the future, they might receive the kind of reward to which my hon. and gallant Friend has referred.

Sir H. CROFT: I am very grateful to my right hon. Friend. What he has said will be received with very great satisfaction. I hope he will answer as emphatically the other questions that I have asked as to whether the Princes or Chiefs in India have been interviewed, or if any endeavour has been made to persuade them? I do not say that that is wrong. If you have a policy, you naturally try to persuade all the constituent elements to come in, but the Princes are in rather a different position from hon. Gentlemen sitting on these benches, who may be brought into harmony with the general scheme. In the case of the Princes let us not forget that a solemn pledge was made to them. It is the only unconditional pledge that has ever been given to India—Queen Victoria's pledge which was repeated by the two successive King Emperors to the effect that their privileges, rights and dignities will be maintained inviolate and inviolable. It is perfectly evident that if any Princes were in any way persuaded to come into a scheme of this kind they would be surrounded immediately by a surging crowd of democracy, and it would be impossible for this country to see that their rights, privileges and dignities were maintained inviolable and inviolate in the future.

The point upon which a very great deal of stress was laid by the Leader of the Conservative party, the Lord President of the Council, was that you cannot hold India for two generations unless you pass these reforms. He was speaking obviously with great sincerity; I am sure he would not have said it otherwise. If that be a fact, I submit that it is not helpful to the Viceroy or to the administration in India that the fact should be proclaimed. There is no doubt that such a statement must be calculated seriously to influence any body of persons, such as delegates to a party conference. Surely we are entitled to some very strong evidence to support such a contention. The Statutory Commission did not advance any such argument, nor, as far as I can see, have the Joint Select Committee. Once before, after a similar statement, there was an immediate response from those whom I may describe as the eight greatest generals before they left India. I think it is so important that I will read what they said in 1933:

> "We, the undersigned, having had considerable and recent military experience in India, state unhesitatingly that, from a military point of view, we can, at any time, hold India against external and internal dangers, provided we retain command of land and sea communications and control of the police. It is, if and when the White Paper proposals are put into force, without modifications, the Army becomes Indianised throughout, and the police, railways, posts and telegraphs have been handed over to entire Indian control, that the danger of our losing India will arise. The control of these services is, in our opinion, a vital factor in the problem of the defence of India."

It was signed by General Sir George de S. Barrow, Lieut.-General Sir E. Lock Elliot, Lieut.-General Sir W. R. Marshall, Lieut.-General Sir E. H. de V. Atkinson, Lieut.-General Sir George MacMunn, Lieut.-General Sir Herbert C. Holman, Major-General Sir W. G. L. Beynon and Major-General F. E. Johnson. I suppose it is true to say that they are the most brilliant names in military administration in recent years. I beg right hon. Gentlemen who are still in doubt to get the opinion of Field-Marshal Sir Claude Jacob and Field-Marshal Sir William Birdwood, the last two Commanders-in-Chief, and ask them if they do not support the view which was maintained by the eight distinguished soldiers whom I have quoted. When we drop the idea of the Reform Bill, the bogey of disaster will drop with it.

Before I resume my seat, I would refer to arguments which have been used frequently in recent discussion. Those who disagree with my hon. Friends say that the only question which divides us is one of pace and time. They they go on to say "you think as you do about the results at the Centre; you ought not therefore to proceed with the policy in the Provinces." That argument as to pace alone dividing us is not correct. We do not believe that the federal scheme can work, and we are utterly opposed to abandoning government at the Centre or handing over the judiciary or the police until all the Provinces have graduated in the arts of statesmanship and democratic institutions, and have proved themselves well-affected partners and fit to enter into a federal scheme with the Em-

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pire. I never had any very great enthusiasm for the Simon Report, but it had one advantage. It apparently had the general support of the nation. The "Times," the "Manchester Guardian" and the "Observer" all went into ecstacies about it. They said it was the most perfect thing which had ever been produced. It was a policy which seemed to have general consent, and I accepted it simply because if you are going to take the step of granting home rule to a province of India that is not fatal. If the policy fails, you can draw back, but once you leave the Central Government of India, you are finished.

I am grateful to the House for the toleration with which they have listened to my remarks. I can only say that my friends and I are not concerned, in this question, in having a riot against the Government. This is a time that is far too solemn, and the dangers confronting the nation are far too great, for any factious opposition, but we feel deep down in our hearts that this thing is wrong; we do not believe that it is going to work. We believe that you are going to lay up for yourselves immense difficulties in the days that are to come, and once more we beg that His Majesty's Government will realise the fact that India has definitely declared against the reforms, and that, therefore, you are not placating those whom you had hoped to please. We beg you also to realise that you have not even had an opportunity, if I may put it in that way, to take the opinion of the people of this country. Are you quite sure that the people of this country want to end British government in India—for, even though this may not be a complete end, it is, as the right hon. Gentleman said yesterday, going on; greater stages are to come?

Some of us cannot get away from this fact. We believe that Britain has given the most marvellous gift to the people of India. It might have been better; there might have been here and there greater imagination; but, on the whole, it has been a wonderful service which the flower of our race have given to the people of India through all these generations. The losses will be greater even than the possibility of loss of trade, which has been appalling in Lancashire since these reforms were started. It has been going down and down, and, instead of good will being promoted, as everyone in Lancashire knows, things have got worse and worse. There is something greater even than this. Although it is difficult to say these things, it exists deep down in our hearts. We have seen Christian rule bridging the gulf between Moslem and Hindu in India during all these years. Alone in the history of India has Christianity been able to pour this wonderful balm upon the acerbities of these people. We believe that, if that rule, based on these precepts, is removed, nothing else can bridge a chasm.

Therefore, let no one imagine that we feel lightly about this question. Here we have one-fifth of the human race, and we have terrible doubts whether, if you remove all power from the British administration and Government, you are not weakening the whole fabric of that which we cound most dear on earth. For that reason we beg once more that His Majesty's Government will not persist with this Measure. If they think that a change is coming over the situation, can they not send a committee or a commission immediately to India, in order to ascertain from the Executive Council in India what are the opinions of its members to-day, as compared with what they were before the elections in India took place? I beg that the Government will not hasten forward with this policy. I do not believe it will go through. I believe that India will forbid it; I believe that Britain will forbid it; and I believe that a Higher Power may still yet deflect you from a course whirh I believe will be disastrous.

5.50 p.m.

Lord EUSTACE PERCY: I ought, perhaps, to apologise to the House for the fact that another Member of the Joint Select Committee is making a speech in this Debate. I had not intended to do so, because I have felt that it is not for us who were Members of that Committee, deputed by this House to consider the question, to get up and hectically defend the work that we have done to the best of our ability. The result of the work which the House gave us to do is now in the hands of the House. The House can read it, and our function, I think, is rather to assist the House in any case where there appears to be misunderstanding or where any elucidation of the re-

port may appear to be required. I did feel that a volume of questions had been propounded yesterday which would justify my speaking, and, even if I had not felt that yesterday, I certainly should have felt it to-day, for, if my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) will forgive me, I never heard a Member of this House, whom we all respect for his sincerity, treat a State document with the liberty with which he treated the report of the Joint Select Committee. He said in effect: "It is obvious from the report of the Joint Select Committee that the whole object of this scheme, and its only object, is to placate Indian aspirations; and, therefore, if I can show that it has not done so, or if I can show that the politically minded classes in India are overwhelmingly against it, then, of course, the whole proposals will fall to the ground." May I say to my hon. and gallant Friend that that is all very well on the platform, but in this House his hearers are persons who have all read at least the first section of the report; and, when he asks them to believe that we drew up our recommendations on the basis that they were to satisfy Indian aspirations, no one is going to believe him. May I just give him one quotation from the beginning of the paragraph which he is always so fond of quoting about moderate and central opinion? This is our summary of what we decided to do:

> "We would close this introductory part of our report with one final word. At its outset we recorded our recognition of Indian aspirations and our sense of the weight to be attached to them. Having done so, we have examined the problem from another angle, concentrating our attention on the facts of Indian Government and of Indian social conditions. Our study of these facts has led us to certain concrete conclusions, which in the body of our report we shall have further to elaborate and justify. But, having thus reached our conclusions by the exercise of our judgment on the facts of the case, we may be permitted to urge their acceptance as embodying"—

and then follow the words which my hon. and gallant Friend is so fond of quoting. I put it to any impartial person whether the whole basis on which my hon. and gallant Friend built up his speech is what would be regarded by an ordinary Englishman as an honest argument? I do not think there can be any loubt as to the answer to that question. It is not the whole fabric of our report which falls when my hon. and gallant Friend's speech has been delivered; it is the whole fabric of his speech that falls when anyone reads with an unbiased and unprejudiced mind the first 47 paragraphs, let alone the rest, of our report.

But, after all, my hon. and gallant Friend does not represent those in this House who really criticise the report. The real reasoned opposition is represented by my Noble Friend the Member for Aldershot (Viscount Wolmer). Listening to his speech, and to the speeches of others who agree with him, I could not but be impressed by one or two features. The first was that all of us in this House, except possibly hon. Members of the Opposition—at any rate the whole of the Conservative party in this House—approach this problem from the same angle. My Noble Friend said very forcibly that this was not democracy; that this was not Parliamentary self-government in our sense; that you could not have a system of Parliamentary government in our sense in India so long as you had no organised parties, or no rivalry between organised parties—that the caste system was a negation of democracy, that the communal system was a negation of Parliamentary government, and that in these circumstances what we had to aim at was to produce a scheme which would work, and not a scheme which would satisfy a demand for democratic self-government, for which *ex hypothesi*, India was not ready.

Where did my Noble Friend get all his arguments? He got them almost verbatim from the report of the Joint Select Committee. These are our arguments, and I think they are unanswerable arguments. What is the use, when that is the case as between members of the same party, of attempting to represent those points of absolute agreement as if they were points of debating difference. It really is not worthy of members of the same party discussing a great constitutional subject. I do not think that my Noble Friend desires to raise unnecessary debating points; I am not accusing him of any unfairness in debate; but I think that, if he had read our report with slightly more imagination, he might have seen that those are views on which we agree. Again, I am not impressed by the narrowness of our difference. It

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is a difference of enormous importance, but it is a difference within defined limits. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bournemouth has, indeed, attempted to widen the difference. He has delivered an attack on the whole idea of any advance at all; and he has delivered that attack in the name of a principle which all of us revere—the principle of our religious faith; but it is a principle which many of us, in view of the bitter experiences of history, are very chary of seeing dragged into political discussion. Those who have ruled by appeal to the highest religious sentiments have not always been in the position of the most beneficent or the most honest government. But, whatever oratorical appeal my hon. and gallant Friend may have made, his whole case was this: "I would have accepted the report of the Statutory Commission because it seemed to have the whole British nation behind it." But did it have the whole Indian nation behind it? Did it have behind it more Indian opinion than this report of the Joint Select Committee? Was my hon. and gallant Friend taking any interest in India in those days? Does he know what was the state of public opinion in India on the subject of the Statutory Commission? He was prepared, apparently, to take one criterion of public acceptance in the case of the Simon Commission and another in the case of the report of the Joint Select Committee.

That is not the attitude of my Noble Friend the Member for Aldershot. He said: "We are prepared to accept Provincial Autonomy as a necessary step. We say, however, that we regard it as a first step, and that it is absurd to say that Provincial Autonomy implies control of the police." My Noble Friend pointed out that we in this House do not control the police. I am very glad that he laid that down so clearly, but there again he is repeating the recommendation of the Joint Select Committee, where we point out very positively that not only should a legislature have no control over the police, but it should have no control over the organisation of the Civil Service or any part of the public services. That is the function of the executive. I am glad that the difference on that subject is narrowed down to the question of the control of the police. I am sorry my Noble Friend attributed to the Joint Select Committee the view that self-government is impossible without control of the police. The Joint Select Committee said nothing of the sort. They said, "unless there was some responsibility for the control of public order." That is a very different thing. This House is responsible for the maintenance of law and order in this country, but it is not necessary for the purposes of that responsibility that it should control the police. I am glad my Noble Friend has now made it clear that that is no longer the point of issue that divides us.

But what really divides us is the question of central Government. That is an enormously important issue, but it is a narrow one which can be argued on its merits and not by reference to the gossip that this or that Member of Parliament may have brought back from India as to what this or that Prince is likely to do. Let us argue it on its merits. My Noble Friend made the only attempt I have ever heard from any critic of the Joint Select Committee's report to argue against our solution. It was a real attempt to produce a serious argument, and for that reason I want to answer it. I think that at the outset he rather fails to appreciate the case that he has to meet. Perhaps he did not quite realise what that case was because, as he said, he had a tendency to be sick when the expression "irresponsible centre" was used. We are all liable to these emetic tendencies, but in the interest of clear thinking we have to control them. If my Noble Friend had thought out what that phrase "irresponsible centre" meant, he would have seen this. Our case against Provincial Autonomy and nothing else is not that the Governor General in Council is an irresponsible Governor, or an unfit person to administer the affairs of the Central Government, nor is it our case, as he seemed to think, that the mere fact that we are not going the whole way will cause such popular feeling in the Provincial Legislatures that they will continually agitate in favour of going further at the Centre. That is not our case at all. Our case is that certain functions of the Central Government are so intimately linked with provincial administration that to attempt to separate them between two authorities, each responsible to a different constituency, is a form of dyarchy, probably the

worst form of dyarchy conceivable, and is bound to break down. That is our case, and the case is mainly based upon finance.

The whole administration of the Provinces depends, first, on the general economic policy of the Central Government, upon its tariff policy, whether it is imposing tariffs for protective or for revenue purposes; and, secondly, upon its own expenditure and upon the way in which it is prepared to distribute any surplus revenues that it has to the Provinces. Our case is that, if you have those essential questions left solely to an authority at the Centre which has no constitutional relationship at all with the authority in the Provinces, you will cause endless friction and sap the whole strength of the Central Government and you will tend to disrupt the unity of India.

Against that my Noble Friend, by not understanding the case that he had to meet, said, "My answer to that is, in the first place, that you ought not to carry provincial autonomy so far. You ought not to give the Provinces anything more than delegated powers. You ought to reserve all the residuary powers to the Centre and you ought to maintain the strictest control over the allocation of the central revenues to the Provinces." One or two of those items I do not think make very much difference. Whether you have a concurrent field in the Federal and Provincial legislation in which Federal legislation overrides Provincial legislation, or whether you have a reservation of the whole residuary field to the Centre, does not seem to me to make very much difference. Nor does, I think, the question whether you regard the powers of the Provinces as delegated powers or original powers. At present the powers of the Provinces are delegated powers, and they always have been. Surely my Noble Friend sees that his last proposal, to link the Provinces far more closely financially with the Centre, makes the difficulty which I have pointed out far greater. It is only if the Provinces are more or less financially independent of the Centre that you can get rid of this fundamental difficulty of an irresponsible Centre and responsible Provinces. Therefore, the whole of his alternative suggestion for getting rid of the difficulty seems to fall to the ground.

Then he said, "What you do propose is unworkable. It is insane. It is Alice in Wonderland." I am very sorry that any of my Noble Friend's friends should have behaved so badly as to incur epithets of that kind. What is the reason why he says our proposals are insane? He says, because in the first place the Princes will not be amenable to the jurisdiction of the Central Government to the same extent as the Provinces, and in particular they will not pay the federal taxation. The only federal taxation which they will not pay is Income Tax. I should like to say a word on this question, because it seems to be generally assumed that the attitude of the Princes towards dircet taxation is in itself wholly unreasonable. On the contrary, it is, I think, wholly fair and reasonable as a pure matter of justice. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bournemouth quoted that unconditional pledge which we gave to the Princes in the name of the Crown. We have given this pledge, and we are certainly bound not to ask for financial conditions which are not fair. The original claim of the States was that they should not be asked to assume the whole of the public debt of British India, in itself a most reasonable request. I think it is very difficult to argue that States with public indebtedness of their own should come in and take over a part of the public debt of British India. But, clearly, to have divided the public debt and to have had a central Budget affecting British India only and a federal Budget for the service of the rest would have been extremely inconvenient. The Princes disliked direct assessment of their citizens carried out in their territory by the authorities of British India, but I always felt that when once the State had waived their claim to a division of the public debt, it was very difficult to argue, quite apart from other elements in the financial accounts with the States, that they ought to be subjected to the full weight of federal taxation. The exemption of the States from Income Tax is certainly an anomaly of a serious kind which will become more and more serious as time goes on, but as a matter of practice now and for many years to come I do not think that exemption from Income Tax is, in substance, unjust.

When my Noble Friend goes on to point out the disparateness between the States

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and the Provinces, I would issue a warning to my hon. Friends who are strongly against the Report of the Joint Select Committee not to use an argument which, if they are genuine in their professions in favour of All-India Federation as an ideal, must inevitably tend to the disruption of British India. Because what is the situation? The Indian States are sovereign States. Their relation with the Crown is a relation of paramountcy. The Crown is the paramount power. A Province of British India is an autonomous unit exercising delegated powers from the British Crown, which is sovereign. If you want to end this disparateness between the States and the Provinces, either you must destroy the sovereignty of the Princes, which we are pledged to uphold, or you must assimilate the position of the British Indian Provinces to that of sovereign States. If you take that line, if you say, as my Noble Friend says, "Let us wait," if you put nothing in the place of the present centre, if you are merely content to defer a decision and you use that argument in favour of it, it tends directly to the satisfaction of the aspirations of every extreme autonomist who does not very much care about the unity of India at all, and only wants to magnify the independence of his own Province. It is all the more dangerous, because the whole case is that the centre should be left untouched as a purely transitional form of government.

My Noble Friend the Member for West Derbyshire (Marquess of Hartington) said, rightly, he thought that a nominated membership and an elected membership in the same Legislature was in the long run impossible. I do not agree with him as far as Federation is concerned. Indeed, I am not sure that I agree with him at all. After all, those two things have existed side by side in a number of legislatures in the British Empire for many years. The point of the speech of my Noble Friend is that he said, "I know that there is that nominated element in the present Central Legislature, but I suppose that no one regards that in any other light than a transitional form of government." Yet the thing which you cannot define upon any ground you are going to leave suspended in the air, and you are not, in other words, trying to produce a system of government which will really work. I do not agree.

Viscount WOLMER: We are not trying to produce it in a day.

Lord E. PERCY: I come to another point of the speech of my Noble Friend. We are asked, what is to be gained by waiting? Shall we gain experience? On what single point that I have mentioned will you gain experience? These are the points, the permanent irreducible points, on which you always have to decide. No one is proposing that you should produce the whole thing in a day. We have now had dinned into our ears that it is very doubtful whether the Princes any longer wish to accede as willingly as they did before, and that there may be a long period of negotiations. Negotiations about what? How are you going to negotiate with the Princes unless you lay down terms upon which you are to negotiate? I imagine that the House would never say to the Secretary of State, "Go on and negotiate and see if the Princes will come in, and we will back you up." If he came back with the accession of a number of Princes based on terms which he had devised himself, what would my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) say? He would say, "You have committed His Majesty's Government without our consent, and have not Parliamentary sanction behind you. How are you to carry out this confederation of governments unless you have laid down in advance the terms on which you are to federate?"

I must refer to what, after all, was the main point of the speech of my Noble Friend, or what was, at any rate, the main apprehension in his mind. He felt that Congress was in precisely the same position as Mr. de Valera. Its only policy was to drive us out of India, and that if you established a Central Government it would give it the power; you would in that legislature at the centre have a "sounding-board" for Congress and your federal legislature would not prove to be strengethened by the addition of the Princes, because the Princes would not pull our chestnuts out of the fire. If we would not stand up to Congress, why should the Princes stand up to Con-

gress? That is another phrase which the critics of the Select Committee are fond of using. "We will not stand up to Congress." Who is not standing up to Congress? Who is saying that the Governor-General under that system will not stand up to the Congress party? He has all the cards in his hands. What is the position of this future Central Legislature? Out of the total electorate of British India, excluding those of the Princes, of the 250 seats, the Hindu seats number 105. There are a certain number of special seats which will fall to Hindus. There are the Sikhs upon which they can very often rely, but in order to get a clear majority in that House of 250 they have to build up a block of discordant elements. Moreover, if you take the representatives of the States with very diverse interests both between themselves and against British India, Congress, even if it captured the whole of the Hindu seats, would still have to build up a coalition of groups in order to get a majority opposition in the Legislature. All history shows that a coalition Opposition of that kind is difficult to build up, is very insecure after you have built it up, and that a strong Sovereign advised by a strong Prime Minister could almost always break it down if he had time to do so.

The Governor-General will have twenty times the staying power that George III had when he put the younger Pitt into the position of minority Prime Minister in this country. He will be able to wait, I would almost say years, when George III could not wait months. The Governor-General has all that power to break down that most difficult and precarious opposition which attempts to reconcile a number of conflicting interests. In the last resort he has his breakdown powers. That is to say, he holds all the trump cards in his hands. I would ask the critics of the report, "If you were building up a block of that kind, which would be the easier course to follow?" If you were leader of the Congress party, would it be easier to go to the leader of the Moslems and say, "My dear friend, I wish to build up a majority opposition against the Governor-General. I am now Finance Minister and am the leader of the largest party in the House. Will you promise not to become Finance Minister in my stead if I resign?" Is that easier, or is it easier to say to your Moslem friend. "Let us join together in a great opposition to force the Imperial Parliament to give any member of the Legislature the right to enjoy the honours and sweets of office"? That is the position you have now in a Legislature where no member can ever hope to enjoy the sweets of office, where there is no incentive before the politician and there is nothing for him but to oppose.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: Is that the noble Lord's incentive in politics?

Lord E. PERCY: Yes. I say that it is, and if the right hon. and gallant Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme (Colonel Wedgwood) had lived as long in the United States as I have, he would know that the quality of a legislature, the members of which are excluded from power, is always far lower than the tone and quality of a legislature whose members come to their legislative duties in the laudable and noble hope of doing public service in administrative positions. The reason why the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme does not appreciate the issues which we are considering is because he has temperamentally no wish of that kind. He has said that he is temperamentally an agitator, and not a politician.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: I would rather be an honest agitator than a politician after a job.

Lord E. PERCY: Precisely, that is the attitude of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. He would rather be an honest agitator than a politician after a job. I agree that public agitation and dictatorship are the only two really respectable political trades. I know that to bear office in a Parliamentary government is a second best sort of thing, but I do not think that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman had better give that advice to India. That is the real issue. You will have a sounding-board at Delhi and fights against the Army Budget year after year, and, whatever you do, friction and opposition. Are you going to bring to that friction and opposition the only constructive outlet—the opportunity of some active responsibility? My Noble Friend says—and this is really the final issue of the argument—that Radicals always become more radical, that Liberals become Radicals, and Radicals

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become Socialists. Is that his experience of Parliamentary government? It is the experience of rebels always. Your Nationalist party in Ireland, which was excluded by its own act from any hope of hunting for political jobs gave place to revolutionaries inevitably. But where you have a Parliamentary government where the agitator is continually put to the test whether he is prepared to assume responsibilty, has my Noble Friend not learned from the teaching of history, that things go from less to more radical? Has he not seen members of the Socialist party become the most respectable bourgeoise administrators? Has he not seen members of the Liberal party at the present moment becoming so conservative that they regard with horror my Noble Friend's radicalism in the agricultural field? The teaching of history is that if you can get your revolutionary elements into a real Parliamentary government, and however small is the measure of responsibility you may be able to give them, it tends not to make them more revolutionary, but to steady them.

Like the Secretary of State, I am not going into this new era as Emile Olivier went into the Franco-German war, with a "light heart." I know the dangers and I know the risks, but I claim that after these last seven years this House is presented with certain alternatives. It is not by any means bound to accept the Majority Report of the Joint Select Committee. It may take one of the Minority Reports. It may go back to the Report of the Statutory Commission or to the report of the Government of India on the Statutory Commission. But it has to choose between these. There is no use hesitating any longer before two opinions, and saying that we will leave half this problem undecided altogether, which is the one fatal course you can possibly pursue. Of the speeches I have heard in this Debate, the one with which I sympathise most is that of the hon. Member for South-East Essex (Mr. Raikes) when he said, what all of us have felt, if we could only find a better solution and could only go back on the tendencies of British administration in the past and find some way of getting nearer to the heart of the peasant, if perhaps we had placed far more emphasis than we did before the days of reform on the creation of village councils and local bodies, and had not made the fatal mistake of withdrawing the official chairmen from the district councils as we did after the War; if we had not committed these mistakes, perhaps we might have been able to find by now a different solution.

I went on to the Joint Select Committee full of the idea that there was some other way round, out, or under, by which we could undo some of our past mistakes, and that we could perhaps start a wholly new line of constitutional reform, but after these seven years of investigation by men all of whom had that hope, we are reduced, I think it is only right to say, to certain practical alternatives which have been worked out. Choose which you will have, but in choosing, for God's sake, do not delay or drift simply because you cannot make up your mind.

6.31 p.m.

Mr. GRAHAM WHITE: The Noble Lord has rendered service to the whole House by restoring the Debate to a proper sense of perspective, after the speech to which we listened from the hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft). In his concluding sentence I think the Noble Lord really touched the vital point in the Debate. I certainly echo the concluding sentence in which he told the House that of all the possible courses the one that was most likely to lead to disaster was the policy of drift. He has also rendered a service to the House by his masterly analysis of the arguments which have been addressed to it by the different hon. Members who have spoken on behalf of that group which is in opposition to the majority of the Members of the House, and he absolved any hon. Member who followed him from dealing with that particular point.

While the hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth was speaking it seemed to me that he was not accurate in his interpretation of some of the smaller facts of the case. In regard to the Princes, at what stage in the proceedings did he imagine that they would come into Federation? They announced their intention of so doing; indeed the whole structure of the scheme has been built upon the principle that they were willing to come into Federation upon the basis of there being responsible Government at the Centre. Having said that, I do not see how it could be imagined that

at an earlier stage they could give their adherence to a scheme all the details of which had not been worked out, and parts of which were in doubt.

The hon. and gallant Member said that one of the Princes had expressed his intention of joining the Federation. My recollection of the Round Table Conference is that not one Prince made that statement, but that every Prince who spoke there made a similar declaration. Those who were not there were represented by their Prime Ministers, who spoke on their behalf. Sir Akbar Hydari and Sir Mirza Ismail both declared their intention in that regard. Sir Akbar Hydari seems to have come in for a good deal of attention in these Debates. He is alleged to have made a differing statement on two occasions. I do not know why the hon. and gallant Member should attach importance only to that statement, whether it was the first or the second, which seems to support the view which he wishes to put to the House, and to ignore the other statement.

With regard to the actual position of public opinion in India in regard to the proposals of the Joint Select Committee, although Congress has said that they reject the proposals, and although the Indian moderates have criticised them, I have yet to learn that any responsible Indian or any large body of Indian opinion, either the Congress or any other organised body, have said that they would definitely refuse to work the scheme. That is an important difference. I do not know what was to be expected from India, vocal or otherwise. One thing is certain, and that is that no important section in India has said that they will refuse definitely to work the reforms if they are brought into operation.

May I refer to some observations made by the hon. Member for Caerphilly (Mr. M. Jones)? He made some comment on the history of the British period in India and some criticisms as regards some of the events that have occurred. I do not stand, nor does anyone stand here to defend some of the events in the past history of our country in India, but I never think that it is a very useful occupation to make criticisms of men who were unable to live out of their own time. That has never seemed to me to be a very useful or profitable task. In regard to the services which England has rendered to India, I have always felt that there was no finer example or truer appreciation than the words which were spoken at the first Round Table Conference by the late Maharaja of Nawanagar, whom we have known affectionately under another name in this country. He said:

> "Three boons in particular stand to the eternal credit of Great Britain. I will give the first place to the *Pax Britannica*, which has enabled India to make much material progress. She has given India a unifying medium through the English language, the noble literature of which has helped to introduce a new spirit of liberty and self respect. India's connection with England has proved to the world that the two countries are complementary to each other, and to-day the world stands to benefit by the mutual 'give and take' of the two countries of which they are eminently capable."

That is possibly the truest appreciation of the service which England has rendered to India.

I am glad that the Under-Secretary has turned the Debate away from the general course that has been pursued and has directed attention to the very important problems connected with the present relations of Burma to the proposals which we have under consideration. It is easy to understand that there has been in Burma during recent times some apprehension lest in the heat of controversy and the clash of argument their claims should in any sense be overlooked. The hon. Member made some deeply interesting remarks in tracing the history of the economic development of Burma, and also the political difficulties which have taken place from time to time. He pointed out with great effect that the fact that Burma is not torn and ravaged by the great communal controversies and difficulties which we find in India simplifies the problem of political advance for her. The matter has been brought much nearer to the practical realisation of Burma's wishes by the fact that the uncertainty that prevailed with regard to the wishes and aspirations of Burma in the early stages of the treatment of this problem by means of conferences has been cleared up. The activities of the anti-separationists caused some doubt as to the real mind of Burma on this subject, but I think we may agree with the Under-Secretary and be

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satisfied that the matter will no longer be in doubt.

The stages of the political and constitutional progress of Burma have come to her as part of the Indian Empire, and all her hopes for the future are based upon promises which have been made to her as part of that political organisation. Therefore, it is proper that this matter should receive the most careful attention from Parliament at this time. From the consideration that I have been able to give to this question, I have always felt that whatever may be the discussions that range round the recommendations of the Statutory Committee in regard to the other portions of their report, their recommendations with regard to Burma have held their own against any counter-suggestions or any criticisms directed against them. If, as no one doubts, we are going to take an important step on the road of self-government for India, it is proper and essential that the question of Burma should be dealt with at the same time.

My hon. Friend paid a tribute to the members of the delegation who came over from India to join in the conferences which have taken place. He said nothing less than the truth when he referred to the great value which their co-operation has been in the joint deliberations. The whole of Burma will be glad to know that all parties in England are determined and anxious that the aspirations and wishes of Burma should receive full and careful consideration, that they are receiving sympathetic consideration and that the views of their representatives at the conferences have received the most careful consideration. We can only hope that the effect of these important proposals in so far as they affect Burma will lead to the realisation of the wishes and aspirations of Burma. We have to remember that although, geographically speaking, Burma may be the smaller part of this problem, Burma is as important to the Burmans as India is to the Indians and as England is to the English. I think the people of Burma will appreciate the fact that this matter is receiving the most earnest and most careful consideration of Parliament.

Whatever may be the fate of these proposals there can be no doubt that they constitute a remarkable development in the history of the relations of India and England. The manner in which they have been developed is of the utmost consequence. Since 1929 the evolution of the Constitution of India has proceeded not on a basis of dictation but by a process of conferences and discussions, a change from which I hope we shall never recede. We on these benches accept the general proposals and give them our general support. My hon. Friend the Member for Bodmin (Mr. Isaac Foot), however, has made it clear that this is not our report and that there are matters to which, at the appropriate time, we shall consider it necessary to direct some attention and criticism.

The importance of these proposals is that they represent the greatest measure of common agreement which can be arrived at in this country. I appeal to our friends in India to realise that they represent the nearest approach to common agreement in this country that we have been able to reach. It is true that a Socialist Government might have appointed a commission and arrived at a result which would give greater satisfaction to them; a Conservative Government, likewise, would have come to a conclusion which would have given more satisfaction to the Conservative party as a whole, and, likewise, if we on these benches had appointed a commission we should not have produced this report but one which would have given greater satisfaction to us. But the result that has been achieved—and it is of great importance that Indians should realise it—represents the greatest measure of common agreement which can be reached in this country. The attitude of the Liberal party was decided almost for all time by one of its great leaders, Mr. Gladstone. We have had many quotations during this Debate and there has been great anxiety on the part of hon. Members that they should be verified. I cannot give the date of the quotation, but I think it must be subsequent to 1863, and in it Mr. Gladstone defines not merely the Liberal attitude but the attitude of the people of this country towards India. He said:

"I hold that the capital agent in determining finally the question whether our power in India is not to continue will be the will of the 240,000,000 of people who inhabit India."

The figure of 240,000,000 might give hon. Members some clue as to the date. Mr. Gladstone went on to say:

"The question who shall have supreme rule in India is by the laws of right an Indian question, but these laws of right are from day to day growing into laws of fact. Our title to be there depends on the first condition, that our going there is profitable to the Indian nation and, on the second condition, that we can make them see and understand that it is profitable to them."

That leads me to this further observation. Important as these proposals are and vital as is the constitutional structure, we must never forget that there is a very important psychological question overriding the whole relations between England and India. The main and immediate task is to win the confidence, and keep it, of India. If we fail in that our constitutional efforts will be of little avail. That is the supreme test. That makes me regret all the more one item in which the proposals of the Joint Select Committee depart from the recommendations of the White Paper. I refer to the substitution of indirect for direct election to the Federal Assembly. That was the decision of the Government in 1919, and it has been pursued with increasing satisfaction—on the authority of the Government of India itself—to Indians themselves in the development and understanding of electoral law. That is now proposed to be altered in the face of the overwhelming weight of practical experience and evidence. It is to be altered against the recommendations of the Indian Franchise Committee, presided over by Lord Lothian, which went out to India, spent a long time there, traversed the country from end to end, and visited every province with the exception of Assam and the central provinces. They examined a good deal of the practice of elections in India, and in those provinces where they were not in force they concurred with an *ad hoc* committee which had given special attention to the matter.

It is also, we understand, to be altered in opposition to the expressed opinion of the Government of India. At all events, the Government of India in a memorandum expressed themselves strongly in favour of the method of direct election. If they are not in favour of it now then the House should be told, and also given the reasons why they have changed their view. The Indian Delegation, which was taken into consultation by the Joint Select Committee, were also strongly in favour of direct election. They took the strongest possible view with regard to it. It was not merely a question of the application of electoral law, it was not merely a technical matter, but something which was already in practice in India, which it was proposed to take away. They were influenced by the consideration that it would have a profound effect on the reception which the constitutional scheme would have in India. May I direct the attention of hon. Members to the memorandum drafted by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, in which he said:

"It is possible that the advocates of a strong Centre may suggest a reduction in the size of the Legislative Assembly and the curtailment of its powers and an indirect method of election.

The governing and most important sentence is this:

"Public opinion in India would never reconcile itself to any such action, and if any such thing is done it may easily *jeopardise the working* of the constitution even in the provinces."

In view of the wealth and weight of this testimony the House will not be surprised to hear me say that we attach the greatest importance to this provision and that at the proper time we shall invite hon. Members to express their opinion upon it. We must realise that this House is not the sole repository of wisdom with regard to Indian matters and that we have not yet reached a stage when we can say that we shall not pay any attention to the views of India on these matters. I hope that we shall give proper weight to the expression of opinion in India on this particular question. It is not too late for a step, which we believe to be retrograde and unfortunate, to be retrieved. There has been criticism on this point from India. The "Times" correspondent has already directed the attention of the public in this country to it. The "Times" newspaper seems to take a somewhat unusual view with regard to this matter. In an article on the 22nd November they said:

"Criticism with regard to this step will come from India, where there is a pathetic faith in direct election."

I am at a loss to understand the meaning of the word "pathetic" in this connection. There is nothing pathetic in the belief in this country in direct election,

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and the "Times" must surely have not heard of the support given to the proposal by the Government of India. Indeed, they do not seem to have been so well informed as they usually are of the course of events in this country. This particular article in the "Times" concludes in this way. It says that the question of direct versus indirect election:

> "Is essentially one of those questions which Indians can and eventually will settle for themselves."

From all the evidence we have had so far India has already settled this question for herself. I repeat my plea, that I hope this is a matter which is not regarded as being closed for all time and that full consideration will be given to the opinion expressed from India on it There are other questions which I should like to have raised but as many hon. Members wish to take part in the Debate I do not feel justified in claiming the attention of the House any longer. May I revert to the concluding remarks of the Noble Lord the right hon. Member for Hastings (Lord E. Percy) with regard to the alternatives before the House. We do not need to be told that there are risks in the proposals we are now considering in this most important Debate on Imperial and foreign affairs. Of course there are risks; risks for England and for India, for Hindus and for Mohammedans, risks for all the peoples in India. But in the policy of doing nothing, of standing still, there is no risk but certainty of disaster. If there is anything worse than standing still, it is the policy of drift. There is only one course, and that is to pursue the road laid down in the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee, and advance steadily towards the day when we shall have a complete partnership with India, based on complete confidence between the two nations.

7.1 p.m.

Major NATHAN: My hon. Friend who has just addressed the House, and every other speaker so far has spoken with special and particular knowledge as a result of long experience and service in India, or from consideration of the problems in the Statutory Committee or the Joint Select Committee. Other speakers have given time and leisure to the study of the problem. I am a speaker who claims no such knowledge of India, who claims merely to address himself to this grave problem, with which this House is faced, as an ordinary man-in-the-street, bringing to it a keen desire to take a hand, to the best of my judgment, in anything that may help in the strengthening, the consolidation, the energising of the British Commonwealth, and India as an integral element in the Commonwealth. I hope to bring to bear on this problem simply that sense of responsibility which must attach to every Member of this honourable House, even though he may be a private back bench Member.

Regarding the matter from that standpoint, I should like to tell the House how this report strikes me. No one can read it without being impressed by the overwhelming complexity of the problems. This is what I would wish particularly to say, that the high seriousness with which this problem has been faced by the members of the Joint Select Committee of all parties, as disclosed by the report of the Majority and the draft report of my hon. Friend the Member for Limehouse (Mr. Attlee), is particularly impressing. The report does not go as far as many of us would wish, but those would be blind—I would say almost wilfully blind—who would deny that it registers an advance genuine and substantial towards Dominion status. Towards Dominion status—but when? That is the crucial question. The introduction to the report quotes the Preamble to the Act of 1919, which has already been quoted more than once in this debate. The Joint Select Committee, in the main body of its legislative proposals, and the White Paper are silent about Dominion status. There was not one word on Dominion status from the Secretary of State yesterday in the speech with which he presented the proposals to the House. Yet Indian national opinion has looked forward to Dominion status, not as a distant objective to be achieved in some unforeseeable future, but as a finite end to be achieved within some time definite and foreseeable.

Indians have been led to believe by pronouncements from the King Emperor himself, from Viceroys and Secretaries of State, from ex-Secretaries of State, from the Prime Minister, that after so many

years of travail there would at last and at least emerge from these proposals some indication of the date when Dominion status would be achieved. Not only are the proposals silent about Dominion status now or at any future fixed date, but they contain no provision at all for the attainment of it at any time in the future, however distant. If the Select Committee's proposals be adopted, there can be no Dominion status without the invocation of fresh inquiries, of fresh discussions between the British Government and representatives of India, fresh legislation and Debates in this House and India. All this is in face of the direct recommendation of the Statutory Committee. They say:

"The Preamble of the 1919 Government of India Act declares that progressive realisation of responsible government in India can only be achieved by successive stages—but there is no reason why each stage should be marked by a Commission of Inquiry."

Indeed, the Statutory Commission warned Parliament against attempting to formulate a Constitution which did not contain within itself provision for its own development. Yet that is what the Select Committee's report proposes. What course could the Committee have adopted? There is one which they have adopted on the question of Dominion status—that of silence. They could have fixed a date or at least prescribed—as I think the Statutory Committee contemplated—a date on which the machinery of Dominion status could be brought automatically into effect. Sir Tej Sapru, who is well known here as one of the most moderate and liberal-minded of Indian representatives, wrote a special article on this point which appeared in the "News Chronicle" on 22nd November. He said:

"Nothing has shaken Indian faith more than the repeated attempts in Parliament to disown the Prime Minister's and Viceroy's declarations. Without the definite objective of Dominion status, Indian political thought will be apt to run into dangerous byepaths preventing them from pooling their collective energies for the common end."

These are words not to be lightly disregarded by those who have in charge these grave matters. I notice that the Noble Lord the Member for Hastings (Lord E. Percy) urged the House not to leave half done the task that it had set itself, but the failure to provide machinery for securing to India Dominion status is leaving the task half done.

I have a few words to say on the subject of reserved subjects and special responsibilities. I say "a few words," because there will be ample opportunity at a later stage for giving to these vital aspects of the problem the consideration they require. I say, at the instance of the right hon. Member the Leader of the Opposition and those who sit on these benches, that when the suitable opportunity arises, Amendments will be placed on the Paper with a view to implementing the proposals made by the representatives of the Labour party on the Select Committee. We are warned that there are to be in the projected Bill between 300 and 400 Clauses. It is bound to be a long and cumbersome Bill. It seems certain that reserved subjects and special responsibilities will take a large share of it. It is a profound pity that it should be so, for it will give a wrong impression altogether. It is not that some or many of the reservations or special responsibilities are so very formidable in themselves. In the Continental system of constitution-making many of them would be taken as a matter of course, but we here have had a different training and work under a different tradition. India naturally has seen only the results of the working of the system without realising how it works. If anyone were to write down in black and white the Constitution of this country with its safeguards and elaborate system of checks and balances which have grown up almost unobserved, even those who operated the Constitution would be unfeignedly surprised. Yet I wish to make it clear that the proposed reservations and the special responsibilities are not only extremely formidable, but they are unnecessarily extensive.

The reservations and special responsibilities in many important respects are not buttresses of responsible Government in India. They take away from it and undermine it. They are a first-class patent for subsidence in the future. In considering the special responsibilities and reservations I cannot find that the Select Committee have faced the fundamental question of what our true function in India is to be in the future. The new Government, Central and Provincial, will of course make many mistakes and

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commit many follies. That is inevitable, and representatives of the King in India will have to keep a steady nerve, be prepared to sit quietly by and watch things go wrong and do nothing. It needs a far stronger nerve to sit by and watch things go wrong than to interfere in order to prevent them from going wrong. We are not there, under responsible government, to prevent mistakes or even follies. We are there in reserve merely to avert catastrophe. Let us bear in mind the good old political adage which is not less true for being so often quoted, that good government is no alternative for self-government.

I observe throughout the report many references to the instrument of instructions, in which the powers and the responsibilities and the duties of the Governor-General and the Provincial Governors are to be defined. So many indeed are the exceptions from the Constitution Act which are to find their place in the instrument of instructions, that when the Bill comes before this House it is clear that it will be almost impossible to consider it adequately unless the House has before it at the same time the draft of the instrument of instructions. I trust that the Government will find it possible to present to the House at the same time as the Bill, and for consideration on the same occasion as the Bill, the draft of the instrument of instructions to the Governor-General and the Provincial Governors, dealing with the matters referred to in the report of the Select Committee which are to be excluded from the Bill and included in the instrument. It is a very vital matter, because without the instrument the Bill cannot be adequately considered.

I say nothing with regard to the important matter of the franchise, save that those who sit on the Labour benches believe, as stated in the report of my hon. Friend the Member for Limehouse (Mr. Attlee), that there should be provision within the Constitution Bill making it possible for adult suffrage to be achieved in due course. Amendments will be put on the Paper by the Labour party to secure that end.

There is only one other question to which I shall refer, and that is the coming into operation of this Constitution. In the report of the Joint Select Committee from beginning to end there is no indication of a date when the Constitution is to come into force. There are, indeed, conditions prescribed before fulfilment of which it is not to come into force, but there is none stating when it will come into force. I should be inclined not to wait upon the accession of so high a percentage of the States. After all, the proposal for an All-India Federation emanated from the Princes themselves. I see no reason to fear that they will not come in in sufficient numbers. I would not make the coming into effect of federation dependent upon that. Indeed, it cannot be done, for when once the Provincial Governments are formed, as the Select Committee has unambiguously recognised, you must have some kind of federation, however incomplete, at the centre. Provincial autonomy predicates a federation centre, even if it should have to be a federation centre of British India only.

I cannot help feeling that an attempt to make the coming into force of a new Constitution dependent upon the financial condition, upon some vague situation of financial equilibrium in the balance of trade or payment in India, is a mistake and is unnecessary. India's present balance of payment is favourable to the extent that, curiously enough, she has discovered a new and singular export in the form of gold for speculative demand upon the London market. In considering the balance of trade in India for the purpose of bringing into force the Constitution Act, is that to be treated as a sound export or not? Or do the Government intend to safeguard that vital export and its continuance before the Constitution is inaugurated at all? Much the same criticism applies to the conditions as to the new Indian central bank. The introduction of the Constitution is in effect made conditional upon the successful operation of the central bank. I would like to know what "successful" means. There are always ups and downs and to's and fro's for a central bank; that is why it is central. Why should we withhold a new Constitution from India for reasons which are so very difficult and weak in definition? In this country there are many influential persons who do not hesitate to say that our own central bank has hardly been run successfully in the best interests of the nation as a whole during the last decade.

These financial safeguards or conditions seem to me to be unnecessary. But in any case neither in structure nor in function nor in operation does the Constitution in any way depend upon them. It could be introduced without waiting to see how the trade balance is moving or how the bank deposits are moving there. It is infinitely to be regretted that there is no definite date or definite condition prescribed for the coming into effect of this Constitution, so that India may know with a certainty whether and when the Constitution will be operative. I realise, of course, that the Bill when it is introduced will pass in substantially the form in which the Government present it. It will bring to an end some old problems, and it will create many new problems. There are risks which no one ignores and risks which it would be foolish to underestimate. I base my hope for the future on a quotation from Mr. Gladstone:

> "The choice is between trust in the people, qualified by prudence, and distrust of the people, qualified by fear."

We on these benches put our trust for the future in the people. We recognise that upon those in India to whom will fall the task of operating the Constitution there will repose a full but an honourable responsibility. It also offers a magnificent and enviable opportunity. I hope that when this Constitution has ceased to be a matter of debate in this House, and when the time comes for it to be operated in India, both those in this country and those in India who may have responsibility will go forward in a spirit of equal fellowship, bearing in mind, to quote an English writer of the last century:

> "It requires the whole man, unreservedly and austerely given. Great things must be done greatly, with a great purpose, a great heart, a great courage, great energy and a great persistent patience."

Above all, it must be with a great persistent patience.

7.26 p.m.

Major COURTAULD: During the course of this Debate, which to an impartial observer like myself has reached a very high level, most of the ground has been covered by critics of the Government proposals. Therefore, I propose in a very short time to touch on only one subject, and that is the important subject of an All-India federation, more especially as it applies to the Princes. Without going too far back into history I think we are all agreed that, previous to 1929, when a few Princes rather surprisingly expressed the view that they were prepared to come into a federation, no one had had any thought that federation was possible, at any rate in the near future. When the Princes expressed this view it was very naturally seized upon by the then Socialist Government, because of course it allowed them to go a long step further towards the ultimate aim of any Socialist Government, and that is Dominion status. Following that we had a change of Government, and to the surprise of many of us and to the dismay of many who had agreed to support a National Government for certain specific purposes, we were told that this idea of federation, an All-India federation, was to be maintained; and since then the Government have gone further and further along that path until we arrive at the position to-day where we are quite seriously and solemnly informed, not only by members of the Government but by all of those who speak in support of the Government proposals, that unless we have an All-India federation, including the Rulers of the native States, it is quite useless to do anything for India at all.

If that is agreed, it is a point from which we may take departure. I find it extremely difficult to believe that myself. I think that but for the rather offchance of certain Princes suggesting that they were willing to enter a federation, the Government of the time, or possibly a successive Government, would have framed a Bill on the lines of the Statutory Commission, which would have commended itself probably to most Conservatives and to the majority of Members of Parliament. I find it hard to believe that the whole thing would have been turned down and that the peoples of India, who we are told are clamouring for some self-expression, would have been told that they were going to get nothing at all because a federation, in the words of the Simon Commission, was a thing of the distant future, and without federation nothing could be done. That is past history and it is not worth while spending time arguing about it. But the present position appears to me to depend entirely on the question as to whether "a considerable number," to use my right

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hon. Friend's expression, of the native Princes are prepared to enter a Federation. I imagine that when he or any of his supporters, say, "are prepared to enter the Federation," they mean prepared to enter it willingly and not under pressure and not with doubts and fears of any sort, because it must be obvious to anyone that to get the Princes or anybody else into any Federation, if they do not want to come into it, it is useless and that they would be much better outside in those circumstances.

If that is so and if this All-India Federation depends on the native Princes, it is surely necessary for the House to consider carefully whether the Princes are prepared willingly to come in or not. We were told by a succession of speakers on the Government side that a large number of the Princes are willingly prepared to come in. We were told rather more than that. We were told that the Princes, with, probably, a few insignificant exceptions. were unanimous in their desire to enter an All-India Federation. The President of the Board of Education is reported as having addressed a meeting at the National Liberal Club—not the Carlton Club—and as having said:

> "I am informed that there are differences of opinion among the Princes of India and also that some pressure has been put upon them to enter this Federation. So far as I know there is no truth in that statement."

I find it very difficult to believe that Lord Halifax is so ignorant of the real conditions in India, because, if words mean anything, his statement means that all the Princes are willing and anxious to enter a Federation—that there are no appreciable exceptions—or else it means on the other side, and this, I think, would be nearer the truth—that substantially none of the Princes are anxious to enter into a Federation. I am perfectly certain, however, that Lord Halifax did not mean that. As regards the entry of these ruling Princes as a condition under which a Federation can be started, the conditions which apply to the number of Princes entering have been considerably modified more than once. To start with, we were told that no Federation was possible unless all the Princes came into it. The word "all" was subsequently removed and we were left with just the words "the Princes," giving the impression that it was the Princes generally, with possibly a few unimportant exceptions. Later on it must have appeared to the Government that there were rather more Princes who were difficult than they expected, and we were then told that it was a majority of the Princes which was necessary. That was a different matter. That meant 51 per cent., and it was not nearly so satisfactory, and it could not have been so satisfactory for the Princes themselves. After that, even the 51 per cent. did not appear to be sufficient to safeguard the Government in the worst eventuality, and we were told that what a majority meant was simply a majority in numbers of the population under princely rule.

Sir S. HOARE: I never said that.

Major COURTAULD: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. I was quoting at that moment—at least I had the impression that I was quoting—my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary. If he never said so, then I have been completely misinformed or have failed to understand. I have certainly heard it stated on many occasions if not by the right hon. Gentleman himself—and obviously I have not heard it stated by him—then by Government supporters, that a majority of the inhabitants under native rule would be sufficient to justify them continuing in the Federation.

Sir S. HOARE: I have not heard it said.

Major COURTAULD: The right hon. Gentleman and myself do not move in the same circles, and it is quite possible that I may have heard something said which he has not heard, but I assure him that I have heard it said, and I thought I had heard it said by my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary.

Mr. BUTLER: Since my hon. and gallant Friend has quoted me in this connection, I should be grateful to him if he will mention the occasion on which I am supposed to have made this statement, and I will then be able to tell him whether I said so or not. I am not conscious of having said any such thing.

Major COURTAULD: That, of course, is quite sufficient. I cannot possibly quote the occasion. It was in my mind that it was in the course of a private conversation.

Duchess of ATHOLL: But is it not the case that both in the White Paper and in the Report of the Joint Committee it is laid down as a main condition of Federation that States representing not less than 50 per cent. of the total population and entitled to not less than 50 per cent. of the seats allotted in the Federal Upper Chamber should accede?

Major COURTAULD: It is not necessary for me to pursue the matter, and we will leave it at that. At any rate, we were told that we must have a majority, 51 per cent., of the ruling Princes. My figures may be wrong, but I think that there are nearly 600, and we were told that 51 per cent. must be in favour before the Government would embark on an All-India Federation. If 51 per cent. have not expressed that view willingly and without pressure, then one assumes that the whole question of Federation will be left out of account. I do not know whether I am right in that assumption, but it seems to be the logical assumption, and, if we take the logic a little further, it seems to me that there will be no Bill at all—though I cannot help thinking that I am letting my imagination run away with me when I go as far as that. In any case, it becomes of the first importance to the Government to get a sufficient number of the Princes into this All-India Federation in order to show that their policy is not based on a fallacy and that means that it is absolutely necessary for the Government also to satisfy Parliament and the country that these Princes are coming in willingly.

I have some knowledge, no doubt slender but first-hand knowledge, of the subject. I am one of those whom I think my Noble Friend the Member for Hastings (Lord E. Percy) called "those different Members who have been to India and have come back with some impressions." As the Noble Lord is in his place now, I may say that I am not one of those who are in politics seeking for jobs and neither am I an agitator. But I have been to India, and I went to India in order that I might at first hand have certain conversations with some of the leading Princes for the sole reason that I was not satisfied with the statement made in this House and outside that the Princes were perfectly satisfied. I had very good reason to believe otherwise, and I may say at once that, having proceeded to India and having had the opportunity of many conversations with some of the leading Princes, I was confirmed in that belief. I came back knowing, if nothing else, that there were many leading and important Princes in India who were not satisfied with the terms set out in the White Paper under which they were to come into a Federation. I do not know whether that is denied or not, but it is a fact, and it is a simple matter to produce proof. I know that the Princes whom I saw were limited in number, but they were undoubtedly of a certain importance.

Among other things I was given a letter signed by five Princes which I brought home on the understanding that it should not be published until the Report of the Joint Select Committee had been published—which was very natural. That letter has since been published in the Press. I think it appeared in all the important papers, in London at any rate, with one notable and obvious exception. It states in unmistakable terms that the signatories are not or would not be prepared to enter a federation under the terms set out in the White Paper. The fact that a request was cabled from the signatories that that letter should be published would seem to prove that they were not satisfied that the Report of the Committee had made any appreciable change.

Major MILNER: Who were they?

Major COURTAULD: I can certainly tell the House the names. They were the Maharaja of Patiala, who is Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes; the Maharaj Rana of Dholpur, who is the pro-Chancellor; the Maharaja of Panna; the Maharaj Rana of Jhalawar and the Nawab of Bahawalpur. Everybody knows that they are members of the Standing Committee. In fact, they constitute a majority of the effective members of the Standing Committee, and I think that no hon. or right hon. Gentleman opposite will say that they are of no importance or that they are not worth listening to or that their prestige in India is insufficient to make them of any account. I do not think that anybody here will say that, although I have heard it said in private and by people who ought to know better. At any rate there is that letter which expresses the opinion of those Princes,

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and I have had information only to-day that those signatories have examined carefully the report of the Committee, and they are satisfied that out of 17 points for which they ask as a *sine quâ non* the report does not grant them the majority. If that is true, and I am perfectly certain it is, and proof that it is true will soon be furnished to Parliament by the Princes themselves, then it seems to me beyond question that these Princes are not prepared under present conditions to enter an All-India Federation. Therefore, anybody who says that there is no difference of opinion, and it was not only Lord Halifax but speakers the other day at the Queen's Hall who gave that impression, is stating something which is not strictly accurate—to put it no lower.

There is one other point, and that is as regards such Princes as have stated their willingness to enter a Federation. I believe that they are very few in number although undoubtedly there are a few. There is the question of whether any pressure or any persuasion has been used or whether any attempts at pressure or persuasion have been made unsuccessfully as yet on those who have not yet signified their agreement. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) put a question to the right hon. Gentleman on that subject and received an assurance that nothing in the way of bribes had been offered. Of course, the House will accept that statement. I have no doubt that nothing in the way of bribes has been offered. Equally I have no doubt that there are many Princes under the impression that such offers have been made. However, that is not the fault of the Government. As for persuasion, the right hon. Gentleman did not answer. He left that question alone. That is quite another case.

Of course, there has been a very strong form of persuasion. I know very well from my own experience. Before I arrived in India certain of the Princes who had invited me and my companion to go to India and discuss matters with them were sent for by the Viceroy and put on the carpet. They were told they had been behaving very badly. No doubt His Excellency the Viceroy had been warned that two dangerous firebrands, no less than two Conservatives, were on the way to India, and no doubt he resented that very much, and those Princes who had the temerity to ask two Conservatives to go out to see them suffered accordingly. Subsequently, while I was in India, proceeding as I did by invitation to stay with various Princes, on no occasion did I ever stay with any Prince who was not warned beforehand, either by the Viceroy or by some member of the political department, that he would be very unwise and be taking a grave risk if he asked us to stay with him.

That is literally true, and the Viceroy himself would be the first person to admit it. I had the honour to have a long conversation with Lord Willingdon, and he made no secret of the fact. He said, "You fellows are coming out here to try to put another case to the Princes. We have got to get them in. I have been spending my time trying to persuade them to come in, and you fellows are coming out and are trying to upset my applecart, but you cannot do it." We knew we could not do it, that we were not powerful enough, but we could have a try. In any case, it is perfectly well known that any ruling Prince in India is firmly of the opinion, rightly or wrongly, that, if he does not support the Government policy in this case, he is taking a risk of reprisals. One Prince said to me, when I rather charged him with timidity on the subject, knowing his real opinion: "You know, we are none of us infallible, and all of us may make mistakes in the administration of our States. If I agree with the Government's policy, I am a good boy, and if I make a mistake not much notice will be taken of it, but, if I now get up and say I disagree and make myself uncomfortable to them, then, if I made a mistake"—as he put it—"my life would be made a burden to me." I am not saying that that is true, I am not making any accusation, but I am saying that the Princes believe it is true.

Mr. KIRKPATRICK: No.

Major COURTAULD: The hon. Gentleman behind me contradicts that, but those Princes with whom I had a talk believe it is true, and I repeat that in the face of the direct negative from the rear. The Princes are honourable men, although perhaps my hon. Friend behind

me would say "No," and when they say a thing they mean it and when they say they believe that they do believe that. I do not know why my hon. Friend behind me should accuse them of telling falsehoods.

Mr. KIRKPATRICK: I was not accusing them of telling falsehoods. I was suggesting that they thought that perhaps my hon. and gallant Friend was "hoodwinkable."

Major COURTAULD: I withdraw then. I do not know what my hon. Friend means. Yesterday a certain question was put to my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State on the subject of these letters of which we have heard something and for which I am in some small measure responsible. I am bound to say, and I hope the hon. Gentleman will not bear me any ill-will for saying it, that I could not understand his answer. I have read it several times since, and I can make very little out of it, and I am rather inclined to think we were not intended to make much out of it. But there was a supplementary question put, to which the answer was perfectly clear. The supplementary question was:

"Can my hon. Friend say whether his right hon. Friend is now convinced that the proposals of the Joint Select Committee fully satisfy the demands made persistently by the Chamber of Princes?"

The hon. Gentleman's answer was:

"I think that in general the Report of the Joint Select Committee may be said to have met the points put forward by the Princes."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 10th December, 1934; cols. 4-5, Vol. 296.]

I do not pretend to any special knowledge of India or of the Princes or of anything else, but I do say that my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State will have to think again, because the Report of the Joint Select Committee definitely does not satisfy the Princes. Definitely the Princes do not consider it as satisfying them, and definitely the Government will be informed of that fact. Whether or not the Princes will come into this peculiar Federation which it is proposed to set up, I have no knowledge, nor has anybody else. It is impossible to make any prophecy as to what will happen over this ramshackle Federation. It may be that they may be persuaded to change their minds, to go back on what they have said, and eventually come in. It may even be that 51 per cent. in number will come in, which will enable the Government to proceed with their Bill in full. I do not know, but in any case it is perfectly clear that to-day a substantial body of Princes, led by men of prestige and importance, do not accept the Report of the Joint Select Committee, and, if they are led to change their minds, it will be a case of further persuasion. I think, without being controversial in any way, that when the history of our retreat from India comes to be written, not the least unpleasant chapter will be that which deals with the persuasion of the Princes.

7.52 p.m.

Lieut.-Colonel SPENDER-CLAY: Everybody appreciates the sincerity and strength of feeling of my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Chichester (Major Courtauld), who has just sat down, but I do not think it is the province of a Member who wants to speak as briefly as possible in any way to attempt to answer his arguments against Federation, because that is a matter which must be responded to by the spokesman of the Government, and I can imagine that the answers which can be given to the points that he has raised will be satisfactory. I rise as one of those who sat through all the Indian Debates in the Parliament of 1919, and I cannot help contrasting the interest which is taken at this moment in the government of India with the apathy which existed in 1919. With the exception, I think, of my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) and my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme (Colonel Wedgwood), who, I think, objected to the Government's Bill in 1919 because it did not enfranchise the whole of the 350,000,000 inhabitants of India, the only person who was consistently against the Bill of 1919 was the late Colonel Yate. Those who were in the House at that time will remember that he stood almost alone. The right hon. Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) was, of course, Secretary of State for War at that moment and was, therefore, otherwise engaged.

I do not think it is a matter to be regretted that there is criticism of this scheme. If you want to get good government, you must have criticism, and one of the disadvantages of the Act of 1919

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was that it went through with a sense of apathy and without full consideration. I also think it is a good thing that the opposition to these proposals cuts right across Parliament. It is a good thing that it is not merely a party question. It is not a case of Conservatives voting one way, Liberals another, and Socialists yet another way. We are not, I hope, going to bring this question of the government of India into party politics in the same way as was the case with the Government of Ireland Bill, unfortunately. I was not a member of the Round Table Conferences, nor was I a member of the Statutory Commission or the Joint Select Committee, so I speak purely as a layman, and I have not had the advantage which the last speaker had of ascertaining the opinions of the Princes in India. I speak merely as a man in the street, but the man in the street has some responsibility, and he also is important, because it is the man and the woman in the street who are the ultimate arbiters of what you do. It is the man in the street whom you have got to convince that your case is right.

I, personally, think the proposals which the Government are bringing forward are the logical outcome of the Morley-Minto reforms of 1906, which were followed by the Act of 1919. The Noble Lord the Member for Hastings (Lord E. Percy) pointed out the risks which we were taking then, and we are taking risks now, but, whatever course you adopt and whatever Bill is brought into this House, you will probably risk something. Whenever you have to take a decision, you have to take some risk, and perhaps that is why it is so difficult to get decisions out of a Government. But there is one danger which has not been mentioned. There is a possibility that there may be a weak Viceroy and a weak Secretary of State here at home, and a combination of the two would, I admit, produce a real risk of disaster. That is a point which should be considered. But what are the alternatives? I have listened to speeches both here and at the party meeting in the Queen's Hall the other day, and I have noticed that they are different here from what they were there. The speeches which we heard and the report which was put forward by Lord Salisbury's minority group advocated provincial self-government with an advisory committee at the Centre. To my mind, speaking as a layman, I cannot imagine anything more dangerous than to have provincial self-government and with that provincial self-government a weak bureaucratic government at the Centre. That, to my mind, would be the greatest danger which could be set up and would bring about a really serious situation.

One point which my hon. and gallant Friend opposite ignored is that if you have the Princes in a federal system, you will have a steadying influence, a steadying Conservative influence, at the centre, which would be of great assistance to the Viceroy in carrying out his very responsible and arduous duties. I believe that the inevitable result of having self-government in the Provinces and a bureaucratic government at the Centre would be that you would have a constant pressure by the Provinces on the central Government, which would inevitably lead to a deadlock, and that is one of the dangers which I foresee. I do not believe that the proposals of the minority group would commend themselves to any responsible body of educated Indian opinion at all. You may say that the proposals which are at present before the House do not appeal to educated Indian opinion, but *a fortiori* the case would be far stronger against giving merely provincial autonomy and having no responsible government at the Centre. I believe this Bill will unite intelligent Indian opinion in a way in which no other Measure could possibly do it.

I was looking up some history a short time ago, and I came across the story of the revolt of the American Colonies against the British Government in 1764. The ultimate result was that 12 years later there was the declaration of independence whereby the colonies in America were lost to this country for all time. I believe that if we do not have unity of all shades of Indian opinion, of people who are most antipathetic to each other with strong communal dislikes and differences of caste and religion, the effect will be disastrous to the continuance of India as the Indian Empire. I do not think that I need allude at any length to the Socialist alternative. They would be willing to take greater risks than the majority of people in this House. They would be prepared to have an advance to

Dominion status without any legislation in this House, and they want to do away with the safeguards which are formulated.

Major MILNER: The hon. and gallant Member will agree that that policy has the greatest support in India?

Lieut.-Colonel SPENDER-CLAY: I agree, for naturally the Indian people as a whole want all they can get. That is understandable, but I am looking at it from the point of view of the interests of the Empire and the Indian people as a whole. I cannot say that politically-minded people would like to have Dominion status at once, but, on the other hand, I think they would prefer to go gradually as is now proposed and take all their people with them including other people in the British Empire, rather than have the proposals of the Minority Report which would tend to retrogression rather than advance. The Government have been wise in adopting the middle course. If the Conservative Minority Report were adopted, we should have a boycott almost immediately in India and, even more serious, we should have non-co-operation among those who are assisting the Government in India now. The ordinary man and woman in India does not realise how services are Indianised at the present moment, and, if we have a spirit of non-co-operation among those who are at present conducting the local government and the central government, we should have a state of affairs which would be chaos. We might govern for a few months by force and a few British civil servants might be able to carry on for a certain time, but sooner or later we should have a state of affairs in which we were governing by autocratic decree. How long would the British public stand government by decree in face of non-co-operation among Indians? Undoubtedly, we should have in the course of time a change of government, and, what was visualised by the Lord President of the Council the other day, a period of strong government or coercion and weak government or concession. Nothing could be worse for India and the condition of India would progressively deteriorate.

If we want to keep India within the Empire, it is essential to take educated Indian opinion with us. A great deal of sob-stuff has been spoken about the illiterate and inarticulate masses, but they will always follow educated Indian opinion. If we want to encourage and to maintain trade and good relations, if we want to save Lancashire, which we are always told is suffering owing to Indian non-co-operation and through being shut out of the Indian markets, the only way is by a spirit of good will. If we endeavour to put back the clock, does anybody think for a moment that it will encourage conditions of trade with India? Because I believe that the proposals of the Government are better calculated to succeed than any others that have yet been put forward, because I value the opinion of those who have been loyally giving up many months to hard work in order to get this report issued, and because it is the opinion of men whose opinion I value, I believe this report should be adopted, and I hope that in the shortest possible time a Bill on these lines will be enacted in Parliament.

8.8 p.m.

Duchess of ATHOLL: In a Debate on a matter of tremendous magnitude it is almost inevitable that many facts that are of vital importance to an understanding of it tend to be left out, and this Debate has been no exception. I would like to remind my Noble Friend the Member for Hastings (Lord E. Percy) that there are some important facts bearing on the question whether Congress is likely to get in power at the Federal Centre. The Noble Lord forgets that it is the only well-organised political body in India, as was proved in the recent elections and that it is a body mainly Hindu which, because of its extreme nationalism, can make an appeal to many Hindus who perhaps do not share all its views but who do not like to stand altogether aside from its activities. It has further been shown that Congress has the power to win to its side Moslems in both the Central Legislature and on the Calcutta Corporation. We have further to remember that as the great majority of the States in India are Hindu the majority of their representatives in the proposed Federal Assembly are likely to be Hindus, and these may well find it difficult to resist some sympathetic action with a Hindu Congress party from British India.

The Princes' representatives in the Federal Assembly may therefore not be the steady stabilising influence on which so many hopes have been built, and that has been clearly shown by the Princes'

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own desire for a Confederation which their representatives should enter before joining the Federation. A representative who gave evidence on behalf of the Princes before the Joint Committee addressed a meeting of Members upstairs, and in explaining the reasons of the Princes for desiring Confederation, showed that it was because they feared their representatives might find it difficult to stand up in debate to politicians from British India, or because they feared that their representatives might be got at by those politicians that they made the suggestion of Confederation, which should oblige all its members to act and vote as one in the Federal Legislature. But they were obliged to admit that entry into this Confederation could only be voluntary, and that there was therefore no certainty that their members would work and vote together. They might find it difficult to stand up against the strong Hindu influences which are bound to be vocal and determinedly expressed in the Federal Legislature.

I now wish to get at some other facts which did not emerge yesterday from the statement of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State. He and others spoke of the hopes expressed at different times in the last 150 years by Englishmen in India that one day India might be able to govern herself, but he did not remind us that all those declarations were finally given Parliamentary form in the 1919 Act, which expresses in statutory shape the most definite and authoritative of the declarations. Nor did he remind us of the Preamble of that Act, which clearly lays down that any further advance towards self-government must depend on the use that Indians make of the powers transferred under that Act. It is satisfactory to find the Joint Committee setting out in their report that it is that Act which must govern Parliament's action to-day. In view of these conditions laid down by the Act of 1919 as to the use Indians have made of the Act, the first duty of anyone examining the question must be to inform himself as to how these powers have been administered. The Simon Commission, as the result of a report of an auxiliary committee which examined into education, reported that

"it was now in a most critical position."

You could not have a greater condemnation than a sentence such as that. They also reported the serious deterioration that had taken place in the work of local authorities since their supervision had been transferred to an Indian Minister.

In view of what my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary said to-day about no deterioration having taken place in the transferred departments in Burma, I hope that he will forgive me if I remind him that the Burmese Government wrote to the Simon Commission of progressive deterioration in the accounts of local bodies, of frequent frauds and embezzlements, and of failure to take effective action against those proved guilty. They also said that the authorities often ignored the auditor's comments and showed themselves indifferent to the qualifications, antecedents and behaviour of their officers. Deterioration in health services was also reported to the Commission by five provincial governments, and the Royal Commission on Agriculture in India presided over by Lord Linlithgow had shown that agriculture was in a condition which needed widespread and comprehensive reform. It is not surprising perhaps that we have not heard much of this deterioration in transferred departments because the Joint Select Committee gave extremely little time to hearing evidence from men who had served in these various departments.

Of the five most important Government departments transferred in 1921—education, health, public works, agriculture, and the supervision of the work of local authorities—they heard only about the work of the Health Department, and only in regard to two provinces out of British India's ten. Up to date reports on education and the work of local authorities show just the same conditions as the Simon Commission. Indeed, the annual reports which the Provincial Governments publish on the work of their local authorities make far clearer than the Simon Commission did the grave deterioration that has occurred in local authorities since they lost the guidance of the Government official who was formerly their chairman. In the latest report of the Government of Bihar and Orissa it is stated that it will take a long time to undo the mischief wrought by years of continual

maladministration and the supersession of the municipality of Patna, its capital city, was to be continued for two more years. The Provincial Government proceed to enumerate faults which are typical of those mentioned in reports on local authorities in other Provinces. In particular very serious defects are noted in the latest reports on local authorities in the Punjab and the United Provinces.

I want the House to consider the prejudice to the welfare of the masses such deterioration in the work of the local authorities must necessarily have produced. An ex-director of public health has stated in a recent review that many local authorities have brought to an end the extension of schemes of drainage and water supply which had been steadily increasing before the reforms of 1921. In many cases, he says, they have got into such financial difficulties that they have not even been able to maintain the services of the kind which had been provided before. Imagine what danger that means to public health in a country such as India, with all its many epidemic diseases. Then an ex-inspector-general of civil hospitals told the Joint Committee of grave deterioration in the health services due not merely to the deficiencies of local authorities but to the administration of the Minister himself and his constant interference in medical appointments. Most unsuitable men had been appointed and other important medical posts—appointments to professorships, which must have had very serious effects on the welfare of human beings. A professor of physiology, the Joint Committee were told, was appointed who admitted to the principal of the medical college that he had never lectured, never demonstrated and had done no physiology since his student days. An ex-inspector-general of hospitals spoke of the thousands of eyes that are blinded every year in India through operations for cataract performed by unqualfied quacks trained in institutions which are now receiving grants from public funds owing to the political pressure put upon Ministers by provincial councils which they have not been able to withstand.

When we learn of facts such as those is it not inevitable that we should feel that the greatest caution is necessary in giving further powers? I feel that it is only honest to say that if to-day we were free to consider only the welfare of the masses—and, after all, Queen Victoria's declaration of 1858 pledged herself that India should be governed for the benefit of all her subjects resident in that country—we should transfer no single additional Department to Indian Ministers until efficiency had been restored in those Departments in which grave deterioration had taken place. But, in view of all that has been said in the past few years, and of the hopes which have been aroused, I feel that it is inevitable that some further powers should be transferred in the Provinces; but I also feel very strongly that they should be transferred in such a way as to minimise as far as possible what seems to me the inevitable suffering they must cause.

It is for that reason that those with whom I associate desire that there should be no transfer of responsibility for law and order, in order that we may feel that we can continue to give security for life, limb and possessions. I recognise, of course, that the Joint Select Committee's report specified certain means by which it is hoped to safeguard these things. The Secretary of State mentioned two of them yesterday. He instanced the fact that in this country the Home Secretary is not given the names of informants or the exact sources of information in secret service crimes, but the Joint Select Committee's report, as I read it, does not propose merely to withhold the names of informants from the Indian Minister for Law and Order but the actual records of information coming from terrorist sources. As I understand it, that means that the Minister is to get no information at all about these matters. If, therefore, he is attacked, as inevitably he will be, in the Provincial Council for steps taken as the result of information of this kind given to his Department, imagine what a humiliating position he will be in, and how difficult it will be for him and the Governor to maintain friendly relations when he knows that the Governor has the power to give him the information but has withheld it. Is that giving the Minister the responsibility which we are told it is so essential that he should have? It is setting up diarchy in the police force itself, and those with expert knowledge hold, I believe, that this suggested provision will not be effective in secur-

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ing a continuance of the supply of information, because no informant will believe it possible that the Minister should not be told the names of informants, and will be too frightened to give information any more. Therefore I do not think that provision is one which will work.

The other means mentioned by my right hon. Friend was the power to be given to the Governor to resume control of Departments in the case of terrorist attempts to overthrow the Government by violent crime, but he was at pains to explain that this resumption of control would only be resorted to in the event of a serious emergency having arisen—in other words, after much harm has been done. My right hon. Friend also omitted to tell us of the close connection between Congress and terrorism in Bengal, which I think is admitted in his note on terrorism attached to the report. If Congress and terrorism have been able to establish close relations in Bengal why should they not do so in other Provinces? We cannot possibly prevent such an association from spreading. In the event of a Congress Minister being in charge of law and order, I do not think it is necessary for me to ask the House to picture all the connivance there will be and all the failure to deal effectually with terrorism before the moment comes when the Governor knows and sees that sufficient harm has been done to warrant him in taking over control. We do not feel, therefore, that these and other means proposed to safeguard life and limb are likely to prove effective. In most cases it will be a case of closing the stable door after the steed has been stolen, and we earnestly hope that responsibility for law and order, by which we mean the courts, the police and the district magistrates, who in all districts control the police, will be reserved to the Governor. Prevention is better than cure.

Another point to which we attach importance is the continuance of British recruitment for all important departments. Personally I feel very strongly about this, especially in regard to irrigation. Sir Raymond Hadow, chief engineer of the irrigation service of the Punjab, stressed the importance of British recruitment as a means of preventing the bribery of Indian subordinates by the wealthier Indian cultivators to give them more than their fair share of the precious water. Sir Charlton Harrison, then chief engineer of the Sukkur Barrage, told the Simon Commission that even with 58 per cent. of his staff British he could not meet the demand for British irrigation officers from all over his area, because the people knew that under a British officer they would get their fair share of the water. If a wealthy cultivator gets more than his fair share a poorer cultivator has to go without, his land yields nothing and he and his family starve. I recognise that provision is made for British recruitment to be resumed if the economic welfare of a province or of its people has suffered, but much harm may have been occasioned before such a step is taken. Sir Raymond Hadow also told the Committee that he had known of cases in which it took five years to bring to light the damage done to irrigation canals as the result of inefficient officials being in charge of them.

I also earnestly desire to see the Governor-General having the power to sanction big irrigation schemes. Does the House realise that irrigation is regarded to-day as being so valuable that a Governor is not allowed to sanction more than quite inexpensive ones? He has to send home to get the sanction of the Secretary of State in Council for anything that will cost more than £350,000. That provision is an effective check on any profiteers or concession hunters getting hold of the precious water supply or water power. But the report would place entire control of these in the hands of Indian Ministers responsible to no Governor or Governor-General or Secretary of State, but only to a Provincial Council which may be swayed or moved in all sorts of ways by people anxious to get accepted some scheme which will put money into their own pockets but not be for the benefit of India or her people.

In the fourth place, as the Noble Lord the Member for Aldershot (Viscount Wolmer) made clear yesterday, we want no transfer of responsibility at the Centre, and I personally attach great importance to the proposals made by the Simon Commission for strengthening the Central Government. The fact that the Simon Commission made those proposals

seems to have been overlooked by a great many people, but they are of great importance from the point of view of administrative efficiency. The commission wanted the Central Government to have "a more authoritative position" than it now enjoys constitutionally, in regard to questions vitally affecting more than one provincial department. Further, the Simon Commission wished the Central Government to have the power to give grants for provincial objects—not merely a doling out of so much of the Income Tax for a Province to spend exactly as it liked, but the making of grants from the Central Government to a Provincial Government in respect of particular services or some portion of a particular service. Mass primary education was mentioned as the sort of object which might be assisted in that way.

Anybody with experience of administration knows how great is the power of the Government that gives a grant to a local authority. He who holds the purse-strings can, tactfully it may be, and gradually, but in the end, lay down conditions attaching to the spending of the grant. The Simon Commission specifically desired this grant-giving power to be used by the Central Government for the restoration of efficiency in education, and they desired the Central Government to have more power than at present to guide and assist education and other provincial subjects. If the hon. Member for Bodmin (Mr. Isaac Foot) were here, I would tell him that that is my answer to the question which he put yesterday as to what we would do with the schools and universities of India. I would tell him that the latest report of Sir George Anderson, Educational Commissioner with the Government of India, who was a member of the Simon Commission's Auxiliary Committee on Education, shows on every page the need that education in the various Provinces has of more guidance in regard both to policy and to administration. I can imagine nothing which is more needed by India to-day for her education than that the Central Government should have power to take the initiative in bringing the Provinces together in order to help them to take united action for the drastic reforms in their educational system, which Sir George Anderson's report shows to be necessary. Lord Linlithgow's Commission on Agriculture also wished the Central Government to have the power to assist every department of agriculture with grants, initiative and guidance.

In the grant-giving power proposed by the Simon Commission and the power to give information and guidance which they desired, are constitutional links between the Central Government and the Provincial Governments such as do not exist to-day, links for the need of which my Noble Friend the Member for Hastings laid so much stress. I go further; I say that the scheme which he and his friends propose in the report will give much less of a constitutional link between the Central Government and the Provincial Governments than was proposed by the Simon Commission, because the Federal Government are to have no power whatever in regard to matters such as irrigation, education and agriculture, or any of those things for which the Simon Commission wanted more guidance and help through grants. Under these proposals Income Tax will be distributed by the Federal Government upon an automatic basis, apparently, according to the population of the Province and as to what the Province has contributed, and without any specific allocation being made by any Government Department which would help to steer the Province into a more efficient administration.

I regard it as absolutely lamentable that the report will give the Federal Government none of the power to help, guide or assist, upon which the Simon Commission relied for restoring efficiency to Provincial Departments. Some vague words are indeed put down in the report about the desirability of co-ordination. The Provinces can co-ordinate and co-operate, but the report does not propose to give the Federal Government any power in regard to education or any of the subjects which I have mentioned, so how can that Government take any effective hand in co-ordinating? To give the powers which I am suggesting to the Central Government would undoubtedly strengthen that Government and should prevent those separatist tendencies which some Members fear might show themselves in the Provinces. Provinces which received grants from the Central Government would have a strong inducement to remain linked to it. It would not be necessary to reduce the official bloc in the Federal Assembly as the

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Simon Commission proposed. This, I admit, would weaken it.

Hon. Members may ask: Why has the report failed to give the Federal Government any power over provincial subjects? I believe it is because of the very real dread entertained by many Moslems of a Federation which they see will naturally be dominated by Hindus. Their delegates have acquiesced in it because they have been given Sind as a separate province. The communal award will give them a majority in that and two other Provinces, and they say: "If we are to have a Federation, let us be top dog in three Provinces, and do not let the Federal Government interfere with us there." I can imagine nothing of greater danger to the peace of India than to press into a Federation a great proportion—I am told about 75 per cent. —of these warlike and virile people, the Moslems of the North-West of India, who occupy a strategic position of enormous importance. They have behind them a great tradition of dominating the Hindus, and many of them are perfectly clear that they will not submit to being under Hindu rule. I leave the House to picture to itself the sort of situation which might arise on the North-West Frontier in the event of disaffection among the Moslems there against Hindu rule, the probability of the emergence of a Pan-Islamic movement, and the great issues to which that might lead. That is, I believe, why the report makes a cleavage between the Federal powers and the provincial powers which will leave the Provincial Departments to wallow in the mire of the inefficiency in which the Simon Commission found them.

Then we would give the Princes the opportunity they desire of being able to influence tariff policy through an advisory council such as the Simon Commission proposed. The Commission proposed that council as a first step to an All-India Federation which they regarded as the ultimate goal. I fail therefore to see how hon. Members can say, as has been said, because this same Advisory Council is proposed in Lord Salisbury's Minority Report instead of a federation, that if federation is not set up now it will never be brought about.

Lastly, I should personally like to see some nominated element retained in the Provincial Councils in order to protect the peasant. I know that the wider franchise is intended to enable the peasant to voice his opinions more than he has been able to do up to the present, but I most earnestly ask the House to consider whether the agriculturist, as matters stand to-day, is free to use his vote for his own benefit. An Indian well known in public life said to me some 18 months ago, "Election booths are auction marts,' and he proceeded to tell me the story of two rival agents in an election going down to a village and for a whole day openly bidding against each other for the votes of the villagers. With a desperately poor peasantry, one can imagine the temptation that it may well be to them to give their vote for a few annas to some gentleman who is in a position to spend what the right hon. and gallant Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme said could be spent on an election.

But there is a greater danger still. If we remember that some 75 per cent. of the peasants are in debt to the moneylender, is it not obvious that the moneylender, if he chooses, can make his debtors vote as he wants them to vote without spending a penny, simply by threatening them? Moneylenders in India have undoubtedly taken a good deal more interest in politics in these last 15 years than they did before, and I am told that in some parts of India to-day the Government is actually called the "Userers' Government." They have managed to hamstring some Measures for the protection of the peasant against their rapacity. The Linlithgow Commission reported that Acts to protect the peasant against the moneylender and to enable the rate of interest to be reduced had proved a dead letter in several Provinces, and asked the Government of India to endeavour to get these Acts put in force. That also is a power which the Government of India will cease to have under the proposals of the report.

I must here record my amazement that the hon. Member for Limehouse (Mr. Attlee) said that we had given protection to the moneylender and policed the rapacity of the landlord. I am very willing to admit that there are landlords in India who are rapacious. An ex-Inspector-General of Police has told me of some of the exactions of the landlords in his Province. But he added that he and his officers spent half their time in

protecting the rank and file of Indians from petty tyrannies of that kind exercised by their own people who were in a more influential position. It seems to me annoying that, while hon. Members opposite speak, in their draft report, about the peasant and the moneylender, they do not seem able to see that it is we who have done anything that has been done to protect the peasant from the rapacity of the moneylender, and that, if we transfer all the powers proposed, and if we have no more nominated members on the provincial councils, it may be possible for the moneylending class to repeal the Acts which with great difficulty have been passed to protect the peasant.

It is because we want to save the peasant from all the misery that will be probable under the proposed transfers that we desire to retain power at the Centre to remedy any breakdown of law and order which may occur in the Provinces. We want also to retain in the Provinces the power to prevent a breakdown of law and order, and I personally wish to ensure the continued presence on the provincial councils of people who can be trusted to work for the interests of the peasant, and also for the protection of minorities against tyrannical majorities. I hope that in that way we shall gradually enable the peasant to free himself from the shackles which fetter him to-day, but which I feel confident, if all that the report proposes is brought about, will permanently enslave him.

8.41 p.m.

Wing-Commander JAMES: It is my fixed determination to make the shortest speech that has been made, or probably will be made in this Debate. If I can do that, I think, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, I shall have earned your gratitude and that of the House as well as my own satisfaction. Perhaps, therefore, the Noble Lady will forgive me if I do not endeavour to follow her, because after the speech of the Noble Lord the Member for Hastings (Lord E. Percy) practically all that can be said in support of the proposals of the Government from a back bench point of view has already been said much better than I could say it. I would only add that it appears to me that one of the greatest merits of these proposals is that once and for all they will place on the Indian shoulders the onus of responsibility for which they have been clamouring, and it will be up to them to make the reforms a success. If they fail, if they do not play the game, if they do not do what they claim they are able to do, they will have earned everything that their detractors have said about them in this House and elsewhere.

I have risen for a distinct purpose. I apologise to the House for referring to a matter in which I do not think anyone except myself takes much interest, but the Secretary of State made a reference to it in his speech yesterday and it is a matter which affects vitally the lives of something like 4 per cent. of the total population of British India and Burma. I refer to that part of the report which deals with the Backward Tracts and Excluded Areas. I welcome the proposals in the report provided that they are implemented in the Bill. The proposals appear to me to be a great improvement on the proposals in the original White Paper. I may say at once that I do not expect any reply to-day on these rather technical points, but I hope they will be brought to the notice of the Secretary of State. This point that I want to bring to the notice of my right hon. Friend, and it is obviously one which has no party bearing whatever, even in the Conservative party itself, and I think that hon. Members opposite and particularly the hon. Member for Broxtowe (Mr. Cocks), who has taken a great interest in this matter, would endorse some of that which I am going to say. The Secretary of State, in his speech yesterday, gave me some cause for apprehension, because in referring to the backward tracts he said:

> "Again with the backward districts and the aboriginal tribes, there, I am quite sure, every hon. Member will agree that we must keep in reserve powers to prevent these tribes and these remote districts from being exploited."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 10th December, 1934; col. 53, Vol. 296.]

That came under his remarks on the subject of special responsibilities, but my submission to the House is that that is not good enough. More than mere powers kept in reserve are required. I should like very briefly—so briefly as probably to be obscure—to indicate the background of this problem. The Simon Report dealt with the matter very thoroughly. In its survey it describes the conditions in seven Provinces, and its

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recommendations and conclusions were specific. The commission also remarked in reference to the previous Montagu-Chelmsford Report that both the definition of these areas and their constitutional arrangements after the reforms were left for further consideration. The trouble is that they have always been left for further consideration and when the Noble Lady tells us, as she constantly does, of the terrible deterioration that is going to take place in their administration of India, I sometimes wonder if she quite appreciates the level from which deterioration will have to start.

The numbers of aboriginals involved gives some indication of how this problem has been consistently allowed to slide for years past. The total number of aboriginals living in British India is about 18,500,000, and the number in Burma about 2,500,000; and yet so little has the Government of India itself, apparently, appreciated the problem that we find the Franchise Committee, whose figures were presumably supplied from official sources, referring to from 5,000,000 to 7,000,000, and we find even the Simon Report talking in one place of 11,000,000. I do not want the matter to be allowed to slide again. In the White Paper it looks as though that were going to happen. Paragraphs 106 to 109 were very vague, and they certainly appeared to go back on the Simon Report. It has been frequently said that the Secretary of State in this report has been merely driving forward a preconceived idea rigidly held. I wish to testify that in this matter, at all events, he has displayed a very different attitude. Although he knew from speeches that I had made in this House that I was antagonistic to his views, it was at his suggestion and with his encouragement that I was privileged to give evidence before the Joint Select Committee, because, as he told me, he wanted every line and every paragraph in the White Paper to be scrutinised and subjected to critical and impartial examination. And I feel rather guilty now in turning to bite—or, at least, indicating that I might feel disposed at a later stage to bite—the hand that fed me.

Earl WINTERTON: I do not quite follow my hon. and gallant Friend's argument. We have laid down the most strict conditions for the excluded areas. Is he not confusing excluded with partially excluded areas?

Wing-Commander JAMES: I was presuming hitherto to indicate what had happened on previous occasions before the Joint Select Committee met. The Joint Select Committee gave sympathetic treatment to the problem. There is, apparently, doubt as to how the appropriate paragraph should be interpreted, but the Committee gave in paragraph 378 (*f*) what appears to me to be a very definite and satisfactory decision, because in that paragraph, as I read it, they say that those areas, either to be excluded or to be partially excluded, are to be specified and are to be prescribed by Order-in-Council after the passing of the Act. If that is to be interpreted literally, it gives me the greatest satisfaction. [*Interruption.*] It is because the House will have a say that I am entering a *caveat* now. What I should like to hear from the Secretary of State, if possible, is how and when he proposes that this survey, almost a boundary commission in its nature, I presume, will be carried out, because I hope the inquiry is going to be independent, unfettered and unprejudiced. I hope Parliament is not going to be asked to accept any bureaucratic substitute by which I mean recommendations from provincial Governments, because we all know that any department, let alone a provincial Government, will never relinquish hold of anything apparently in its grasp. I urge that the claims of each area should be examined separately and the matter treated purely on its merits in each case. Dr. Hutton's evidence shows quite conclusively that under the existing haphazard system of exclusion and part exclusion there has been very bad maladministration. If this matter is not tackled now, in my submission the Provincial Governors and Legislatures are from the outset going to be burdened with special responsibilities which would be more wisely dealt with in another way. In support of my general argument, I wish to read one paragraph from the report of the Joint Select Committee. It is true that it is written in relation to Burma but its moral applies equally to the whole of India, and further it almost seems to imply that the mind of the Secretary of State is not quite as fluid as I had hoped:

"The Secretary of State's memorandum, which we understand reflects the views of the Government of Burma, suggests that where an area has never been formally declared a backward tract and does not consist exclusively of hill districts it is undesirable to withdraw it from the scope of Ministers and the Legislature, and that it should therefore continue to be regarded as a partially excluded area only. We cannot accept this suggestion nor do we agree that the omissions of the past should necessarily be perpetuated in the future."

That paragraph expresses the whole of the plea that I wish to make.

8.50 p.m.

Sir JOHN GANZONI: No question since I have been here has caused more difficulty or more searching of heart than this Indian question, and I consider myself lucky in catching your eye, Sir, when I know that so many want to do so, because I believe I speak for plain Conservative men and women—there are no plain Conservative women, but plain Conservative men and typical Conservative women, both inside and outside the House, and I am certain that they feel almost in despair. Truth is only to be found at the bottom of a well, and it is extraordinarily difficult for those who have not practical, personal experience of India to be quite sure, among the multitude of counsellors, where the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth is to be found. Perhaps I have a slight personal advantage over some of them inasmuch as, though I have no experience of working or living in India, I have a considerable experience of the great Dominions and the Crown Colonies, and also of the coloured races in many parts of the Empire.

As a thorough Conservative I should, of course, like to go back to the period before the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, as many of us would, but we cannot put the clock back. I have very grave doubts —and I certainly do not stand alone—as to the readiness of these Oriental people for a democratic constitution on Western lines. I have had doubts as to the wisdom of conferring it. I have had doubts as to the safety of the Indians themselves, or, at any rate, for the less warlike races residing in India, for the Britons in India and also for those Britons living at home and within the rest of the Empire. But there is another side to the question. No critics of the Government's intentions can get away from the fact that we have made and repeated a promise time and time again. It may be said that it has been somewhat gratuitously repeated. But the fact remains. The promise is there, and it is a very moot point whether, after such a bright light has been shed on the matter, failing publicly and signally to implement that promise might not do a great deal more harm, particularly in dealing with Asiatic peoples different in language and religion from ourselves, than anything that could be put into the Constitution which has to be so very carefully drawn up and based upon a report which is, after all, a historic and most carefully considered document.

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: To what particular promise is the hon. Baronet referring?

Sir J. GANZONI: I do not think it is a favourable opportunity to go into, I will not say back-chat, but conversation; but the hon. and gallant Gentleman must be well aware that ever since 1918 the people of India have been led to believe that when we considered that they were ripe for it they would be given a Constitution of their own. If that does not satisfy the hon. and gallant Gentleman, at any rate he will allow me to continue for the time being. It may have been perfectly true—I think that it was perfectly true—that some time ago there was no such thing as a national Indian opinion, and in that connection it explains a great deal of the honest hostility to the present proposals among people outside the House and among some of the best patriots, whether retired colonels or Indian civil servants or business men who have spent long, honourable and useful years in India and completed their life there by 1918, or as late as the time of the Simon Report. But since those people came home for good, things have moved apace. They have moved very fast indeed, and, as generally happens, they have gathered momentum, and the pace has been still more marked since the time of the Simon Commission, and again since 1931. Finally, of course, comes the adhesion of the Indian Princes. I know that people impute various motives for that adhesion, but still it is an accomplished fact, and it came, as far as we in this country are concerned, by their own volition in 1931,

[Sir J. Ganzoni.]

and I feel that that has completely altered the situation. It has given us the chance for the first time of making a federation of all India and not only for British India, and, although I have not the knowledge to say that if we fail to grasp this present opportunity, no other will at any time be offered, still we are certainly well advised in seizing the opportunity immediately after, and as a consequence of, the report of the Joint Select Committee.

I am impressed with the Joint Select Committee not only with its report as much as I have been able to digest, but also with its objective and with its conduct of affairs throughout long and protracted sittings. I think that perhaps a good deal of improvement might have been brought about. What is not capable of improvement? Those who are most ready to say that it should have been greatly improved—and this is the only mildly provocative thing I propose to say from start to finish of my speech—and say so loudly are those who refused, after invitations, to participate in their deliberations and give the benefit of their advice and skill in drafting this very remarkable report. I have listened carefully, especially lately, to the best advice I could get from both sides, and notably to those who have led Debates both for and against the White Paper proposals in many places outside the House of Commons. Also there was the occasion of the party meeting at the Queen's Hall where I was particularly impressed with the speech of our Leader. I know that it is a trite saying, so much so that it almost provokes sarcasm, to say that it is the influence of his honesty and sincerity which makes him perhaps the most influential man in public life not only with a considerable portion of his own party, but also with right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite, who are inclined to dispute it here in this House though they know that it is true with the bulk of their supporters in the country, and also among those with no settled political opinions. But there are other things besides transparent sincerity. This reminds me of something which I heard the late Mr. Bonar Law say in my presence at a great public platform meeting at the time of the Home Rule campaign in the country. Towards the end of a long speech, and in that charming way he had of taking the vast audience into his confidence, he said:

> "You know my enemies—and believe me I have enemies—allow me certain qualities, but they seem to think I am a very simple man. Now, I do not think I am such a simple man really."

I do not think that the Lord President, who is leading the Conservative party as the backbone of a National Government, is a very simple man really. I think that I can find another simile which will be better understood by the people outside. His tactics more closely represent the tactics which are frequently pursued with great success by two outstanding characters of the turf to-day, Joe Childs and Freddy Fox, who have made a practice of allowing their chief opponents to take the lead, and sometimes a long lead, at the wrong time but almost invariably managing to come through with a rattle on the rails at the finish and being the first past the winning post.

I definitely support the Motion which the Government have put upon the Paper, and I believe that a Bill should be based upon the report of the Joint Select Committee. If I turn for hope or comfort to the Amendment which has been put upon the Paper by the party opposite and which, I understand, is to be moved to-morrow, it only makes me more thankful than ever that this Constitution is to be provided during the time of power of the National Government with a strong Conservative backbone. If I turn to the Amendment, which I regret and think is a pity, standing in the names of the two Noble Lords, of the Noble Lady, and of the right hon. Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) and other Members of the Conservative party, and which I understand will not be moved, I find that it represents a negative and a *non possumus* attitude which does not help a plain man like myself either outside or inside the House of Commons to make up his mind. I hope that when the time comes I shall find that the Bill is drafted in such a way that I shall be able to support it. I shall ever be ready and willing to do all I can to strengthen safeguards, and I am by no means convinced at present that the control of police and the administration of law and order should be handed over to Indian Ministers elected on a democratic basis.

I hope that I have stated my reasons, as many as I have time for, in a temperate and moderate manner and that anything that I have said may help plain Conservatives inside and outside the House, many of whom I believe are thinking what I have been saying.

9.3 p.m.

Miss RATHBONE: The cheerful speech to which we have just listened has been something like a relief. No one who has listened to the previous speeches can think that this House is in any danger of embarking upon this great adventure in a half-hearted spirit. Certainly no one who comes to the Indian problem as I do and has studied social conditions in India, and especially conditions among women, are likely to succumb to light-hearted optimism. We have looked at the dark side of the Indian picture, and if we have come to believe, as I have, that we have no choice but to go forward with a measure as far-reaching, though not necessarily identical in all its particulars, as that which is before the Committee, it is not because we do not realise the difficulties and risks but because we are convinced, as the Committee say, that only Indians can redeem India from the evils which are sapping the vitality of her race, and, further, Indians will only really buckle down to the task as long as the energies of her best men and women are in the political struggle, and they have British rule and British instruction to blame for failure to implement social reform. As I listened to the Noble Lady, I felt that as a logical conclusion of her speech we should take away from India all the powers we have given her hitherto. Whether Indian reformers are justified in throwing the blame for their defects upon British rulers is not now the question. I think that if we had taken a bolder line in matters of social reconstruction we might have encountered great difficulties, but we should have won greater respect from all, and more affection from those whose affection is best worth having. But it is useless to regret the past. All that is left to us now, in handing over a task which we have adjudged ourselves unable to fulfil, is to see that those whom we have failed to protect shall be equipped as far as constitutional rights can do it with the means of self-protection. The immediate question is whether the proposed structure of government will achieve this end.

I want to deal chiefly but not exclusively with the bearing of the reforms upon the status of women. I have given more time to the study of that question than to any other political question, and perhaps more than to all other questions put together. Owing to significant and tragic reasons Indian women and girls are a minority of the population. Yet they only fall about 11,000,000 short of being half of it, so that I hope the House will not look upon this as a side issue. I want to make full acknowledgment of the generous way in which the Committee has approached this part of its task, and here I may include all the members of the Committee. I believe that the sections of the report dealing with the protection of the women's franchise and representation on elected bodies are practically the only portions of the recommendations of the Committee, as compared with those of the White Paper, which have extended rather than curtailed the development of democratic self-government. Perhaps this is in some part a testimony to the skill and persistence with which the women's claims were presented to the Committee by the women's organisations here and in India and by Members of both Houses. I wish that one of those Members, Miss Mary Pickford, was here with us to-day. We shall sorely miss that very clear and very quick brain, but her labours have borne fruit.

The concessions made by the report are substantial, and we are grateful for them, but they will not satisfy the women's organisations in India, most of which have steadily demanded adult suffrage as the only way of achieving full equality. They will not even satisfy those of us who would have been content with the recommendations of the very moderate and able Lothian Report on the franchise question, which would have contented those of use who are broken in to British methods of gradualism and compromise. It may be worth while to summarise what those concessions give and what they fail to give, in the hope that there is still time to remedy some of the defects before the Bill is brought before us. First, as to the franchise. The White Paper made two very serious changes for the worse in the proposals of the Lothian

[Miss Rathbone.]

Committee. One change was to compel women qualified to vote in respect of their husband's property to make application for their votes. The other was to substitute a much higher educational qualification for the test of simple literacy recommended for women voters. We pressed for the restitution of the Lothian proposals in both respects. The report has conceded a change in one or other respects in each of the Governor's Provinces, but not both except in one and a half Provinces, and neither in any of the minor Provinces.

Secondly, the report improves on the White Paper by recognising that the grave obstacles imposed by the application condition and the heightened educational qualification to the achievement of even the most modest proportion of one women to four and a half men, which is considered reasonable, are justified, if justified at all, only by administrative difficulties which can and should be overcome before the second general election under the new Constitution. But it does not supply the necessary stimulus to the Provincial Governments to grapple with these difficulties by making the recommendation mandatory. I think that is a mistake. We all know the difference in the psychological effect on ourselves between knowing that we must prepare for a troublesome task within a given time, and of merely being told that we ought to be thinking about the task and getting ready to perform it as soon as possible.

Frankly, the record of Indian Government, both central and provincial, in the matter of women's interests has not been such that we who have these interests at heart can happily leave the initiative for further advances in their hands. When young Englishmen go to join the Services in India they are usually inoculated against various infectious diseases, but I fear that they are not inoculated against the most infectious of them, and that is the Oriental attitude towards women. They often catch it very badly. The best antidote, and one for which the Committee's report makes no provision, would be a liberal infusion of women into the administrative services. Here I would like to ask one direct question of the Secretary of State. What is the position of the women's medical service in the new arrangements? Is it not time that this service should be given a more stable and recognised position, possibly by setting it up as a definite branch of the Indian Medical Service? Since the women's service is already subsidised by the Government, the change would not necessarily cost more money.

A word as to the method of pooling the nine seats reserved for women in the Federal Assembly. Since indirect election is inevitable in the case of so small a number of seats as nine, I think the proposal of the report is perhaps the best practicable, and certainly a great improvement on that of the White Paper. The new proposal is that the women members of the Provincial Legislatures shall form an electoral college. The women of India pride themselves specially on having kept clear of communal dissensions, and though under this plan certain of these seats must be allotted to special communities, it will give an opportunity of selecting women who will be really representative of women's interests and women's needs, and not merely communal or party hacks. I wish I could be equally hopeful that the question of the substitution of indirect for direct election to the Assembly as a whole will work out beneficially.

Before leaving the question of reserved seats I want to say a few words about Burma. The report, as the Under-Secretary told us, proposes to take away the three seats that were intended for the Burmese women in the House of Representatives because the delegates from the Burmese women convinced the Committee that the women of Burma did not desire those seats. True, but the representatives of the Burmese women also urged that the right of women to vote on their husband's qualification should be conceded to the women of Burma, as it has been conceded to the women of India. The Committee could not see their way to accede to that. It is not fair to take away a privilege which was disclaimed while refusing a privilege which they claimed. The two proposals balance each other and should stand or fall together. Without this the position of Burmese women in the matter of representation will be markedly inferior to that of the women of India, and I cannot believe that this will be either equitable or will give satisfaction.

The last defect in the proposal of the report applies equally to the claims of Labour, and it is a serious defect. Neither women nor Labour are given the certainty of any seats at all in the Upper Chambers, either in the Provinces or at the Centre. It is true that in both a certain number of seats are left to be filled by the Governor or the Governor-General respectively. It is even suggested that that nomination may give the possibility of securing some representation for women in the Upper Houses of the Provinces. But there can be no certainty. That is a serious omission, especially with regard to the Council of State both for women and Labour, especially in view of the great powers which are accorded to the Council of State. Unlike the Provincial Upper Chambers, and unlike our own House of Lords, the Council of State can do more than delay reform. It is to have nearly equal powers with those of the Federal Assembly, and if there is a conflict between them there may, but only at the Governor-General's discretion, be a joint session.

Consider how this may work out. In many of the questions most vitally affecting both women and Labour, marriage questions, custody of children, inheritance of property, factory legislation, trade unionism, labour disputes, industrial insurance, the Centre and the Provinces are to have concurrent powers of legislation, but in the case of a conflict between a central Act and a provincial Act, the federal Act is to prevail. It follows, therefore, that almost any piece of social legislation, which may be ardently desired both by the Provinces and by the majority of the Assembly, may, by the joint action of the Council of State and the more reactionary elements in the Assembly, be so worsened or emasculated as to be mischievous or useless, and yet completely block the way to any progressive legislation on the same subject in the Provinces. Yet there may not be a single representative of women or of Labour on the Council of State to uphold the interests of their order or in the Upper House, to which such great powers are given. I confess that I feel very anxious about the influence of these upper chambers, mainly representative of wealth and great vested interests on the future of social reforms, which concern the great masses of women and the poor.

The representatives of the Indian States will be a new and untried factor in the Central Government. What sort of a factor? We are told that the States have made it clear that they have no desire to interfere in matters exclusively affecting British India. But what sort of matters will be so regarded? Large sections of this House welcome the accession of the Princes as a conservative and stabilising force. Perhaps. But conservatism and stability are good or bad things according to the quality of that which is to be conserved and stabilised. We may hope from the lead which has been given by a few of the States in matter of education and social reform that the representatives of the Princes will not seek to conserve evil social customs or to stabilise deplorably low standards of living and of labour. But what about the rest? Is the Government so satisfied as to the quality of the influence, and influence may make itself felt otherwise than through votes, likely to be exercised by the States upon the interests of women and of the poor, that they are satisfied to leave those interests without any direct champions of their own in the Upper Houses?

This leads me to another issue, and it is the last upon which I shall touch. It is the question of the effect of the new constitution upon the rank and file of the masses in the Indian States. We are told that the Constitution Act will make no changes in the relations between the Crown as the predominant power and the States, except so far as the latter accede and admit the jurisdiction of the Federal Government in the matters specially reserved to it. Formally and technically this may be so. But may there not be some danger in the very dependency of this new structure for smooth working upon the support of the Princes? It is a strange partnership, this partnership betwen the greatest and most successful democracy that the world has ever known and autocratic oriental Princes. It may lead to some strange situations. I will not take the case where there may be flagrant and outrageous misrule in an Indian State, but will assume that there are now, and will continue to be, means of dealing with it. But suppose there is a growing desire for self-government

[Miss Rathbone.]

amongst the people of an Indian State, a movement fostered by its increasingly close connection with British India. Good things as well as bad are infectious. Democracy is infectious. Are we in any danger of incurring obligations that some day, perhaps without the British people or even this Parliament realising that it is happening, may result in whatever influence our representatives still possess, in India being exerted to discourage, perhaps even to crush by armed force, the aspirations of peoples rightly struggling to be free within the Indian States? The Solicitor-General reminded us yesterday that in the recommendations of the report:

> "the most absolute regard both in form and substance has been paid to the autonomy, sovereignty and treaty rights of the States."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 10th December, 1934; col. 165, Vol. 296.]

That to my mind is an ominous assurance. It may be that nothing new is being given away, but, in effect, to reaffirm to-day in this solemn manner as part of a new bargain, involving mutual obligations on both sides, rights, some of which were conceded generations ago, is a new and very serious thing. It has become one of the commonest and one of the most stupidest of cliches that democracy is a failure. Democracy, in fact, has failed nowhere except in countries where it is a plant of too recent and too rapid a growth to withstand storms. The Act to which these Debates are a prelude will be in substance a great act of faith in the future of democracy, not only for ourselves but for other lands and other peoples. It will be a strang irony if the same measure which marks a great advance in the path of self-governing institutions for one-half of India should prove in result to have riveted the shackles of despotism upon the limbs of the other half. We are deciding, so far as one Act can decide it, the machinery of government for a country which contains the largest population of the world. A single provision in the Act which proves in its working out to have been misconceived, or the omission of a safeguard which should have been inserted, may well prove to be the precipitating cause of more tragedies in individual human lives than are contained in all the tragedies of every great dramatist and novelist who ever lived. We shall hear more of safeguards in the next few months. I hope we shall give India no reason to think that this House is more interested in safeguards which affect our own commerce and imperial interests than in those which concern the welfare of the poorest of her peoples, or of those who by reason of social custom are less able to protect themselves.

9.23 p.m.

Lord SCONE: During the whole course of the Debate yesterday and to-day I have been somewhat surprised, not to say a little shocked, by the way in which some exponents of advanced political opinions in my own party as well as in the party opposite, have been concerned so much more with administrative details than with what is going to be the actual effect of the proposed Act upon the lives of the common people of India. I regret the hon. and gallant Member for Tonbridge (Lieut.-Colonel Spender-Clay) is not in his place at the moment. Perhaps it is as well, because I understand he regards it as sob-stuff to make any allusion to the great masses of the Indian people, over 300,000,000 of them, and nearly all illiterate. Hon. and right hon. Members on Liberal and Socialist benches have been far more interested in discussing whether there ought to be a one-chamber or a two-chamber system of government, whether certain women ought or ought not to have votes, and whether there should be direct or indirect election, than in discussing the vital elements in this case. It seems to me that we have had too many examples of the preoccupation of little minds with little things.

I, myself, and most of those who usually occupy this bench know that really what matters is the effect of giving this Measure of self-government on the poor and humble classes of India. I submit that there is very little evidence to show that they are going to benefit in any way. For almost the first time in history the only people who are likely to benefit from such a proposed action are a small political class who have an influence that has been greatly exaggerated both in and out of this House. I have heard it said that the Indian masses will always follow Indian politicians. I think that is a statement which requires corroboration. It has been shown in the past that the illiterate peasants have a great deal more confi-

dence in the British civil servant, the British soldier or even the casual traveller, than in many of their own countrymen.

During the very short time I wish to take up it is my intention to survey what the proposed legislation is likely to be, whether it is likely to succeed, and what, if it fails, the price of failure is likely to be. What is this legislation? It is an advance—if one can use that term—towards democratic government. I am not going into the merits of democracy: personally, I think it is a bad thing. The whole point is that never before has there been any attempt to set up a democratic government in the Orient, where it is totally alien to the ideas prevailing on forms of government. The numbers of those in India clamouring for these proposals are about as numerous as the just men in Sodom and Gomorrah, whose total did not amount to ten. The hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) has mentioned the figure of between 1,500,000 to 10,000,000 as the number of people who want to get Home Rule. I cannot find anyone who welcomes enthusiastically the Government's actual proposals. That is to say, we shall not get co-operation in working these proposals, but a good deal of non-co-operation if not actual opposition.

The best speech in defence of the Government's idea has been that of the Noble Lord the Member for Hastings (Lord E. Percy). At the same time, that was a speech which one could only accept if one accepted the premises, which, to my mind, were based on despair. I hope the Noble Lord will not take it amiss if I criticise what appeared to be one of the strongest parts of his speech. One of the chief reasons, apparently, for these proposals was to give Congress politicians a chance of acquiring a little responsibility. It may be very good that they should acquire that responsibility, but if it is to be done at the expense of the majority of people in India, it would be far too great a price to pay. What is going to be the benefit of these proposals? We have been told that there has been a great deterioration in the services already Indianised. All questions on this subject to the Secretary of State and his deputy seem to have been a duel between him and the questioner, not as to whether any improvement had taken place, but as to whether the deterioration that had occurred was of a serious character or not.

Next we must consider what will happen if the proposals fail. I do not think anyone will deny that British rule has been beneficial to India. The population has increased very greatly as a result of our good government. The hon. Member for East Birkenhead (Mr. White) quoted from Mr. Gladstone showing that there had been an increase in no long period of from 240,000,000 to now upwards of 350,000,000, simply because under the "Pax Britannica" there had been no internecine feuds, bad customs like infanticide and suttee had been abolished, the boundaries had been protected from foreign aggression, while health services, formerly non-existent, had been introduced and extended, and agriculture improved, so that famine, once so prevalent, has not now to be seriously considered. But in Indianisation we may get a return to conditions existing before British rule. On page 4, Volume 1 of the Joint Select Committee's Report it is admitted that before we went to India "the sum of human misery" could be found there. If all safeguards fail, who will suffer? Hundreds of millions of Indian peasants.

I submit that, in introducing a scheme of self-government, we are gambling, placing an enormous stake in order to get back at the very best a very little reward, merely to satisfy to some extent a small, if vociferous, number of Indian politicians. On the other hand, if our improvements fail to work and the new system breaks down, then, indeed, we shall put in jeopardy the happiness, the health, the very life of scores of millions of our Indian subjects. The responsibility for this must, in the long run, come back to this House. That is why many of us feel that there is an alternative. Let us go forward in such a way that if the worst happens our Indian subjects will not come out of it as badly as they otherwise may. One step forward could be the setting up of provincial assemblies, reserving to ourselves control at the Centre. If there were any breakdown we should then have control, but if there were a breakdown at the Centre, then there would be a situation that no one could wish to contemplate. In these circumstances, I do submit that we are going too far,

[Lord Scone.]

because we are venturing a great deal to gain very little. That is why we say to the Government that, before they risk the health, the happiness, and possibly the lives of tens of millions, just to gratify the political vanity of tens of thousands, in heaven's name, let them have a care what they do.

9.34 p.m.

Mr. AMERY: The speech of the Noble Lord the Member for Perth (Lord Scone), a simple and sincere speech, was one directed not against the proposals before the House, but against everything we have done in India during the last 20 or 30 years. I am glad that one at least of the Conservative critics of the Government's proposals has taken the real ground of their opposition to these proposals as frankly as he has done. He laid his finger on one point which, of course, must always be in the forefront of our minds, and that is the welfare of the people of India themselves. That is obviously something that we can never forget. We have done much in the past to contribute to that welfare. We have given them good government. But it is just worth while remembering that British rule in India was achieved from start to finish with the co-operation and with the consent of Indians themselves. After centuries of anarchy the only thing that India thought of was reasonably good government. Because we brought it they helped us. Because we brought it they acquiesced in our rule, and were even grateful for it.

But can things stay for ever at that point? After all, we have taught them to believe that there is something more than good government by others, that there is a virtue in good and progressive government by yourself. We have taught them that for the best part of a century. Everything that we have taught India, everything that we have promised India, everything that we have initiated in India for the last 50 years has led towards the desire for an extended measure of responsible self-government. Indeed I am not sure that even from the immediate point of view of the welfare of the humblest of India's people there is not something that Indian government can do, something that we have never been able to touch. As the Report of the Joint Select Committee shows, there are social questions at the bottom of most of the poverty and misery in India —questions which for religious and social reasons we have never dared to touch. Let us at any rate see the hopeful sides of self-government in India as well as look upon the prospect with unalloyed distrust and suspicion.

During the last two days' Debate in most of the speeches that have been delivered there has been a continuous recurrence of certain words which, whether used in praise or dispraise, have been used without any very great precision and with very little relation either to Indian conditions or to the report of the Joint Select Committee. One of those words is "Federation." From the point of view of some of the critics of the Government, like my Noble Friend the Member for Aldershot (Viscount Wolmer), that is something disastrous, "insane," an "Alice in Wonderland" scheme. From the point of view of others, like the Noble Lady who has just spoken, it is an ideal. But both believe that it should be deferred, that we should proceed step by step, first inaugurate Provincial Autonomy and presently consider whether we should follow with Federation. That is a quite impossible suggestion. The moment you constitute Provincial Autonomy you have, *ipso facto*, set up Federation in British India. Unless you are to make the Provinces entirely independent of the Central Government, then so long as you give any powers of self-government—it does not matter whether the residual powers are with the Centre, as in Canada, or locally as in Australia—you have a Federation.

The trouble is that the Federation which is set up, if you make no change in the structure of the Centre, is a bad Federation because of the inherent weakness of the present system of government at the Centre. When you have, as you have at the Centre to-day, an irremovable executive face to face with an irresponsible legislature, the experience of the whole world, of every British Dominion and Colony, of our own past history, shows that you have created a system which involves endless friction, all the irresponsibility and recklessness and destructive criticism of a legislature that can never actually carry out the work of administration, and all the weakness and instability of an executive which cannot appeal to the nation for support, and

which for the sake of peace is always giving way. That situation is unsatisfactory enough at the Centre to-day. It will become infinitely worse the moment you set up the Provinces with anything like full autonomy. You will have deadlock after deadlock, with the only result that to escape from an intolerable situation you will have to set up responsibility at the Centre. You cannot avoid it. It is inherent in the situation itself.

It is true, historically speaking, that the issue of responsibility at the Centre was precipitated at the first Round Table Conference by the line taken by the Princes. I do not believe that that line was taken by the Maharajah of Bikanir and his colleagues as a sudden sentimental contribution to the Round Table Conference. This problem has been in the minds of the Indian rulers ever since they have seen extended self-government in British India looming in the distance, because, whatever pledges the Crown may have given, nothing could prevent them being injured by the tariffs, the railway legislation, the excise legislation and all the rest of the legislation which a central Indian legislature, irresponsible so far as they were concerned, was liable to pass. The Princes made their offer from a sense of their own interest, and we from a sense of the welfare of India as a whole, as well as a sense of the stability of the Government of India, we were wise in accepting it.

But we should have to accept responsible government at the centre in any case. What I ask the critics is, if there is to be responsible government at the centre would they sooner have the Princes in or not? If not, why gloat, as some have done, over the doubts of some of the Princes? It seems to me that once you accept the implications of any form of Provincial Autonomy, which is British India Federation, you must naturally be glad, in the interests of India, to bring in the Princes, if they are willing to come. If they do not come, well, then we are left with the so-called alternative proposals of my hon. Friends, and I only hope that they will not regret too much any action of theirs that might have deterred the Princes of India from joining in the scheme for the welfare of India as a whole.

Let me come to another word which I have heard frequently—" diarchy." The scheme proposed by the Joint Select Committee is denounced because it involves diarchy at the centre. Unless you are to make India wholly independent, or unless you are to get rid of every vestige of self-government in India, you must have some division of authority, some point of junction between those who are responsible to Parliament here and those who are responsible, in the current phrase, to their own legislatures. The question is, where can that junction be made with the minimum of friction and difficulty? The worst point at which to make it is, if your executive is responsible to one authority and your legislature to another. Diarchy at the centre in India today is far worse than any diarchy in the Provinces. It seems to me that the critics of the Government propose to maintain diarchy in the Provinces in connection with law and order and also the worst form of it in the central Government.

The report of the Select Committee suggests that the point of junction should be between external affairs, including defence, and the whole social and economic life of India, which is to be entrusted to India herself, subject only to the special responsibilities of the Viceroy and the Governors, which are not so much an external interference with responsible self-government as essential reinforcement of self-government itself if it is ever to succeed. That is a point where friction may be inevitable. But it is reduced to a minimum. It deals with questions which will not affect the ordinary life of the people. The only point of contact with the legislature is finance and there, as the report points out, we start with an existing and customary distribution of the finances which, at any rate in substance, is likely to be maintained and likely to give rise to much less friction than dyarchy at any other point.

Then we have the stock phrases about " democracy " and " responsibility." Let me remind the House that there has been no pledge at any time by this country to introduce democratic party government in India. What we have promised is a progressive extension of responsible self-government—a much finer thing and a thing not necessarily dependent upon party or democracy. We had responsible self-government and ordered freedom long before we had democracy, in days

[Mr. Amery.]

when we had many anomalies in our Constitution, and Members who sat for pocket boroughs who were just as much nominated as the representatives of any Indian Princes would be. Undoubtedly democracy in our ordinary party sense is not applicable to Indian conditions. It is perfectly true that with the differences of caste and religion and the complex structure of India make ordinary, party government as we know it, unsuitable in that country and no one wants to impose it. My right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme (Colonel Wedgwood) passionately denounced the communal system. Surely if you have a division as deep and intense as that which separates Moslems and Hindus and if both sections put into a common electorate it only means that that division will be the subject matter of every election. The minority is bound in every case to be defeated and never to get a chance of representation in the legislature. If, on the other hand you recognise the situation and if you eliminate that division at any rate from the elections, though it may well remain in the legislature, there is a chance of rival candidates of the same religion or caste competing with each other. I believe that under Indian conditions the only chance of developing some sort of party system based on social or economic policies lies in accepting, for the present, at any rate, the undeniable fact of the communal system.

Again take the Centre. Any Federation where there are many and varied interests makes party government a little difficult. In Canada before you construct a Cabinet you have to put in at least a couple of representatives of Catholic and Protectionist Quebec, to whatever party you may belong. At the same time you must have some representatives of the Free Trade maritime provinces and the Free Trade prairie provinces. The result is that while your party differences may be active enough up to a certain point, they do not cut very deep. Under a Federation in India it will be necessary to create a government at the Centre which will include representatives of the Provinces and the States, some Moslems, some Hindus, perhaps some Sikhs. You create a system which does not lend itself very much to ordinary party differences such as we have here.

Then there is the word "responsibility." The word "responsibility" is used in many different senses. It means first and foremost responsibility to facts, the responsibility for carrying your proposals into action. That is something which only experience can teach. Until you give India responsibility in that sense, until Indian statesmen instead of merely criticising and denouncing have to act upon their speeches, until you create legislatures the members of which regard themselves not only as critics but as potential administrators, you will not get that true sense of responsibility which is the first condition of self-government. We have done something to create that in the Provinces. There is no one who knows India but admits that in many respects the Provincial Legislatures set a higher standard than the Central Legislature. You have responsibility in the Indian States, and it has been mentioned more than once in these Debates that India possesses in the States some first-class administrators and men of high capacity. There is another sense in which the word responsibility is correctly used, and that is responsibility to the legislature, the dependence of the Ministry on the legislature. There is a third sense, not often used, but by no means unimportant—the original sense in which Ministers were responsible to the Crown, not merely for representing a majority in the House but for securing the support of that majority in order that the King's Government should be carried on properly, with fairness to all the King's subjects, in an orderly spirit and with regard to the permanent welfare of the nation.

That sense of responsibility is one which has developed in this country and has become an inbred tradition in our public life. As it has done so, the direct personal power of the Crown has become more and more dormant. But no constitutional lawyer would venture to say that if all those traditions, those boundary lines which we set ourselves, were transgressed by extreme party violence, those dormant powers might not yet, in the interests of the nation, have to be brought to life again. At any rate in India where those traditions are as yet largely absent, I believe that the

Joint Committee have found the only true safeguard against the dangers of party violence or sectional or religous prejudice by definitely and statutorily giving a wide and special personal discretion to the representative of the Crown. We are, in fact, embodying in persons brought up in and imbued with British traditions, the one element in which India is still lacking. India will accept advice far more readily from men whom it can trust, from leaders and guides in whom Ministers have confidence than safeguards in any purely documentary form.

I believe that the discretionary powers of the Governor and the Viceroy will exercise an immense influence not so much because they will be frequently used but because the fact that they can be used will lend to the advice of the Governor in his ordinary, every-day, intimate intercourse with Ministers, a weight and an importance which they cannot afford to disregard. From all those points of view it seems to me that the Select Committee at the end of seven years discussion have worked out a scheme which as far as possible makes responsible government safe and does so by safeguards which are inherent and not artificially imposed, safeguards inherent in the type of government itself. They have also provided a constitutional framework calculated to meet Indian conditions, and one which, in fact, has inevitably proceeded from all that has gone before. The Committee have devised the only scheme which to-day holds the field. What is the alternative which some of my hon. Friends put forward? The alternative of Provincial Autonomy now is a mere refusal to face the obvious and immediate implications of that autonomy. What is the other alternative? To go back to before 1919? Is that what is wanted?

My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) made great play of the fact that Indian political opinion has opposed this scheme. Does that mean that Indian political opinion is in favour of his proposals, that Congress has swept the general Indian electorate on the basis of back to before 1914, or even on the basis of Lord Salisbury's Amendment? What does it mean? Does it mean that he would sooner have this House pass a scheme that Congress would approve and bless? If not, why waste our time by dealing with the opposition of Indian political opinion? As a matter of fact, my hon. and gallant Friend seemed to think it was in the power of Congress to veto this Measure that will now be introduced. This Measure is going to be introduced here and passed here; it is not going to come up for the sanction of a Central Legislature in India. It will come into operation first in the Provinces, which have every reason for working it and for looking forward to the day when they themselves can nominate their representatives to a Central Legislature, in which their social and economic interests will be collectively dealt with.

What other real objection is there to this scheme, unless you honestly say you are against any scheme? That is not a position which, after all that has passed, after all that has been said in Parliament and outside, after all that has been done, can be adopted any longer in this country. If so, if the scheme of the Joint Select Committee holds the field, if, as was very truly said in one speech, it is both the maximum of what we ought to give and the minimum that there is any chance of India accepting in fact and working in fact, why not go ahead with it now? Now at any rate we can act in confidence, in strength. No one can accuse us of surrendering to intimidation or anarchy. India is better governed to-day than she has been for a long time past, and while I do not lay much stress on historical parallels, it is worth while remembering that wherever we have given self-government in our strength in the past it has succeeded. When we gave it to Canada—[An HON. MEMBER: "What about Ireland?"]—in our strength, it succeeded. When we gave it to South Africa after we had won the South African War, it succeeded. When we professed to give it to South Africa in 1881, because we were beaten in the field and not prepared to face the expense of reconquering the Transvaal, it failed. In Ireland yes; there you had weakness and weariness; you had abdication; that was a very different situation from that with which we are to-day confronted in India.

If so, let us realise that now we can act with all the world knowing that we are acting because we believe it to be right. And further, if we act now, there is still time to act before all India has

[Mr. Amery.]

gone sour and bitter from disappointment at our delay. There is still to-day, I believe, a large body of opinion in India—whether we were successful at the particular elections held recently or not I do not care—which is prepared to work a scheme of this sort, and in working it to be guided, though not dictated to, by Englishmen, glad to take British advice and leadership from the representative of a Crown which is still honoured widely throughout India. If they do, at any rate there is a fair prospect that this great scheme, elaborated after so many years, may, if launched at the right season, lead to a happy issue. Of course, there are dangers. Of course, to do anything of this sort is in a sense a great act of faith. But, after all, in building up this Empire we have more than once ventured upon great acts of faith, and they have succeeded.

10.0 p.m.

Mr. RHYS DAVIES: It is with diffidence that I rise to take part in this Debate. I am probably one of those who are quite unfamiliar with the colossal issues which arise in a debate of this kind. Indeed, the problems are so profound that it is very difficult for an ordinary man to say very much more than has already been said in these two days' Debates. I have tried, however, to read the substantial portions of the report of the Joint Select Committee, and I have come to the conclusion that in all the matter that has been published, and in all the speeches that have been delivered, the issue is fairly simple in the end; that is to say, shall India have greater freedom than she now possesses, and shall we continue to hold out hope to the Indian people that they will rank in this Commonwealth of nations of ours, with the same status as Canada, Australia, and South Africa? There is one thing, however, that I can never forget about India. Nothing in these volumes, nothing in the speeches that I have listened to yesterday and to-day, will ever impress itself as much on my mind as to see the late Edwin Montagu standing on the other side of the House, some 10 or 12 years ago, a broken-hearted man because he tried to do for India what some of us have been trying to do ever since. Indeed, many people, not only in India but in this country, have sacrificed a great deal to try to secure for the Indian people greater freedom than they now possess.

I should like to refer to the speech of the hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft), who, I am sorry to see, is not now here. I do not know that anybody will question his sincerity, but I could not understand his argument. He said that Congress and the majority of vocal opinion in India were against these proposals, but he never told us that the majority of vocal opinion in India is against these proposals because they do not go far enough on the lines that the Labour party desire they should go, and I object to the method of debate that the hon. and gallant Member employed in utilising the opposition to these proposals in India as if it was opposition to doing anything at all, whereas in fact the opposition to these proposals among Congress men in India, so I am informed, is opposition of exactly the same kind that we lay down on behalf of the official Opposition in this House.

I was more than interested in the speech of the Noble Lord the Member for Perth (Lord Scone), and I was thinking when he spoke that I could almost guarantee that I could put my hand on a record of speeches in this House 150 years ago just like the one he delivered this evening. Indeed, that kind of speech makes me wonder how we are going to deal with this problem of India at all. He talked about poor, illiterate Indian peasants, and that we are satisfying a small political class. I am not very old, but when I was a boy nearly all the political power in this country was held by a small political class of the type of the Noble Lord. Ordinary men like ourselves could never secure any political power, anywhere, at any time. The opposition of the Noble Lord to political freedom in India is exactly the same type of opposition that has been uttered in this House for two or three centuries. If I can make any contribution to this Debate, it is to say that whatever Constitution be granted to the Indian people that Constitution in the end will work or fail just in proportion as the urge for greater freedom comes from the people at the bottom. In the end democracy has to depend on the mass of the people at the bottom end of the social scale.

The Noble Lord said that democracy is a bad thing and unsuitable for the Oriental mind. I was one of seven Members of this House who were in Istanbul less than two months ago, and we were then in the Orient. I think my geography is right. When we were across the Bosphorus I think we were in Asia. I am almost sure I am right. When we went to Angora we were among the Asiatics. The most remarkable thing to me when we were in Istanbul was to see people dressed just like the working people of Lancashire or London. When I am told that because people live in the Orient they are incapable of working a democratic instrument, let me inform hon. Members that there is a Republic in Turkey, in Asia, and there is a President of the Republic, too, a very intelligent gentleman. They are making a good attempt at establishing a Parliament there, and I think they have secured their Parliament by more honourable means than this Government secured their Parliament in 1931. I have yet to learn that the Indians are very much more backward than the Turks. It is possible to see that a real attempt is being made in Turkey, in spite of all the difficulties, at establishing political democracy as an instrument of government.

The first question we are asked when debating the Indian problem is whether the Indians are fit for self-government. Some hon. Members from the South of England, especially the hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth, have been to Lancashire telling the people that the Indians are not fit to govern themselves. As a Lancashire man myself—[*Laughter.*] It is amazing how we Lancashire people stick together. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Darwen (Sir H. Samuel) and I are both Lancashire men. These hon. Members, in their desire to prevent these proposals being put into operation, have been trying to convince Lancashire people that the whole of that county will suffer if the proposals are adopted. There never was a stranger form of propaganda than to put Lancashire in pawn in this way. Somebody has mentioned in the Debate the treatment which Great Britain meted out to America about a century and a half ago. I have been in America twice, and it was sad, in talking to people in New York and Baltimore and right through the Middle West, to find how the Americans regard the attempt that the then British Government made to stabilise the same position in the United States as the Tory Diehards are trying to do to-day in India. It has left an indelible mark of silent contempt on the present generation of Americans against this country.

Let me pass to the point that is sometimes made that the Indians are not fit to govern. I do not know any race anywhere in the world which can be stated to be fit to govern until it gets the opportunity to prove whether it is fit to govern or not. That is not a new gospel. At the beginning of 1924, when we became the first Labour Government in this country, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) said that we were not fit to govern. Let me remind Conservatives who are delighted in thinking so still that the Prime Minister of that Government is their present Prime Minister. That argument will not avail. Political democracy is not a failure. I have heard that India should not be given self-government because political democracy has failed in Italy, Germany, Austria and Russia. So far as I know the recent history of these countries, there is still a desire in them for greater personal liberty and political freedom, and it is still growing. We are told that there are keen divisions of opinion in India and that because of their fundamental religious differences we must be careful, in giving the people freedom, they will, in common parlance, not fly at each other's throats. I understand that India covers a territory as big as the whole of Europe, outside Russia, and that its population is as great, and I am wondering whether the castes and colours and creeds in India are very much more numerous and hostile to each other than they are in Europe, and especially in the Balkans. And when we are dealing with this problem we must not forget the divisions of opinion among ourselves. The present Government have tried to unite all parties, and some leaders of the Government thought the time had come, in 1931, when everybody in this nation would be of the same opinion, but recent by-elections have shown that that is by no means the case.

Let me turn to that point about Lancashire. I do not think there is any other

[Mr. Davies.]

county or section of people in England as interested in these proposals, because they affect the trade of the 5,000,000 people who live in Lancashire. I am very glad indeed that opinion in Lancashire is hardening against that small group who desire to insert in these proposals a provision that we in this country should retain the power to determine the Customs Duties for or against us in India. In fact, I was more pleased than words can tell to learn that the hon. and gallant Member for Hulme (Sir J. Nall) who, I think, was a very doubtful starter on these proposals, has at last joined with Lord Derby. They wrote one of the finest letters I have ever seen in print in favour of the proposition that we cannot get trade with India, any more than with any other country, except on the basis of good will. I am very pleased indeed that the vast majority of opinion in Lancashire has come round to that view.

Without going into details I think it is worth while stating the case as we in that county see it. It is said that the cotton manufactured goods sent from Lancashire to India have declined from 57 per cent. of the total consumed in India in 1913 to 8 per cent. in 1933. Let me pause to say that no district in these islands has been so severely affected in its trade with India as Lancashire, where the decline has produced almost a calamity. Still, I was amazed at the argument of the hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) that we must present a rigid attitude towards India in order to get back this trade. In talking in that way he forgets that what has happened in India is this: The Indian people have not given their trade to Japan, as is supposed in some quarters, but they have increased their own production of cotton goods by hand and by machinery. There is nothing we can do to prevent the Indian people from producing any commodity for themselves. Therefore, I come back to the point that I am sure the vast majority of people in Lancashire will welcome, with me, any step taken in order to secure that good will which is the only factor in trade relationships between one country and another.

We on this side of the House are very much disturbed, and we have reason to be, to find that the Joint Select Committee did not pay as much attention to the conditions of employment in India as, in our view, they ought to have done. After all the vast majority of the people in any country earn their livelihood by work. I have a report issued by two members of the Trade Union Congress who visited India in 1928, and after reading the figures in that report I feel that we shall do a terrible wrong to the working classes of India unless, in anything we do we take note of the fact that in forming a Constitution for India there is a possibility of removing the terrible conditions in the mills and factories of that great country. Let me give one or two illustrations to show what is happening there. In 1928—and I do not think conditions have changed—the wage of an Indian coolie, an adult man, was 9d. a day. In practically all the mills in Bombay if an ordinary worker lost a day's work his penalty was the loss of two days' wages. The party to which I belong would not be doing their duty unless they said, as we declare in our Amendment, that however good the proposals of the Government may be, they are not good enough unless they do something to prevent the continuance, in the mills of Bombay and elsewhere, of a condition of things to which I have referred.

We are of opinion that only a greater measure of self-government in India will bring about better conditions for the working people in that country, in exactly the same way as has been the case in our own land. I remember when there was no workmen's compensation law in this country, and when nothing was paid to the widow of a man who had been killed, for instance, in a coal mine. Most of us remember the beginning of unemployment insurance, health insurance, widows' pensions, old age pensions and the like. Members of all parties are proud that we have by those schemes laid down an economic foundation for our people through which very few will fall in the future. That has come about because of the organisation of the workpeople, and the urgings which have come from below for better conditions. The Government may give safeguards to the employers and the capitalists; you may safeguard the Army, the police and the railways; that may all be good, so far as statecraft is concerned, but we repeat, as

a party, that we shall not be satisfied unless the Bill which is produced gives hope not only for self-government for the Indian ruling class, but hope also for the millions of working people that they shall have better conditions consequent upon the granting of the new Constitution.

We have put down our Amendment, and it will be discussed to-morrow. I think we have taken the logical course in doing so. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) and the hon. Baronet the Member for Bournemouth, if they were frank with the House, do not want anything done at all, unless I am much mistaken. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sparkbrook (Mr. Amery) supports the proposals—I hope he does not mind my being critical of his speech—in the belief that nothing particular will happen when they are put into operation. That is the sort of mind which has expressed itself in this Debate on more than one occasion. One or two supporters of the Government have very nearly said that when we have given all this to the Indians, the Governors representing this country will always see to it that nothing untoward will happen to British interests. That sort of argument will not avail with the Indian people. In the last few years I have travelled, and have seen many places and many other peoples living and working, and I have come to the conclusion that no nation will be able for very long to order the destiny of any other nation in the world.

10.25 p.m.

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Ormsby-Gore): I do not propose to follow the hon. Member for Westhoughton (Mr. Rhys Davies) into the Amendment which is to be moved to-morrow on behalf of the official Opposition. I would say to the hon. Gentleman, however, that nobody agrees more heartily than I do that it would be extremely welcome if Indian legislators would turn their attention to Labour legislation when they have got a Constitution, and that that kind of thing is wanted much more than long-continued barren dicussions as to what powers they should or should not have. Therefore, the hon. Gentleman will excuse me if I devote most of my remarks to dealing with some of my own hon. Friends, who, on this Motion, are the real Opposition. They are very sincere, and I know their keen belief that this scheme is almost infinitely bad. I will not say I believe that it is infinitely good, but I believe that it is incredibly the best scheme that has been evolved for the government of India.

Let me say one or two words about one of the leaders of the Opposition who spoke this evening, the Noble Lady the Member for West Perth (Duchess of Atholl). I am sorry that she is no longer in her place. When I heard the Noble Lady speaking, I could not help thinking of Voltaire's Dr. Pangloss. It will be remembered that, although disaster after disaster came along, it was always for the best in the best of all possible worlds. The Noble Lady thinks that all is for the worst in the worst of all possible worlds. Not one redeeming feature in the situation was revealed by her speech to-night. She began with her version of the results of transferring education and various other heads of government to provincial legislatures, and to Ministers responsible to those legislatures under the Act of 1920. My Noble Friend read out a catalogue of failures, of regrettable incidents, but not one single word on the other side. It was all one uniform picture of blackness. There was no mention of the fact that in Madras, in the Punjab, there have been conspicuous successes in administration by quite outstanding Indian administrators.

All that ran through the Noble Lady's speech, but there was not one single constructive suggestion, not one alternative proposal—only a root-and-branch condemnation of the existing situation of India, let alone the proposals which are now before the House. Indeed, what the Noble Lady asked the British Parliament to do was to tear up the reforming Act of 1920, and, having done that, to tear up the Morley-Minto reforms of 1909, and to go right back. I would ask her one question. She said that the Indian peasants are in debt to the moneylenders, the reforms having given them financial power I want to know, is it only since the reforms came into operation that the Indian peasants have been in debt? This complete negation, this continuous denunciation by the Noble Lady up and down the country, after all that has been done in the last 20 years in India, is the

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kind of thing that does indeed, from a person in her position, cause bad blood between races.

The other leader who has spoken to-day was my hon. and gallant Friend who spoke with such earnestness, the Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft). He was not as negative or as extreme as the Noble Lady, but he did advance what struck me as a very strange argument; in fact, it was his main argument. He said that between the signature and the publication of the report there had taken place an election in which a majority of Indians had been returned who did not like the White Paper, and that therefore we had no right to proceed with our proposal. I seem to recollect speeches by my hon. and gallant Friend up and down the country two or three years ago when he was arguing against the existence of the Round Table Conference. His argument then was that we had brought Indians over to England to discuss with us what should be the form of the new Constitution when it was expressly laid down in the Preamble to the Act of 1920 that this was a matter for Parliament alone. I will take my hon. and gallant Friend at his word. This is not a matter for any Constituent Assembly in India. There is no Assembly or Legislature in India that is competent to decide what the British Parliament in its wisdom thinks is the best form of Government for India.

This scheme, which has now been elaborated for so long, we put forward, as was stated by the Secretary of State yesterday, solely on its merits as a scheme for the government of India. I will take up a specific challenge of Lord Lloyd in a speech in the country in which he said more than once that no Cabinet Minister had dared to defend this scheme as one for the better government of India. He did not know what the scheme was when he was making his challenge. He was free to carry on his propaganda, but our tongues were tied. This is almost the first opportunity and we accept that challenge, and we do say that it is in that spirit that this matter is being dealt with to-day.

I approach this subject not with any direct knowledge of India, but I have served for seven years at the Colonial Office, and in the course of my time there I have visited all the Colonies, and not only our own Colonies but those of France and also the Dutch East Indies. My experience in the Colonial Office was with an amazing variety of governments, some still with the official majority, some with an unofficial majority, some with an elected majority, some with representative government and some with dyarchic government, almost the most complete variety of governments one could imagine. Therefore, one inevitably came into contact with the organisation of different types of legislature.

The first thing I should like to clear up is the question of safeguards. It has become the word used in connection with the Indian discussions. At the Colonial Office for years they have been known as reserve powers; powers under the various Constitutions reserved either to the Secretary of State or the Governor in his discretion to override, either generally or in particular circumstances, the elected majority of a legislature. Those reserve powers and safeguards are frequently used, and rightly. They are part of the Constitution. Let nobody imagine that under these proposals any more than in any of the Colonial Constitutions safeguards and special powers are put in with the idea that they will not be used. They ought not to be in the Constitution unless they are part of the Constitution and unless it is constitutional to use them. The point is that if Safeguards are in a Constitution their use is constitutional.

During the course of my time at the Colonial Office I had to take part in doing away with an ancient Constitution, because some of those Colonial Constitutions go back 200 or 300 years. There was for over 100 years a Constitution in British Guiana which rubbed along in the most peculiar way, and finally got nearer and nearer to bankruptcy, because the Constitution provided that the control of finance should be in the hands of the Court of Policy, where there was an elected majority and where nobody in the Court of Policy was in any way responsible for any department of government, which consisted entirely of British officials. The result was a series of deficits. The elected representatives of the people demanded social reforms, and the Government, under the pressure, put those social reforms upon the Statute Book. They came to the Court of Policy for a grant of money and for taxation to carry

them out and they were refused, and there was a series of deadlocks. We passed through this House the British Guiana Constitution (Amendment) Bill which was, quite frankly, to do away with the elected majority, and we have done away with the elected majority.

All this is leading up to the fact that in the course of my seven years at the Colonial Office I formed one quite definite conclusion in all these constitutional matters. It was never to give political power and control unless you accompanied it with political responsibility. I remember that during the time I was at the Colonial Office coming up against a suggestion that there should be an elected majority in the Colony of Kenya. It was plausibly argued that elected majorities had existed in many other British Colonies. I always resisted the claim. Both in Nairobi and in this country I said that I should never personally stand for an elected majority for the Colony of Kenya unless the grant of an electoral majority was accompanied by definite political responsibility for a definite purpose. That was the lesson that we have learned in our experiments with Indian reform in the past, and I hope now that it is final.

I served as a member of the Joint Select Committee on Indian Reform in 1919. We went there with the idea that it was our duty to implement the famous pledge drafted by Lord Curzon about responsible self-government, that was given to the world on the authority of the War Cabinet as a whole on the 20th August, 1917. Our thoughts naturally turned to the question of defining the nature of the responsibility. I remember clearly that I came to the conclusion that it was not because of that declaration that the Montagu-Chelmsford reform scheme logically followed, but it was due to the existence of the Morley-Minto constitution in being at the time. I have heard hon. Members to-night and yesterday talking about the introduction of democracy into India as if we were doing it for the first time, as if there were something very novel about it. The Morley-Minto reforms in 1909 gave unofficial majorities in every Legislative Council in every Province in India and they gave an elected majority in Bengal.

I remember that when evidence was given by officials from the Indian Civil Service who came before us in the rooms in the House of Lords, they said "You have faced us with, finally, having the power and the responsibility of government, and you have faced us with an elected majority, who do all the bowling but can never do any batting." That was the phrase that was used. The result was that it became inevitable that there should be some transfer of responsibility. When I look back on the difficult times in India. I do not say that everything has gone well, but looking on the sum total of the work done in the Provinces under the Montagu-Chelmsford reform scheme, we can at least say that they were on the right lines. There is evidence that a certain number of Indian Ministers have come forward and done their job well and have functioned in a way of which India may be proud. But I must admit that immediately after the War we did make profound mistakes at the Centre, and that the existing Central Constitution is one which cannot be allowed to go on indefinitely.

I go further. My own position is this. Were the Government proposals proposals to proceed with provincial autonomy alone, with or without some safeguards, with or without the transfer of law and order, leaving the Centre alone, I certainly should not be standing at this Box, but I should be taking a most active part in opposition. I have given the House opinions that I formed long before this Report came into being in regard to the Central Legislative Assembly. Paragraph 41 is the most crucial paragraph in the whole Report. Dealing with the question of the unity of India they say:

"We cannot leave this subject without asking the vital question which Parliament will have to answer; whether a Central Government of India constituted as we propose would fulfil the conditions we have already laid down—whether it would provide a central authority strong enough to maintain the unity of India and to protect all classes of her citizens."

I wish to underline those last words.

"That question cannot be answered apart from a consideration of the strength or weakness of the Central Government as it now exists. As our inquiries have proceeded, we have been increasingly impressed, not by the strength of the Central Government as at present constituted, but by its weakness. It is confronted by a Legislature which can be nothing but (in Bagehot's words) 'a debating society adhering to an executive.' The members of that Legislature are unrestrained by the knowledge that they

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themselves may be required to provide an alternative government; their opinions have been uninformed by the experience of power and they have shown themselves prone to regard support of government policy as a betrayal of the national cause. It is no wonder that the criticism offered by the members of such a Legislature should have been mainly destructive; yet it is abundantly clear from the political history of the last 12 years that criticism by the Assembly has constantly influenced the policy of Government. As a result, the prestige of the Central Government has been lowered and disharmony between Government and Legislature has tended to sap the efficiency of both. Indeed, the main problem which in this sphere Parliament has now to consider is how to strengthen an already weakening Central Executive. We believe that the Central Government which we recommend will be stronger than the existing Government, and we see no other way in which it could be strengthened."

Those are tremendous words, and to my mind they are the test of the problem before us. If you are to grant provincial autonomy you have to strengthen the central executive as well as the Central Legislature. I ask myself, seeing that by Statute we debar anybody who is elected to the existing Central Legislature from ever having any voice in the government of India, what have you attracted to your Central Legislature? They are mainly lawyers, people who have big practices in places like Allahabad. Membership of the Assembly is an honour, and they know that they can handle their business and will not be interfered with by the danger of having to take on a responsible job of work. That is the inevitable consequence of building up that kind of legislature. I am satisfied that as long as the Central Legislature affords no avenue to an Indian who is anxious to serve his country in government, not merely in opposition, he will not go to that kind of Central Legislature; there must be some responsibility at the Centre.

Where do British Indians who are anxious to do work in government go to-day? They go into the provincial legislatures and become Ministers there—what the French would call "*L'homme du gouvernement.*" Those people who are anxious to take part in constructive government, naturally, do not go into a Government where there is no opportunity of constructive government. Unless there is responsibility at the Centre, I do not believe we can go on with the existing Constitution of India. Either we have to go right back and entirely reconstruct it, or give responsibility. Whether representatives come directly or indirectly from a system of election, however non-democratic, because of its communal character or prescriptive character, it is absurd to say they will not go together with nominees of autocratic rulers.

Why is it absurd? Certainly the system in the only other federation of Asia consists of the constitution of the Federal Chamber of the Dutch East Indies. I remember visiting that body in Batavia where there were direct representatives of the Chinese, indirectly elected Javanese—these were indirectly elected by the town by one remove, and by the villages by two removes—four representatives, or rather nominees, of the four hereditary Princes who have, as it were, native States in the centre of the Isle of Java and are Mohammedans, and one Hindu, the Prince of Bali himself. There you have a federation of very diverse elements all serving in one assembly. I do not see why it should be inconsistent for representatives of the British Provinces to serve alongside nominees of the Princes in the Federal Chamber. I am quite satisfied that that is the ideal solution. Again, our critics talk as if we had invented the idea of Federation during the lifetime of this Government. Of course, the word is writ large in the Simon Report. They regarded it as the ideal settlement if a federal settlement for all India could be reached. In paragraph 13 of their recommendations we read at the beginning:

"We believe that, unless this ultimate goal is borne in mind in framing India's Constitution, there is a danger of the mind of political India being led astray by false analogies, and that there are practical as well as theoretical reasons for so planning the structure of Indian government that the transition to a truly All-Indian policy can be made as soon as the time is ripe."

The origin of the whole conception of Indian Federation is in the Simon Report.

Let me come to the question of the Princes. The hon. and gallant Member made a lot of insinuations against the Secretary of State, that he had been using pressure, writing to the Viceroy and telling him to bring pressure. My right hon. Friend has assured me, and I think the House, that it was after

reading the Simon Report that the offer of the Princes came quite voluntarily and quite unexpectedly. Yet there has been all this suggestion that it was we who have been driving the Princes into federation because we want federation. We agree that federation is desirable, and personally I think that federation is essential if you are to grant provincial autonomy.

Hon. Members of the official Opposition talk glibly about self-government for the people of India. But let us face the fact that that self-government is essentially restricted by the present extent of illiteracy. I must say a word about that. When we are told that everything under the British Raj in the nineteenth century was perfect, and that everything in these modern reforms is wrong, do let us remember that in February, 1835, Lord Macaulay put forward his famous Minute, which laid down that the vernaculars would be submerged and that it was the duty of the British Raj to impose on the Indian people western education in the history of western culture and institutions through the medium of the English language. That has been the foundation of the education policy of the Government in India. What has been the result? Even as late as the time of the Simon Commission it was found that the Government of Bengal was spending more on university education than on primary education.

I remember reading some, not all, of the last volumes of the report of the Calcutta University Commission, and tragic reading it was. It showed how we had imposed university education upon India, when we had full powers, and not upon the masses of the people the primary education that was intended, with the result that in Travancore and many of the native States you have a far higher measure of literacy than in British India. You have that on the principles taught through the medium of Whig books under the domination of the Whig doctrinaire, Lord Macaulay, and the result is that you have the political problems with which you are faced to-day. Now, when we put forward a Tory solution with a measure of responsibility—[HON. MEMBERS: "A Socialist solution."] No, a Tory solution, for I believe in no political power that is unaccompanied by definite responsibility. When I see a long line of old Whigs leading the Opposition to this Bill, I say "Macaulay is still with you."

Ordered, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—[*Sir G. Penny.*]

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

The remaining Orders were read and postponed.

PRISONERS (FLOGGING).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—[*Sir G. Penny.*]

11.1 p.m.

Mr. BERNAYS: In accordance with the notice which I have given I desire to raise the question of the advisability of an inquiry into the punishment of flogging. The case of the Dartmoor convict will be in the recollection of the House and a very horrible case it was. On 29th November a convict named Collins who had been condemned to 12 strokes with the "cat" and three years penal servitude, for an act of violence done while trying to escape from Dartmoor, committed suicide in gaol. I do not wish to attempt to harrow the feelings of the House with the revolting details of the case but I feel that in support of my argument, I must quote from a letter which this man left in his cell and which reveals the state of mind of one condemned to this terrible punishment. This is what he wrote:

> "I am being slowly murdered—tortured to death. Every night I am lashed with the cat. The policeman in my head keeps lashing at me all night. My head is awful with all this worry and I think it might go back on me any minute. I tried to hide what is really the matter with me from the doctor. I did not tell him all. My one best pal will understand. I cannot rest or sleep but keep staring up feeling the lash across my body. My mind is in agony. God help me."

I suggest that that is a letter which no decent man can read unmoved. It shows that this man at any rate was not as is so often alleged in these cases, a hardened brute who could only understand brutal punishment. It reveals, I think, a responsive mind tortured beyond endurance. The whole episode, I suggest, is highly disturbing to those people who do not confuse punishment with vengeance. I do not seek to cast any reflection on

[Mr. Bernays.]

the officials at Dartmoor. I am sure that they are humane men and that nothing they did caused this terrible result. Nor do I wish to make too much of this incident horrible though it is, but there is one question which I must put to the Home Secretary. There was another convict named Hollins who was sentenced to 12 lashes. Has that sentence been carried out? I think we have a right to know and we have also a right to know what considerations operated in the minds of those responsible, whatever decision was made.

I desire to lift the argument on to a wider plane and to ask whether the time has not come for an inquiry into the whole question of flogging. There is no doubt that this is a very brutal punishment. It is not just a schoolboy's birching. A man is tied to a triangle, thrashed with a whip of nine thongs, and his back left a mass of weals and blood. It is a revolting punishment, and it is not pleasant to think of its effect not merely on the victim but on the man who has to carry out the punishment, on the officials who have to witness it and on the society in whose name it is done. We have to ask ourselves, as representatives of the people, whether this punishment is really necessary. It is said that flogging stopped garrotting, but that hoary story is without any foundation in fact, and I would quote no less an authority than an ex-Prime Minister and an ex-Home Secretary himself, Mr. Asquith, who said:

> "As to garrotting, that crime had been brought to an end as a serious danger before the House, in a fit of panic, due to one of its own Members having been garrotted, resorted to legislation. Garrotting was put down without resort to the lash."

In any case there is an equal decrease in garrotting in Scotland, where there is no punishment of flogging, and there is no evidence to show, as is often said, that a man who is condemned to be flogged does not commit the same offence again. Other countries can do without flogging. Flogging has disappeared from the penal codes in nearly every civilised country in the world, and there is no evidence that its disappearance has produced any of the results which those who support flogging think it would. Is it not unfortunate that this country, which has led the way in penal reform, should be so far behind in this instance? I recognise, of course, the formidable arguments that can be produced in favour of flogging. It is said that prison discipline would become very difficult, if not impossible, without resort to flogging. Exactly the same arguments were used when the Prisons Act of 1898, severely limiting the number of cases where the cat could be used, was passed through this House. It was said that the warder's life would not be worth an hour's purchase, but all those prophecies were found to be wrong, and there has been a steady decrease during the last 30 years in the number of offences against prison discipline. Of course, crimes for which flogging is employed as a punishment are revolting, but that does not excuse a revolting punishment. Flogging can really be attacked as a method of torture, and exactly the same arguments can be used in favour of flogging as could be used in favour of the rack, the thumbscrew, boiling oil, and all the other medieval barbarities.

But I do not desire to prejudge the issue in this matter. All that I want is an inquiry. There has never been an inquiry. We have a right to know whether flogging is really a deterrent, whether it is not too brutally administered, and whether, if it is really necessary in the last resort, its use ought not to be more seriously restricted than it is now. I do hope the Home Secretary will not just dismiss my plea as liberal crankiness. The abolition of flogging is, I think, supported by hard-headed men in all parties in this House, and it is supported by some officials. I would call the right hon. Gentleman's attention to a letter that appeared in the "Daily Telegraph" on the 7th December, written by a medical officer in a convict prison. He gave his name, and this is what he said:

> "*Apropos* of the question asked in the House yesterday respecting the suicide in Dartmoor of a convict sentenced to be flogged, may I, as one whose painful—terribly painful—duty it has been to witness this ghastly form of punishment, protest against its continuance? Dreadful as it is, it has but one effect—and that is on the mind and body of the prisoner. It does not act as a deterrent to others. But the worst part of it is that it is a brutal application of the law, as well as the terrible knouts that cut into the flesh of the receiver. I shall not forget in a hurry the look on the face of two people when I last saw this punishment inflicted—i.e., the flogger and the flogged. Both were utterly

demoralised, temporarily, and the savage brute came out in both of them. Let us see an end of this ancient relic of brutal days."

I say with all the sincerity in me that the time has come for an inquiry, and I hope the Home Office, which has such a fine record for liberality and humanitarianism, will not refuse my request.

11.11 p.m.

Mr. ISAAC FOOT: I should like to say a word, not because a word is needed, but because I put a question down about the same time as the hon. Member, as soon as I saw what had happened in my own native county and in the district in which I live. I saw a full account of the occurrence in our Western paper, and I am bound to say that I read it with a sense of horror, and I think most of the people in the district did so too. I have nothing to add to the eloquent plea that has been made by the hon. Member, but I found that as a result of putting the question down certain misapprehensions arose. I found that it was thought by some, and I have no doubt the hon. Member had the same experience judging from what he has said, that there was some criticism being made of the prison authorities. I would like it to be known that there was no criticism in my mind of the prison authorities. I know that the Governor of that prison is a very high-minded man who carries out his duties with every consideration, and he holds a very high place in the estimation of all with whom he has to do. Certainly there was no criticism of the Medical Officer. All the evidence showed that the officials of the prison did all that was in their power, and I am sure that no criticism has been levelled, either by the hon. Member or by myself, against those who have the difficult task to perform of caring for those members of society who have been put under control.

The suggestion has been made that those of us who put down questions of this kind are showing some sympathy with this wretched man. I am not in a position to judge that man. Most of us, had we gone through the same experience and been subjected to the same temptations and the same upbringing, might have been no better. We have to speak no ill of the dead; no one of us is in a position to judge. It is true that this man did a violent thing, but he was trying to escape, and a desperate man does desperate things in times of emergency. None of us would care to say what we would do in similar circumstances, but a wicked thing was done by him. The fact that violence was done by him is not the gravemen of my hon. Friend's case. It is not a case of this particular man, miserable as his lot was. The question is whether such treatment, such a sentence ought to be imposed in the interests of society. It may be that as the result of the inquiry it may be shown that this is a check upon evil deeds, or that in the end it is no check and that society in imposing this punishment secures for itself no advantage.

I only want to make it clear that this does not involve on either my right hon. Friend's part or on mine the slightest criticism on those who thought they were being criticised in this House. No word has been said in the House that would bear in any sense that interpretation. It is our desire that judges and prison officials may, as a result of a wise reform, be relieved of a task which must be a dreadful burden to them to carry out, when it is imposed by the sentence of the law. Surely the Home Secretary, whom I know to be a man of generous heart as well as a wise administrator, will take into consideration a plea that is made to him, not merely by two private Members but a plea which has the support of many in this country who are deeply concerned that society should take this method for its protection. If he can take that into consideration, or, if he cannot say anything now, if he will give us an assurance that he will do so, after consultation with those best qualified to advise him, I think he will meet the views of many people who read the recent proceedings with great apprehension and anxiety.

11.17 p.m.

Mr. LANSBURY: I only rise to join in the appeal made to the Home Secretary. I was not aware before the hon. Member rose that this subject was to be raised to-night, but I felt I must stay to hear him, and to join in whatever appeal is made for an inquiry. I will not attempt to go into the case except to say, with the last speaker, that in appeal-

[Mr. Lansbury.]

ing for an inquiry I have not the slightest intention of insinuating any sort of reflection on those who had to carry out these terrible duties, but I feel that the case has revealed a condition of things which does merit inquiry. Whether people are bad enough for any of us to treat them in that way I will not argue to-night. Sometimes I think of myself as very fortunate to have lived as long as I have lived under circumstances which have, to a large extent, kept me out of that kind of arena, but I often feel also that there are lots of other things of which I am guilty that people do not know anything about, and I hope that perhaps the Power in the world that really does judge these things may judge some of these men as leniently as I hope I may be judged.

11.19 p.m.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I hope that neither my right hon. Friend nor the House will in this case work from the particular to the general. It is difficult either to generalise about a particular case, or a particular form of punishment, and I personally should deprecate any inquiry into the mere question of flogging as a punishment. If there is to be an inquiry it should be into the much more general question of the whole of our penal system and the method of dealing with criminals. As this particular case has been raised I think it may be of service to my right hon. Friend if I mention that I knew this man. I took part in the Dartmoor prosecution when he was one of the criminals and I had him under constant review for some three weeks, and, *de mortuis nil nisi bonum*, it is impossible to give one's full personal impressions of a man of that kind. But if I say this I hope that I shall not be misunderstood. He was one of a type, of whom there are a great many examples, on whom physical punishment would have little or no deterrent effect at all. He took a very violent part in the Dartmoor mutiny. He acted with very great violence against warders; laid about him with an axe against warders against whom he had nothing at all. He had a long prison record, and prison was no deterrent to him; he was one of a class of case that I have known in my professional career, in which I have had the duty of prosecuting, and in which the lash has been awarded, as the only punishment which would have any effect whatever.

These people are in and out of gaol all their lives, and the one thing they really do mind is the cat-o'-nine-tails. I also know, from personal conversation with prison governors, of cases in which there have been remarkable transformations of character of prisoners as a result of treatment with the cat-o'-nine-tails. I know, on the authority of a governor, of a prisoner who, after the lash, subsequently became one of the best of men. You cannot dismiss the thing merely on sentiment. As my hon. Friend says, one automatically revolts against the kind of sentence and it is easy to work up sentiment. It is also easy to work up hysteria. When I read, as I did, the letter from the prison doctor which was quoted by my hon. Friend a few moments ago, I thought that the prison doctor was making an unfair reflection upon the men who have to perform the duty of flogging a prisoner. I am sure that the people who perform those sentences are scrupulously impersonal. They are not sadists. They do not do this in satisfaction to any feelings of their own, and it is an unfair criticism to make the suggestion that this duty has a degenerating effect upon them. This is not a subject which can be disposed of on a Motion for the Adjournment, or by a mere *ad hoc* inquiry into this particular method of punishment. You have to go over the whole range of punishment and many other punishments, and to consider the pros and cons of this kind of punishment.

11.23 p.m.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir J. Gilmour): I am sure that the House will believe me when I say that I appreciate the temper and the tone of this discussion. I admit at once that the hon. Member who raised this matter spoke with great conviction. It has been my lot, as it has been of everyone who has held the position which I do, to study these problems and to accept a measure of responsibility in carrying out what the existing law says should be carried out. Let the House remember that in recent years these problems of punishment have been dealt with under two heads; one inflicted by order of the court after the most careful consideration and public trial of the circumstances. That is applicable to this case,

in which two men were concerned. All I say on that is that I think what the hon. and learned Member for Central Nottingham (Mr. O'Connor) has said really explains the position with regard to this particular case.

I was asked whether this punishment had been inflicted upon the second convict who was concerned with the one who committed suicide. The circumstances here are perfectly simple. This other man has swallowed certain things deliberately, and for the moment he is under medical observation. About that I cannot say more. But I want to emphasise the fact that, taking the average of the last five years, it is under 12 that have been punished in this kind of way. While I realise the seriousness of this method of dealing with this problem, yet I must ask the House to remember that it is only because individuals have used the power of force and brutality in excess of everything of which this House could approve and it is only because they have used methods that are indefensible, which I am certain Members in this House would not defend for a moment, that this method has been adopted. Apart from the question of the decision of the courts, there is the question of discipline in the prison. The House must remember that it is the duty of prison warders to act with the least degree of force that is necessary to carry out the discipline of the prison and it is impossible that those who have the responsibility of maintaining law and order in prisons should neglect to give reasonable support to a warder who is brutally attacked in some of these cases without any real provocation and serious bodily injury inflicted upon him.

This House is right in revising from time to time problems such as we have been discussing but it must be remembered that there are safeguards imposed upon this punishment. On the one hand, it is ordered by the court, after very careful consideration, while on the other hand, it can only take place after an inquiry by magistrates on the spot in the prison, it is subsequently brought to the Home Secretary, and it is also supervised—and on every occasion most carefully and meticulously supervised—by the medical officer. If there is any doubt in the mind of the Medical Officer, his view is paramount in this matter, and, even when this punishment is being carried out, if there is the slightest sign that would lead the Medical Officer to suppose that any serious and permanent injury was likely to be inflicted upon the individual, on his word that punishment ceases and is not continued. Whatever our feelings may be, it must be remembered that there is still a stratum of society in this country which, if it were allowed to get beyond control, would cause very serious evils. I would ask the House to accept my word that this is done with the greatest care and circumspection, and I trust that the House will not ask for an inquiry of this kind.

Question put, and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at Twenty-nine Minutes after Eleven o'Clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 12th December, 1934.

[OFFICIAL REPORT.]

The House met at a Quarter before Three of the Clock, Mr. SPEAKER *in the Chair.*

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

YUGOSLAVIA AND HUNGARY.

1. **Mr. MABANE** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can make any statement with regard to the manner in which the League of Nations proposes to deal with the Yugoslav-Hungarian dispute; and whether he can say whether any further protest has been received by the League from Hungary with regard to the treatment of the Hungarian minority in Yugoslavia by the Yugoslav Government?

2. **Sir ROBERT GOWER** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, as this country was a party to the post-War treaty which guaranteed certain rights to racial minorities in the Little Entente States, he has any statement to make regarding the recent wholesale expulsions of Hungarian nationals from those parts of Yugoslavia which were formerly Hungarian, and the manner in which the expulsions were carried out?

3. **Mr. LOVAT-FRASER** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the treatment accorded to Hungarian subjects in Yugoslavia who have been expelled from their homes and country contrary to the principles of humanity; and what action His Majesty's Government proposes to take at the pending meeting of the League of Nations regarding this matter?

7. **Colonel WEDGWOOD** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is in a position to state what His Majesty's Government have done to stop the expulsion of Hungarians from Yugoslavia; and whether those expelled will now be allowed to return?

8. **Sir COOPER RAWSON** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the treatment of Hungarian minority subjects by Yugoslavia, particularly during the past few days, he has made or proposes to make any representations to the Yugoslav Government with regard to their obligations for the protection of racial minorities under the treaty to which Great Britain was a party?

The SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir John Simon): With regard to the general question of the Yugoslav-Hungarian dispute, I would refer to the statement which I made in the House yesterday. It is a fact that during the past two or three weeks a considerable number of Hungarians—between 2,000 and 3,000 in all—have been expelled by certain Yugoslav authorities from Yugoslavia. According to my information, the persons concerned were of Hungarian, or at any rate not of Yugoslav, nationality, and the provisions of the treaty with Yugoslavia for the protection of minorities would not, therefore, apply to them. Nevertheless, His Majesty's Government were impressed both by the hardship to those concerned and by the importance of avoiding anything which might further embitter the dispute which had been referred to the Council of the League of Nations; and they accordingly made representations to the Yugoslav Government to bring these expulsions to an end. The Prince Regent—that is Prince Paul of Yugoslavia—on his return to Yugoslavia on the 8th December, at once ordered that the expulsions should cease, and I am informed that they have ceased. I do not know whether any of those expelled have yet returned or whether they desire to do so.

Mr. MABANE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that, without respect to the merits of the expulsions, the manner in which they have been carried out is against all canons of British justice and fair play; and will he represent to the Yugoslav authorities the intense indignation that is felt through this country?

Sir J. SIMON: I think the answer I have given will show to the House, in rather more moderate terms, the advice that we thought it proper to tender to a friendly nation. It is true, as I have

[Sir J. Simon.]
already said, that hardships are involved in some cases. In so far as the matter rests with me, I am sure that hon. Members will agree that the best course in the interests of peace and good relations is to be very well satisfied that the matter is ended.

Mr. RHYS DAVIES: In view of the excellent results which have followed the intervention of His Majesty's Government in stopping the expulsions, would it be too much to ask that His Majesty's Government should make arrangements to see that these people may return to their homes in Yugoslavia?

Sir J. SIMON: I am much obliged to my hon. Friend for the question. That matter has not escaped our attention. Indeed, I observed in my first answer that, whether any of those who were expelled have yet returned, or whether any of them desire to do so, it is obviously undesirable that we should press those who are willing to make other arrangements. The matter has not been overlooked.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: Would the right hon. Gentleman add to his service to humanity by obtaining permission for those who have been deported to return if they wish to do so?

Sir J. SIMON: That is what I meant when I said that this matter had not escaped our attention.

STEAMSHIP "ALMEDA STAR" (POLICE SEARCH, BUENOS AYRES).

4. **Captain ARTHUR EVANS** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is in a position to make a statement as to the boarding of the British liner "Almeda Star" by the Buenos Ayres police authorities on Thursday, 6th December, when the purser was compelled to hand over sacks of private mail for examination which contained confidential correspondence of the Anglo-Argentine Cold Storage and Produce Company?

Sir J. SIMON: According to a report which I have received from His Majesty's Ambassador at Buenos Ayres, the Steamship "Almeda Star" was searched in Buenos Ayres harbour on the 6th December, at the moment of sailing, by representatives of the Argentine Post Office, Customs and port police. Three bags containing unstamped private correspondence, shipping papers and routine documents belonging to the Anglo-Argentine Cold Storage and Produce Company were removed for examination, and the departure of the vessel was delayed for about an hour. I am informed that the bags, which were removed, were returned on the next day to the company with all their contents.

SAAR PLEBISCITE (MAINTENANCE OF ORDER).

6. **Mr. MANDER** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the desirability has been considered of sending a contingent of the Royal Air Force as part of the Saar international police force, in view of its value for reconnaissance work?

Sir J. SIMON: The composition of the British contingent of the Saar international police force is being stated by my right hon. Friend, the Financial Secretary to the War Office, in reply to the questions asked by my hon. Friends, the Members for South Cardiff (Captain A. Evans) and Elland (Mr. Levy).

Mr. MANDER: Do I understand th an Air Force contingent is not included

Sir J. SIMON: If the hon. Member presses his question, perhaps he will allow me to say that it did not occur to me that it was necessary that we should have a reconnaisance force for the purpose of seeing how the people voted.

Mr. MANDER: I quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman, but might not a reconnaisance force be useful to see whether any sort of invasion or putsch was taking place?

Sir J. SIMON: In all the circumstances, I think the hon. Member might join the rest of us in putting some confidence in the British Commander-in-Chief.

60. **Mr. LEVY** asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office what British units will form part of the Saar force, and the name of the British officer who will command the force?

61. **Captain A. EVANS** asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office

whether the composition of the British force to be sent to the Saar, and by whom the detachment will be commanded?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Douglas Hacking): The British contingent will consist of the Headquarters of the 13th Infantry Brigade, with the 1st Battalion the Essex Regiment and the 1st Battalion the East Lancashire Regiment, and in addition the necessary detachments of other arms and services such as as the Corps of Royal Engineers, the Royal Corps of Signals, the Royal Army Service Corps, the Royal Army Medical Corps and the Royal Army Ordnance Corps. The British contingent will also include a squadron of the 12th Lancers, with eight armoured cars which will follow after Christmas. The International Force will be commanded by Major-General J. E. S. Brind, and the British contingent by Brigadier J. H. T. Priestman. I regret that it was necessary to give some of this information to the Press before the whole of it could be given to the House. In view of the many rumours which were causing uncertainty amongst units of the Army it was deemed advisable to publish the names of the battalions concerned as soon as a definite decision was reached last night.

Mr. LEVY: While thanking my hon. Friend for his reply, may I ask who will pay the cost of the British troops in the Saar?

Mr. HACKING: I can only say that no extra cost involved will fall upon Army funds.

Brigadier-General NATION: Will these units proceed on a peace establishment as regards arms and equipment?

Mr. HACKING: No, Sir. They will have active service equipment.

Mr. LEVY: Are we to understand from the right hon. Gentleman's reply that the League of Nations will provide the funds for the payment of these troops?

Mr. HACKING: That is no concern of mine. I am quite satisfied so long as the cost does not fall upon Army funds.

Mr. PETHERICK: Can the right hon. Gentleman say when the troops will be leaving?

Mr. HACKING: It is hoped that the whole of the contingent will have reached the Saar before Christmas, with the exception of the Lancers, who, as I have said, will be going as soon as possible after Christmas.

ROYAL NAVY.

ENGINE ROOM ARTIFICERS (CANDIDATES).

10. **Mr. HICKS** asked the First Lord of the Admiralty how many candidates from engineering workshops in the country have been given an opportunity of passing into the Royal Navy as engine-room artificers; how many have succeeded in passing the test examination since 1st January, 1934; whether any of the candidates during their test examination period declined to proceed to the end or, after duly passing the test, declined to sign for service; and, if so, what reasons, if any, were given?

Lord STANLEY: As the answer contains a number of figures, I will, with the hon. Member's permission, circulate it in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following is the answer:

Number of candidates from engineering workshops in the country given an opportunity of passing into the Royal Navy as acting engine room artificers, 4th class, since 1st January, 1934	120
Number passed the trade test ...	94
Number failed trade test	21
Number declined to undergo trade test	3
One candidate stated he had a better job. The other two gave no reason for declining.	
Number who withdrew during trade test	2
One was medically unfit and the other was considered unsuitable.	
Number declined to sign for service after duly passing trade test ...	Nil.

BUILDING PROGRAMME (SLOOP MINE-SWEEPERS).

9. **Mr. STOREY** asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he can now state where the sloop mine-sweepers under the 1934 programme are to be built?

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Lord Stanley): The allocation of the orders for the sloop mine-sweepers will be announced within the next few days.

Mr. STOREY: Will the hon. Gentleman bear in mind the claims of the River Wear to a share of Admiralty work when he is considering the placing of these contracts?

Lord STANLEY: All relevant claims are borne in mind.

PALESTINE.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ORDINANCE.

12. **Mr. RHYS DAVIES** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the High Commissioner of Palestine has yet issued an Ordinance for the establishment of municipal councils in Palestine and, if so, to what towns and villages the ordinance applies; and whether any elections have yet taken place, and the result?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister): The new Municipal Corporations Ordinance came into force on the 12th January last. The Ordinance applies to 23 places, the names of which are given in the schedules to the Ordinance, and of which the most important are Jerusalem, Haifa, Jaffa and Tel-Aviv. If the hon. Member desires I will send him the list. The High Commissioner is empowered by the Ordinance to provide for the establishment of municipal councils in other areas and I have not been informed whether he has yet made use of his powers in this respect. Elections have been in progress for some months and the only result which has been reported to me is that of the election for the municipal council of Jerusalem where six Jews, four Moslems and two Christians have been elected. In this case several election petitions have been before the courts and the decisions on these petitions have not yet been reported.

TELEGRAMS (HEBREW).

16. **Mr. JANNER** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will give particulars of such arrangements, if any, as have been made for the use in Palestine of Hebrew characters in telegrams; and what Post Offices will be available for that purpose?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: I have seen a statement in the Press to the effect that certain arrangements have been made in Palestine to enable telegrams to be sent in Hebrew characters, but I have no official confirmation of this. I will let the hon. Member have any details I receive with regard to this.

CHURCH OF HOLY SEPULCHRE, JERUSALEM.

17. **Mr. RANKIN** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies when it is anticipated that the report on the extent of the repairs necessary to prevent the ruin of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem will be issued; and whether he can make any statement as to the attitude of the British Government in respect of possible assistance to the government of Palestine in preserving this historic building?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: I hope that it will be possible to issue this report shortly. The question of the extent of the repairs required and of the best means of raising funds for the cost will be a matter for discussion with the ecclesiastical authorities concerned. As I informed my hon. Friend on the 2nd May, there is no question of a grant from the British Government.

BRITISH GUIANA (ELECTIONS).

13. **Mr. ROBINSON** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that in two recent elections in British Guiana successful candidates have been unseated on grounds of treating, personation, and bribery; whether he is aware that in one case both candidates were found to have been guilty of corrupt practices; and whether he will cause a thorough inquiry to be made into the existence of corruption in elections in British Guiana?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: I have received a report from the Acting Governor of British Guiana regarding the circumstances of one recent election, when, as the result of a petition to the Supreme Court of the Colony, the election was declared void. I have also seen a statement to the effect that the Supreme Court took similar action in another recent election. I am asking for a report from the Acting Governor on the matter.

Mr. ROBINSON: Will my right hon. Friend press for legislation to ensure that in future all candidates who are unseated for corrupt practices should be disqualified from sitting in the Legislative Council for a period of years?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: I would rather know the facts before I recommend the legislation. The most effective way to ensure that elections are not corruptly conducted seems to be that people who try to corrupt shall be unseated.

Mr. ROBINSON: Is not the right hon. Gentleman aware that, as things are now, the unseated candidate can immediately stand again and be elected?

TANGANYIKA (NATIVE SCHOLARS: DEATHS).

14. **Mr. PALING** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give any information to the House as to the circumstances in which a number of native school girls in Tanganyika met their deaths as a result of drinking a poisonous liquid by mistake; and what steps have been taken to avoid the possibility of any such occurrence in the future?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: I deeply regret this tragic occurrence. I understand that on the morning of the 25th October, doses of what was thought to be shark oil, which had been used with success at hospitals in Tanganyika as a substitute for cod liver oil, were issued, on the instructions of the headmistress, herself a doctor, to the pupils at Malangali girls' school. It has now been established, however, that the liquid used was not shark oil, but some form of disinfectant resembling it in appearance but containing arsenic, with the result that all who had taken doses, including the headmistress herself, became ill, and 35 of the girls died. It is not yet definitely known how the mistake occurred. Further investigations are proceeding, and I will communicate to the hon. Member any further information I receive. As regards the second part of the question, orders were issued immediately after the occurrence to every Government station, and to all hospitals, tribal dressing stations, dispensaries, and mission stations to the effect that the use of shark's oil must be discontinued at once until after the matter had been investigated. The question of what further action may be necessary must naturally depend on the result of the investigation.

Mr. PALING: Have the deaths that have followed this unfortunate occurrence had an effect upon the disposition of parents to send their children to the schools?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: I think I would like notice of that question. I should very much doubt it, as it is clear, from the very prompt action that was taken, that the facts of this most unhappy and unfortunate occurrence are fully understood and realised.

KENYA (TAX AGE).

15. **Mr. BANFIELD** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the Government of Tanganyika has recently raised the poll-tax age for African males from 16 years to the limit applying to non-African males of 18 years, and that Kenya Colony, alone among our East African dependencies, retains the racial discrimination of an earlier tax-age for Africans; and whether he will request the Kenya Government to follow the action recently taken in Tanganyika?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: I am aware that the Government of Tanganyika have recently passed an Ordinance raising the age of taxation to 18, with effect from next year. As the hon. Member is aware, this question was specially considered in Kenya by Lord Moyne in his report as Financial Commissioner; and Lord Moyne reported against the proposal on merits, and estimated that it would cost £40,000. In view of these facts, and of the financial position in Kenya, I should not feel justified in adopting the hon. Member's suggestion.

Mr. BANFIELD: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that, since the Moyne Report was issued, there have been serious losses as a consequence of drought and so on, and that as a result these boys have drifted to the towns, and in many cases have drifted into crime also?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: While losses arising from drought are very unfortunate, they do not seem to me to affect the question whether these people should be liable to taxation at the age of 16 or at the age of 18. The hon. Gentleman will be aware of the difficulty of ascertaining the real age, and it is pointed out in the Moyne Report that, if this relief from taxation were given, it would only mean that it would be necessary to impose higher rates of taxation on other natives, who are equally affected by the drought.

Mr. PALING: Is not the age of 16 rather low for this purpose?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: I think that, if the hon. Gentleman reads Lord Moyne's Report carefully, he will see all the arguments on the subject fully set out.

BERMUDA (JUVENILE OFFENDERS: APPRENTICESHIP).

18. **Mr. MALLALIEU** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies with regard to the Ordinance which has been passed in Bermuda under which children convicted of offences may at the order of the court be apprenticed for several years to private employers, what is the number of years it is possible to apprentice such children; what are the wages paid during the apprenticeship; and whether the wages are paid direct to the apprentice or to third parties?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: The Ordinance provides that the period of the apprenticeship shall be such as the juvenile court shall direct, but that it shall in any event terminate when the juvenile apprenticed attains the age of 21 years. There is no provision in the Ordinance relating to the payment of wages to the apprentices, and I have not been informed as to the practice adopted.

ROYAL AIR FORCE (TOOLS).

19. **Mr. ROBINSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for Air whether he is aware that foreign tools are used by the Royal Air Force, although British tools are available; and whether he will stipulate that all future Royal Air Force contracts shall insist on the tools and equipment being of British manufacture?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for AIR (Sir Philip Sassoon): The policy of the Air Ministry is to purchase British tools whenever possible, and foreign tools are bought only when British tools are not available or when their cost is so much higher as to preclude the normal preference being given in their favour. I may add that during the past year only two purchases of foreign tools have been made, of a total value of under £75.

Mr. ROBINSON: Is my right hon. Friend aware that tools of foreign manufacture are bought from France, Germany and the United States by British firms, and are then supplied to his Department without name or mark; and will he insist in future that all the tools used by his Department shall be manufactured, as well as purchased, in this country?

Sir P. SASSOON: I have given my answer.

Mr. PIKE: Can the Under-Secretary say what were the tools that British industry is not competent to manufacture?

Sir P. SASSOON: It is not a question of competence; it is a question of financial limits.

AVIATION.

EMPIRE AIR ROUTES (EUROPEAN SECTION).

20. **Captain PETER MACDONALD** asked the Under-Secretary of State for Air whether any further progress has been made in negotiations with the various European Powers concerned with a view to enabling British commercial air routes to operate by air over Europe; and, if so, by what date arrangements will be made for British commercial machines on the South African and Far Eastern routes to fly over a greater part or the whole of the European section of these routes?

23. **Mr. WHITESIDE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for Air whether he has any statement to make in connection with the new convention between Great Britain and Italy for the institution of air transport lines?

Sir P. SASSOON: I am glad to say that an Air Transport Services Convention between Italy and this country was signed at Rome on Monday last. Negotiations regarding the operation of

regular air services over France are still in progress, and I am not as yet in a position to give a date by which the whole of the European section of Empire air routes will be operated by air.

IMPERIAL AIRWAYS (PARIS-MARSEILLES FLIGHT).

21. **Mr. SIMMONDS** asked the Under-Secretary of State for Air upon what conditions the French Government permitted the flight of the Imperial Airways aircraft "Hengist" from Paris to Marseilles on the 8th instant; and what further flights have been similarly authorised?

Sir P. SASSOON: The permission of the French Government was not required, since the particular aircraft used on this occasion was making a special flight from London to Cairo, to which centre she was being transferred and from which she will operate in future.

ACCIDENT, CASTLE BROMWICH.

22. **Mr. MANDER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for Air whether he has any statement to make with reference to the circumstances under which three Midland pilots lost their lives in a flying accident at Castle Bromwich aerodrome on Sunday, 9th December?

Sir P. SASSOON: I regret that I am not as yet in a position to supplement the information which has appeared in the public Press in regard to this regrettable accident. The circumstances which led to the collision are being investigated by the inspector of accidents. I should like to take this opportunity of publicly expressing my Noble Friend's and my own deep personal sympathy with the relatives of the three victims of the accident.

Mr. MANDER: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether the report will be published?

Sir P. SASSOON: These reports are never published.

Mr. MANDER: Will some statement be made?

Sir P. SASSOON: I should like notice of that question.

TRANSPORT.

ACCIDENTS (PEDESTRIANS).

25. **Sir FRANCIS FREMANTLE** asked the Minister of Transport the number of deaths from road accidents during 1933 due to pedestrians stepping from the kerb into the roadway; and whether he will take action to inculcate the rule of the pavement to keep to the left so as to face oncoming traffic?

The MINISTER of TRANSPORT (Mr. Hore-Belisha): The analysis of fatal road accidents in 1933 shows that, of the 3,517 pedestrians who were killed, 379 deaths were attributed to stepping from a kerb or refuge without looking. This was assigned as the sole or main cause of the accident in 337 of these cases, and as a contributory cause in the remainder. I have remitted the question whether or not pedestrians should be advised to keep to their left on the pavement, so as to face oncoming traffic, to the Committee on Road Safety for report.

Vice-Admiral CAMPBELL: Will the Minister consider putting handrails round the outer edge of the pavement in dangerous streets?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: Yes, Sir, that matter is being considered.

MENAI SUSPENSION BRIDGE.

26 and 27. **Major OWEN** asked the Minister of Transport (1) what has been the revenue received, up to 30th November last, from the Menai Suspension Bridge tolls since the reductions were made earlier this year; what was the revenue received for the corresponding period last year; and what payments were made during each period;

(2) what is the present amount of the reserve fund which has been accumulated for the purpose of renewals and for reconstruction of the Menai Suspension Bridge?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: Between the 1st April, when the reduced tolls were introduced, and the 30th November, the revenue from tolls collected at Menai Bridge was £10,170, compared with £10,702 during the corresponding period of last year. The payments made during these periods were £1,896 this year and £1,834 last year. The fund to which the hon. and gallant Members refers now amounts to approximately £107,000.

Major OWEN: In view of the Minister's avowed intention to free all bridges from tolls, does he not think that, with the reserve fund now available, he could free this bridge permanently from tolls?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I am entirely in agreement with the general purpose enunciated by the hon. and gallant Gentleman, but I understand that the local authorities have consistently refused to assume responsibility for the maintenance of the bridge. When they will assume that responsibility, the day of freeing it will be nearer at hand.

Major OWEN: Is the hon. Gentleman prepared to hand over the reserve fund to the two county councils concerned, for the purposes of freeing the bridge?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: The purpose of the fund is to reconstruct the old bridge or to build a better one in the future, and I could not touch it for an improper purpose.

PARKING REGULATIONS.

28. **Sir CYRIL COBB** asked the Minister of Transport whether, in view of the fact that the King's highway is maintained at the public expense to provide a free passage for traffic, he will, in order that obstruction by the storage of motor cars on the highway may cease, take steps to compel local authorities in the Metropolitan and other built-up areas to make a considerable charge payable to public funds for storage space occupied by cars standing in public thorughfares instead of in garages?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I am in agreement with my hon. Friend's general aim of preventing the use of the highway by standing vehicles, but I fear that to give highway authorities a power, which they do not at present possess, to make a charge, would increase rather than diminish the present difficulties.

Mr. HERBERT WILLIAMS: Does the Minister propose to deal with vehicles loading goods when they occupy excessive amounts of time in doing so?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I hope it will be possible in the future to deal with that matter.

29. **Sir C. COBB** asked the Minister of Transport whether, in view of the fact that the use of public thoroughfares instead of proper accommodation for the storage of motor vehicles is one of the most powerful causes of accidents, he will now request local authorities to forbid motor vehicles to stand in public thoroughfares of a built-up area, if unoccupied by their drivers, for a longer period than 15 minutes, and except to set down or pick up passengers or freight?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: Regulations are in force limiting the periods during which vehicles may wait in Oxford Street and Piccadilly Circus and short sections of the streets leading into Oxford Street and Piccadilly Circus. I am considering whether similar regulations should be made in respect of other streets which are congested or where accidents are a frequent occurrence. Outside the London Traffic Area, the matter is one primarily for consideration by the local authorities concerned.

Sir ARTHUR MICHAEL SAMUEL: Is the Minister aware that many side streets leading out of main streets are now used as garages for motor vehicles?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: Yes, Sir. I strongly deprecate that practice, and wish that more garages could be provided and used.

Mr. ISAAC FOOT: Will the hon. Gentleman give attention to the stationing of cars, as so frequently happens within the white line which has been laid down because of dangerous circumstances? Will he have regard to the cars that are often left within the white line, occupying space which is needed for public purposes?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I share the hon. Gentleman's view, and hope that progressively some improvement may be made.

Viscountess ASTOR: Will the Minister consider the possibility of putting a garage under St. James's Square?

Mr. PIKE: Will my hon. Friend bear in mind the fact that one of the reasons which prompt many people to leave their cars on highways is the exorbitant price charged by the majority of garages?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I hope that some enterprising people will take advantage of the opportunity and install garages that are cheap. They would be both useful and profitable.

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: Is not the Minister aware that most of the cars left at the side of the road are cars used by people who are doing shopping, and that, if too great restrictions are put upon them, it may very serious affect the shopping interests?

Viscountess ASTOR: Will the hon. Gentleman remember that nothing stops a woman shopping?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: Those who have shops or restaurants or theatres which attract traffic outside their doors ought to make provision for it.

RAILWAY PASSENGERS' TICKETS.

32. **Mr. MACLAY** asked the Minister of Transport whether, in view of the fact that certain tickets issued by the main railway companies relieve the companies of claims in respect of damages to passengers through negligent acts of the railway companies or their employés, he will take steps to ensure that in future the railway companies will clearly mark those tickets to which no such liability attaches?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I have asked the railway companies to consider the hon. Gentleman's suggestion, and will in due course inform him of the result.

ROAD SERVICE LICENCES (APPEALS).

33. **Captain P. MACDONALD** asked the Minister of Transport whether he is yet in a position to make any statement as to whether he intends to make any alteration in the existing arrangements for hearing appeals from the decisions of the Road Traffic Commissioners, so far as the licensing of public service vehicles is concerned?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: When further experience has been gained of the revised procedure for dealing with these appeals which is now in operation, I will certainly re-examine it.

OMNIBUS SERVICES, WEST LONDON.

34. **Mr. ALAN TODD** asked the Minister of Transport whether he is aware that since the inception of the London Passenger Transport Board there has been a considerable falling off in the regularity of the omnibus service, particularly in West London; and what steps he proposes to take to see that this board carries out its duties efficiently in this respect?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: If my hon. Friend will let me know more particularly what services he has in mind I will make inquiry. I am fully alive to the importance of taking comprehensive measures with a view to reducing the congestion of traffic in the whole area of Greater London.

Mr. TODD: May I supply the hon. Gentleman with figures?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I shall be most grateful to have the opportunity of assisting my hon. Friend.

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATIONS.

35. **Mr. HOLDSWORTH** asked the Minister of Transport whether he will make a statement as to the complaints he has received in reference to regulations made under the Road and Rail Traffic Act, 1933; and whether he has at his disposal any machinery for ascertaining the views of those affected?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: The regulations referred to in the question have been made in accordance with the procedure laid down in the Act of 1933. I am having them re-examined with a view to seeing whether, within the terms of the Act, I can meet the criticisms which have been made to me. I can assure the hon. Gentleman that I shall always be ready to take such a course.

Mr. HOLDSWORTH: Would it not be a great advantage in dealing with all questions relating to road transport if the various interests concerned were so organised that they could present a complete policy to the Minister?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: It would be a great advantage in many cases if a unified case could be put forward by the industry as a whole.

PEDESTRIAN CROSSING-PLACES.

36. **Mr. FLEMING** asked the Minister of Transport which local authorities have refused to inaugurate or maintain uncontrolled crossings, with or without beacons; and what steps he proposes to take in the case of such refusal?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: Only local authorities in the Metropolitan Area have, up to the present, been asked to

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co-operate in the actual laying down of crossings. The only authority to withhold co-operation is the Metropolitan Borough of Bermondsey. As my hon. Friend will be aware, I have power in the event of a local authority declining to lay down crossings, to lay them down and recover the cost, but I have no reason at the moment to anticipate that local authorities generally will refrain, after I have appointed a date, from employing this practical method of promoting road safety.

Mr. FLEMING: Did the local authority in question, Bermondsey, give any reason for refusing?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I must ask for notice, but I remember that it was a very short letter.

Mr. HOLFORD KNIGHT: Is it the case that an alderman of this authority sits on the Traffic Advisory Committee?

38. **Mr. D. G. SOMERVILLE** asked the Minister of Transport whether he will consider adding to the luminous traffic signs illuminated verbal indications to pedestrians as to whether they are to cross or not to cross?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: Yes, Sir. My Department is actively engaged in trying to overcome the difficulties which have hitherto been held to stand in the way of adding indications for pedestrians to light signals which are primarily intended to control vehicular traffic.

41. **Sir PERCY HARRIS** asked the Minister of Transport how many pedestrian beacons have been put up in the county of London; what is the total cost of the same; and what proportion of the cost has been borne by the local authorities and how much by the Government?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: Approximately 14,000 beacons have been erected at pedestrian crossings in the County of London. The cost of these beacons is about £15,000 which is being borne, in the first instance, by the Road Fund, subject to a refund by the local authorities concerned of 40 per cent. of the cost of any permanent works taken over by these authorities.

Sir P. HARRIS: Will the hon. Gentleman consider not spending any more money on these expensive ornaments until he is satisfied that they are really fulfilling the purpose for which they were put up?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I have given a long time for the results of this experiment to show themselves. Compared with the casualties last year, there is a distinct improvement, and also the figures for this year have hitherto shown a distinct improvement, the number of pedestrians in relation to other sections of the population who have been killed having diminished.

Sir P. HARRIS: Does the hon. Gentleman realise that the improvement is due mainly to the white lines rather than to the beacons, which cannot be seen at night?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I can assure the hon. Baronet that my sole desire is to promote the public safety. It is for that reason that I have allowed an extended period for the experiment in London before extending it to the provinces. I shall not shirk the conclusions of the evidence, whatever they may be, for I feel that the public as a whole want to discover the right method by experiment, and there is no other way.

Sir JOHN HASLAM: Will the hon. Gentleman continue his progressive policy of trying any method which will help to save life rather than the do-nothing policy that is advocated in certain die-hard quarters?

TRAFFIC SIGNS.

40. **Mr. D. G. SOMERVILLE** asked the Minister of Transport whether he will consider the desirability of fixing luminous traffic signs in the centre of the road rather than at corners, in view of the assistance this change would give to drivers of motor vehicles?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: Where conditions permit, additional traffic signs or signals are frequently provided on islands in the centre of the road and this practice will, I have no doubt, continue to be followed by highway authorities.

ONE-WAY STREETS.

39. **Mr. D. G. SOMERVILLE** asked the Minister of Transport whether the extension of one-way streets is evoking approval or disapproval from the shopkeepers in those streets; and what is his

general policy in dealing with such representations of traders who are interested?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: In some cases shopkeepers have expressed disapproval of proposals for one-way streets, and it is the practice to take all such representations, as well as those of other interests, into careful consideration before a decision is reached.

HYDE PARK (ALBERT GATE).

68. **Mr. ALAN TODD** asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware of the complaints raised by shopkeepers, hotel keepers and residents in the Knightsbridge area because of the recent closing of Albert Gate, Hyde Park; and whether he is prepared to reopen this gate for a period of four months to test the quality of the recent closing experiment?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir John Gilmour): Yes, Sir, and as my hon. Friend is aware, I received a deputation on this subject on the 6th instant from the Westminster City Council and the Chelsea Borough Council. I have given the most sympathetic consideration to the representations made by the deputation, but I have come to the conclusion that the gate should remain closed to vehicular traffic until further experience has been gained of the results of the experiment.

Mr. TODD: May I ask how long the right hon. Gentleman intends to close the gate under this experimental scheme?

Sir J. GILMOUR: That has not been decided.

69. **Mr. TODD** asked the Home Secretary whether he is aware that Albert Gate, Hyde Park, was closed in July last without reference to the councils of the city of Westminster, the borough of Chelsea, or the royal borough of Kensington; and whether he will take steps to see that in future some co-operation between his Department and the Metropolitan boroughs is forthcoming before such regulations are enforced?

Sir J. GILMOUR: It is frequently the case that traffic questions cannot be decided solely, or even mainly, upon purely local considerations; but, as I explained to the deputation from the Westminster City Council and the Chelsea Borough Council which I received on the 6th instant, the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis is at all times ready to consider the views of local authorities upon matters which affect them, and I do not think that any further action on my part is called for.

MOTOR VEHICLES (POLICE ARRESTMENT).

71. **Sir GIFFORD FOX** asked the Home Secretary whether drivers of motor vehicles on the public highway who are stopped for any reason by policemen in plain clothes are entitled to demand the production of a badge or warrant of identity?

Sir J. GILMOUR: Yes, Sir.

FACILITIES, EAST LONDON.

24. **Mr. GROVES** asked the Minister of Transport whether he proposes any action to implement the undertaking given to Parliament that improvements will be effected in the travelling facilities for the East End; and when it is proposed to make arrangements for the construction of a tube railway and the electrification of the London and North Eastern suburban lines?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: The hon. Gentleman will be aware that the matters referred to in the question are not under my control. I am, however, circulating in the OFFICIAL REPORT a summary of information with which I have been furnished by the London Passenger Transport Board.

Mr. GROVES: Will the Minister of Transport take up this matter and bring pressure to bear upon the London Passenger Transport Board in order to deal with this serious problem?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I have already conveyed the hon. Member's strong feelings to the right quarter. I am always ready to act as a vehicle for that purpose.

Following is the information:

I understand that powers to convert the local tramcar services in Walthamstow, Leyton, West Ham, East Ham and Ilford to trolley omnibus operation and to run trolley vehicles along Silvertown Way to Woolwich Ferry, are being sought in the London Passenger Transport

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Board's Bill in the present Session. I also understand that a new service of coaches from Aldgate starting at the Minories lay-by and terminating at Gidea Park, operating via Leyton, Wanstead, Cranbrook Park and Romford every 15 minutes, has been provided, and that on the trunk route, London and Brentwood, 26 more journeys per day have been provided than were operated by the board's predecessors and that a further 17 journeys per day are now to be operated.

As regards the construction of a tube railway and the electrification of the London and North Eastern Railway suburban lines, I am informed that these questions are receiving the consideration of the Standing Joint Committee of the London Passenger Transport Board and the Main Line Companies, set up under the London Passenger Transport Act, 1933, but that no decision has yet been reached.

COAL INDUSTRY.

Deputies and Examiners.

42. **Mr. DAVID DAVIES** asked the Secretary for Mines whether he can state the number of deputies, examiners, or firemen employed in the coal mines of England, Scotland and Wales, respectively, for the year 1933?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE (Secretary, Department of Overseas Trade): I have been asked to reply. It is regretted that no figures are available for the year 1933. The latest available information is that collected by the Royal Commission on the Coal Industry (1925) which shows that the numbers in 1924 were 21,021 for England, 3,982 for Scotland and 4,753 for Wales (including Monmouthshire).

Mr. PALING: Does that mean that no machinery exists in the Department for collecting these figures?

Pit Ponies.

43. **Mr. LAWSON** asked the Secretary for Mines whether he has had any complaints concerning the operation of that Section of the Coal Mines (Regulation) Act, 1911, which limits the number of ponies under the care of each horse-keeper; and whether he is satisfied that this Section is being properly administered?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: I have been asked to reply. Representations have been made arising out of a dispute about the terms and conditions of employment of certain horse-keepers in Durham, but there are no grounds on which my hon. Friend would feel justified in attempting to intervene under the provisions of the Coal Mines Act which deal with the care and treatment of horses. He is satisfied that those provisions are properly administered and secure their object.

Miners' Welfare.

44. **Mr. LAWSON** asked the Secretary for Mines whether he has considered the report of the proceedings of the annual conference of the various districts of the mining industry held on 20th November, 1934, at the Board of Trade offices to discuss the administration of the Miners' Welfare Acts, when there was a general demand for funds to administer existing schemes; and whether he will take steps to provide funds by restoring the ½d. per ton that was taken from the welfare levy recently to be used for administration and upkeep of those schemes for culture and recreation that exist throughout the coalfields?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: My hon. Friend is aware that two or three of the speakers at this conference asked for grants to be made for the maintenance of existing welfare schemes, but his information does not suggest any general support for such a policy. In any case the allocation of the fund is a matter for the Miners' Welfare Committee, and it has been their settled policy, throughout the life of the fund, to confine grants, broadly speaking, to capital expenditure. The answer to the last part of the question is that my hon. Friend is not prepared to recommend that the amount of the levy be reconsidered. The hon. Member will be aware that the recent amending Act was passed as lately as last March, after full consideration by Parliament of all the circumstances, and that this Act did not merely reduce the rate of the levy, but extended its operation for 20 years.

AIR DEFENCES AND SERVICES.

45. **Mr. SIMMONDS** asked the Prime Minister whether the Government will take advantage of the presence in this

country next year of the statesmen of the Dominions to hold an imperial air conference to discuss both the air defences and the commercial air services of the Empire?

The PRIME MINISTER (Mr. Ramsay MacDonald): While it is not proposed that any formal conference should be held during the celebration of His Majesty the King's Silver Jubilee, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom will, of course, as has already been stated, welcome the opportunity which will be afforded by the presence in this country of Dominion Prime Ministers for such personal and informal discussion of questions of common concern as may be thought desirable.

Mr. SIMMONDS: Will the right hon. Gentleman bear in mind that the British Government have so much leeway to make up that the Dominions are looking to the Home Government to give a lead?

The PRIME MINISTER: I can assure the House that these two particular matters are being dealt with now, and I think the Government alone are able to estimate how to handle what really is a very intricate question of inter-Dominion importance.

Brigadier-General MAKINS: Does not the Prime Minister think it will be more profitable to consider Imperial defence from the point of view of the three services combined and not the Air Force alone?

LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION (BALLOT).

46. **Sir FRANK SANDERSON** asked the Prime Minister whether he is aware that the poster which is being displayed publicly bearing the words You shall decide Peace or War, and a leaflet headed Peace or War—A National Declaration on the League of Nations and Armaments, which incorporates a ballot form setting forth five questions to which all men and women over the age of 18 in every household are requested to answer Yes or No and to attach their signatures, is causing apprehension among great numbers of people in this country, and that, due to the wording, A National Declaration, it is assumed by the great majority of uninformed persons that the poster and leaflet are sponsored by the Government and that it is therefore their duty to vote on the questionnaire; and whether he will issue an official statement, and give the widest publicity to it, to the effect that the Government disclaims any authorship of or any responsibility for these publications?

The PRIME MINISTER: The Government has no responsibility whatever for the publications to which my hon. Friend refers, and I hope that the statement will be sufficient to remove any misunderstanding which may exist.

Sir F. SANDERSON: As it is calculated to create a war atmosphere rather than to appease it, is it not possible for the right hon. Gentleman to take steps which will prevent a continuance of it?

Mr. MANDER: Is it a fact that the national ballot is being warmly supported by several Members of the Government?

Mr. THORNE: Is the right hon. Gentleman having filed away the records of the five questions and the extraordinary way in which the people are voting?

POST OFFICE.

LOTTERIES AND SWEEPSTAKES.

48. **Mr. NORTH** asked the Postmaster-General whether he is satisfied that the existing staff employed for the purpose is adequate to prevent the use of the inland post for the transmission of legal and illegal lottery tickets; and whether there is any intention to increase the staff or issue new instructions as a result of recent legislation dealing with lotteries?

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Sir Kingsley Wood): I am satisfied that the existing arrangements are adequate. The position will be kept under review.

Mr. NORTH: Can my right hon. Friend say approximately the total number of letters opened by his Department in their search for lottery tickets?

Sir K. WOOD: Obviously, that is another matter entirely.

49. **Mr. NORTH** asked the Postmaster-General whether Post Office messengers are permitted to carry packages conveying lottery tickets either of a legal or illegal nature, respectively; and whether

[Mr. North.]
he intends to issue any new instructions in this matter as a result of recent legislation legalising certain lotteries?

Sir K. WOOD: Post Office messengers receive the same instructions as other Post Office servants, and the answer to both parts of the question is in the negative.

Mr. NORTH: May I ask my right hon. Friend whether these messengers are allowed to open letters and packages?

Sir K. WOOD: That is another matter.

Mr. COCKS: What does the right hon. Gentleman do with these lottery tickets? Does he keep them for himself, or does he distribute them to his staff, or what?

Mr. LOGAN: If a lottery were declared illegal, what would happen if a postman abstracted one of the tickets and put it into his pocket?

Sir K. WOOD: I should consult the hon. Gentleman as to that.

50. **Mr. NORTH** asked the Postmaster-General whether he will consider the desirability of introducing in the public interest amended regulations at an early date enabling the Post Office to accept for transmission any letter containing any voucher, ticket, or coupon in a competition or lottery which is legal under the Betting and Lotteries Act of 1934?

Sir K. WOOD: As was explained in answer to my hon. Friend's question on the 4th instant, the tickets of lotteries which have become legal under the Betting and Lotteries Act, 1934, are not transmissible by post; and the question of issuing amended regulations does not therefore arise.

Mr. NORTH: Does not my right hon. Friend think that a considerable anomaly has arisen?

Sir K. WOOD: I cannot comment on the action of this House.

Mr. PIKE: Can my right hon. Friend say whether the answer applies to the printer who has received instructions from the promoters of a legal sweepstake, in so far as he is bound under the contract to supply the goods which have been ordered from him; and would those goods be confiscated?

Sir K. WOOD: I should like to consult my legal adviser on the matter.

HIS MAJESTY'S SILVER JUBILEE.

51. **Mr. THOMAS COOK** asked the Postmaster-General whether he is prepared to authorise the printing of a special series of postage stamps to commemorate the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of His Majesty's accession to the Throne?

Sir K. WOOD: Yes, Sir.

BELMONT TRAINING COLONY.

52. **Mr. McGOVERN** asked the Minister of Health whether he will consider the closing down of the Belmont Training Colony?

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the MINISTRY of HEALTH (Mr. Shakespeare): The answer is in the negative. The colony is the property of the London County Council and is administered by them as a public assistance authority.

Mr. McGOVERN: I did not catch the last part of the answer, but do I understand that the London County Council can close down this colony if they so desire?

Mr. SHAKESPEARE: If they thought it to be redundant, they could do so.

Viscountess ASTOR: Is it true that the London County Council are delighted that they have so many schemes coming and that the Labour party, now that they are in, have nothing new to start?

HOUSING (BROWNHILLS, STAFFORDSHIRE).

53. **Mr. THORNE** asked the Minister of Health whether he can give to the House any information in regard to the direct labour housing scheme of the urban district council of Brownhills, Staffordshire; the number of three-bedroom type houses that have been erected; the cost of the house and land; what is the principal and interest, and the amount allowed for repairs and management; the approximate weekly rent and rates per week; and the inclusive rent per week?

Mr. SHAKESPEARE: It is assumed that the hon. Member refers to the houses erected by the Brownhills Urban District Council under the Housing Act, 1930. Fifty-two houses have been built under this Act by direct labour. Of these, 28 are of the three-bedroomed type. I will send the hon. Member the remaining details for which he asks.

INLAND WATER SURVEY.

54. **Mr. NEIL MACLEAN** asked the Minister of Health whether he is taking steps to obtain a comprehensive survey of the water resources of the nation; and, if so, whether he can state when such a survey will commence?

Mr. SHAKESPEARE: I would refer the hon. Member to the reply given to a question by my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Tiverton (Lieut.-Colonel Acland-Troyte) on the 7th December.

AGRICULTURE.

HOPS (QUOTAS).

55. **Captain P. MACDONALD** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether his attention has been called to the growing practice among farmers of selling hop quotas to one another and thus receiving large sums of money for abstaining from growing hops; and whether, in view of the fact that hops have still to be imported into this country, he will consider whether the existing scheme can be improved in the interests of all concerned?

The MINISTER of AGRICULTURE (Mr. Elliot): As regards the first part of the question, I would refer my hon. and gallant Friend to the reply I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for the Mile End Division (Dr. O'Donovan) on 8th November, of which I am sending him a copy. The arrangements for the transfer of annual selling quotas is designed to give the scheme reasonable flexibility. As regards the second part of the question, my hon. and gallant Friend is probably aware that certain varieties of imported hops are in demand for the brewing of special beers, and that the Brewers' Society have agreed with the Hops Marketing Board as to the importation of a quantity, not exceeding 15 per cent. of the total market demand, to meet this requirement. The working arrangements are constantly under review by a body consisting of representatives of the Brewers' Society and of the Hops Marketing Board, with three impartial members, one of whom is chairman. The area under hops in this country has increased by 1,500 acres, or almost 10 per cent., since 1932. The quantity of hops tendered to the Hops Marketing Board by registered producers this season was 239,000 cwt., and the total market demand, as estimated by the Joint Hops Committee, is 215,000 cwt.

Captain MACDONALD: Is my right hon. Friend aware that the transferring or selling of hops quotas is being grossly abused at the present time, and will he take steps to deal with the matter?

Mr. ELLIOT: I am not willing to admit that it is being grossly abused at the present time, but, in any case, it is under the review of a Committee on which the producers and the public are represented.

Mr. PALING: Does the selling of individual quotas reduce the total amount of hops?

Mr. ELLIOT: Oh no, Sir.

Mr. D. DAVIES: Can the right hon. Gentleman tell the House for what purpose the hops are used?

GREY SEALS.

56 and 57. **Sir BASIL PETO** asked the Minister of Agriculture, (1) in view of the fact that the Outer Scilly Isles and North Coast of Cornwall constitute one of the principal breeding places of grey seals, what steps he proposes to take to enforce the penalties provided by the Grey Seals Protection Act of 1932 against the Cornwall Sea Fisheries Committee of the Cornish County Council for having carried out the destruction of over 100 seals during the present close season, commencing 1st September last, imposed by the Grey Seals Protection Act;

(2) if he can say whether the grey seals slaughtered recently during the close season, under the direction of the Cornish County Council Sea Fisheries Committee, were shot in the sea or on the rocks and caves on the coast?

Mr. ELLIOT: I am informed that of the seals shot since the 31st August last in the course of the Committee's demonstrations, the majority were shot in the water, some on rocks but none in caves. I have no definite evidence that the seals shot included grey seals, although, as I have indicated in reply to previous questions, I think that discrimination must in many cases have been extremely difficult. In order to prove that an offence under the Act referred to had been committed by the Cornwall Sea Fisheries Committee or their officers it would be necessary to establish not only that grey seals had in fact been killed or wounded by them during the close season but that such killing or wounding had been carried out knowingly and with intent. While it is likely that a number of grey seals were among the seals destroyed by the Committee in the course of their demonstration during the present close season for grey seals, I am not satisfied that the evidence before me is such as would justify my taking proceedings against the Committee for an offence under the Act. As, however, my hon. Friend will appreciate, I have no special responsibility for the enforcement of the Act, and it is open to any member of the general public to take proceedings if he thinks fit.

Sir B. PETO: May I ask my right hon. Friend whether he proposes to take any steps to render effective the protection that was intended to be given by this House to these animals during the breeding season, and whether he has issued any Order relating to the area which includes the North Cornwall coast to permit the slaughter of grey seals during the close season which is enacted in the Grey Seals (Protection) Act, 1932?

Mr. ELLIOT: No, Sir, I have made no Order permitting the destruction of grey seals during the close season, and I was extremely surprised when I learned that such action had taken place. As to affording the necessary protection which the House has desired for these animals, I am keeping the situation under close review.

Sir F. SANDERSON: Can my right hon. Friend state whether the seals which are killed are put to any commercial use?

Mr. ELLIOT: Oh, no, Sir. These seals were simply destroyed.

EDUCATION (SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE).

59. **Sir NICHOLAS GRATTAN-DOYLE** asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education whether any provisions have been made for a new school at the High Heaton estate, Newcastle-on-Tyne?

Captain AUSTIN HUDSON (Lord of the Treasury): The Board have sanctioned the provision of two schools at the High Heaton estate, for 450 juniors and 450 infants respectively. They are now awaiting final plans for these schools.

Sir N. GRATTAN-DOYLE: While thanking my hon. and gallant Friend for his reply, may I ask if he can indicate how soon these schools can be opened, as there is a pressing need for them in the locality?

Captain HUDSON: My hon. Friend had better put a question down on that point.

MERCANTILE MARINE (LOAD-LINE CONVENTION).

62. **Lieut.-Colonel Sir ARNOLD WILSON** asked the President of the Board of Trade on what date Great Britain ratified the Load-line Convention; which maritime Powers have not yet ratified it; whether omission to do so gives any advantage to shipping under these flags in competition with British shipping; and, if so, whether he will consider the desirability of imposing forthwith higher port dues on shipping under these flags and of amending existing regulations to ensure that effective disciplinary measures can be taken and adequate fines imposed?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: The United Kingdom instrument of ratification was deposited on 1st October, 1932. Of the countries which signed the convention, Australia, Belgium, Japan and Paraguay have not yet ratified it. The answer to the third part of the question is in the negative and the fourth part does not therefore arise.

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

RUSSIA.

63. **Sir PARK GOFF** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he

is satisfied that the commercial agreement with Russia is operating satisfactorily; and whether British manufacturers are now receiving fair treatment in their tenders for Russian contracts?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: I have no reason to doubt that the ratio of payments called for in the agreement will be realised. With regard to the second part of the question, I have not received any complaints that our maufacturers are not receiving fair treatment in their tenders.

YUGOSLAVIA.

64. **Sir P. GOFF** asked the Secretary to the Overseas Trade Department whether any special effort is being made to extend British trade in Yugoslavia; and when the latest report of the commercial attaché at Belgrade will be available for Members of the House?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: Every effort is made by the Department of Overseas Trade to extend United Kingdom export trade to Yugoslavia wherever sound business openings exist. The latest report on economic conditions in Yugoslavia, by the Commercial Secretary to His Majesty's Legation, is dated June, 1934. It is available as a Stationery Office publication, price 2s.

TURKEY.

65. **Sir P. GOFF** asked the Secretary to the Overseas Trade Department whether any special effort is in contemplation to expand British trade in Turkey; and if he is satisfied that the representation of British interests in the republic of Turkey is adequate and is functioning satisfactorily?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: As my hon. Friend is aware, negotiations are at present in progress for the conclusion of a new commercial agreement with Turkey the effect of which, it is hoped, will lead to the improvement of Anglo-Turkish trade relations. With regard to the second part of the question, the answer is in the affirmative.

Sir P. GOFF: Is the hon. and gallant Member aware that the British Chamber of Commerce at Istanbul have been continuously passing resolutions with regard to clearance and quotas?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: Yes, Sir, I am aware of that fact.

Mr. H. WILLIAMS: Can the hon. and gallant Member say whether the proposed trade agreement with Turkey will contain a provision limiting our power to impose restrictions?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: It is not the practice to disclose in advance any of the negotiations.

Mr. HOLDSWORTH: Will the hon. and gallant Member bear in mind the discriminatory nature of the steps Turkey has taken against British trade?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: Yes, Sir, we have fully in mind the disadvantages under which British trade is at present suffering, and that is why we have taken up active negotiations with Turkey.

BRITISH-BORN SUBJECTS (RENATURALISATION).

66. **Mr. McGOVERN** asked the Home Secretary the number of persons who were former British subjects and, having emigrated to America, were compelled to become American citizens in order to retain their employment, and have now applied for leave to return to this country for the purpose of finding employment or commencing in business for each year since 1930; and the number of permits granted in each year?

Sir J. GILMOUR: I have no figures as to the number of United States citizens of British origin who have applied to British Consuls in America for visas to return to this country, and without inquiry being made in America it is not possible to say how far, if at all, the information desired by the hon. Member could be supplied by British Consuls. Even if the Consuls have kept figures, I doubt whether they would form a reliable basis for distinguishing between persons who return to visit or stay with relatives and those who state that they wish to take employment or open a business. Unless there are special circumstances, permission is not given to a person to return to this country to take employment.

Mr. McGOVERN: Will the Home Secretary give any indication of the number of people who have returned here from Holland and have asked leave to return?

Sir J. GILMOUR: I do not think that that information could be found without considerable labour, and I doubt whether it would be helpful.

Mr. McGOVERN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a large number of these people went out to America rather than become a charge upon public funds, and that they had no desire to become American citizens, but circumstances compelled them? Now that they are undergoing a period of extreme hardship, cannot the right hon. Gentleman consider that they should be allowed to return to their friends in this country?

70. **Mr. JOEL** asked the Home Secretary how many applications have been received by his Department within the last year for renaturalisation of British subjects who have been abroad since the War and for purposes beneficial to themselves have become naturalised in other countries; and how many of such applications for renaturalisation have been granted?

Sir J. GILMOUR: During 1933, the last year for which figures are available, certificates of naturalisation were granted to 74 male persons who had been British subjects before they became aliens. Applications from such persons are dealt with on the same basis as applications from other aliens, and no separate statistics are kept of the number of applicants who belong to this category.

BROADCASTING (INTERFERENCE).

72. **Mr. KNIGHT** asked the Home Secretary whether his attention has been called to the interference with the broadcasting programme at St. George's Hall, London, on Saturday night last; whether he is aware of repeated attempts of this nature in recent weeks; and what proceedings are intended for dealing with persons responsible for these affronts to the public?

Sir J. GILMOUR: I have seen Press reports of the incidents referred to, but no action on my part appears to be called for.

Mr. KNIGHT: Seeing that this sort of interference, of which there have been several attempts lately, is serious, are we to understand that the British Broadcasting Corporation are failing to protect the public from these interruptions?

Sir J. GILMOUR: That is a matter for the British Broadcasting Corporation.

Mr. KNIGHT: Considering that this service extends to nearly 7,000,000 licences, will the right hon. Gentleman make some inquiry into the matter?

LOTTERIES AND SWEEPSTAKES.

67. **Mr. McGOVERN** asked the Home Secretary the amount of money for the Irish Free State hospital sweepstakes which has been confiscated or returned after the opening of correspondence for each draw since they were initiated; and the number of prosecutions in connection with each draw?

Sir J. GILMOUR: No money has been confiscated, and it would not be in the public interest to give information as to the amount of the money returned, as requested in the first part of the question. As regards the second part of the question, I regret that the information is not available.

CINEMATOGRAPH FILMS (CENSORSHIP).

73. **Mr. MACLEAN** asked the Home Secretary whether his attention has been drawn to a film entitled "Forbidden Territory," which is being generally released; whether he is aware that the picture is definitely anti-Russian; and whether he will take steps to prevent it being shown, in view of the undesirability of allowing propaganda hostile to a country with which this country has friendly relations?

Sir J. GILMOUR: My attention had not previously been drawn to this film, and from such inquiries as I have been able to make I gather that it is regarded as an exciting melodrama of a familiar type with no political significance whatever.

Mr. MACLEAN: Can the right hon. Gentleman inform the House how many films have been banned, or parts cut out before being exhibited, because they contain propaganda against some other Power?

SUBSIDIES AND GUARANTEES.

74. **Mr. LAWSON** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer the particulars of all subsidies and guarantees to which the Government has been committed since October, 1931, and the amount in each case?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Duff Cooper): I will, with the hon. Member's permission, circulate a statement in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following is the statement:

Statement of subsidies and guarantees to which the Government have been committed since October, 1931. This statement excludes loans, grants to local authorities and grants from the Colonial Development Fund:

1. Subsidies.

SUBSIDY AND NEW COMMITMENT.

Beet Sugar Subsidy.

The British Sugar (Subsidy) Act, 1934, extended by 11 months (until 31st August, 1935) the period in respect of which subsidy is payable on sugar and molasses manufactured from beet grown in Great Britain. A sum of £3,300,000 was provided in 1934 Estimates.

Cattle.

The Cattle Industry (Emergency Provisions) Act, 1934, provided for temporary advances not exceeding £3,000,000 in all from the Consolidated Fund (which will be repaid out of voted money) to a Cattle Fund out of which payments should be made to producers of certain classes of fat cattle sold for slaughter in the United Kingdom between a date not earlier than 1st September, 1934, and 31st March, 1935. As was explained in the White Paper on the livestock situation (Cmd. 4651) it is intended that all sums advanced, including advances to cover the cost of administration, shall be recoverable by the Exchequer from the proceeds of any levy which may hereafter be collected on imported meat and livestock.

Milk.

The Milk Act, 1934, provided for (*a*) repayable advances over a period of two years commencing 1st April, 1934, to secure to producers of milk a minimum return in respect of milk used in the manufacture of milk products. It is estimated that these advances will amount to about £3¼ millions. (*b*) Payments not exceeding £750,000 spread over four years with the object of improving the quality of the milk supply. (*c*) Payments not exceeding £1,000,000 spread over two years contributable to the Milk Marketing Boards to the extent of one half of their expenses shown to be incurred on approved arrangements for increasing the demand for milk, including the provision of milk at reduced rates for schools.

SUBSIDY AND NEW COMMITMENT.

Herrings.

Supplementary Estimates which were passed by the House of Commons in July, 1934, provided the sum of £25,000 for assistance on certain conditions in respect of expenditure on fitting out herring drifters.

Mercantile Marine.

The British Shipping (Assistance) Bill at present before the House provides for a subsidy not exceeding £2,000,000 to be paid in respect of tramp voyages or parts of tramp voyages to be carried out in the year 1935.

Civil Aviation.

Australian Air Service.

In connection with the extension of this service beyond Karachi subsidies will be payable up to a maximum of approximately £210,000 over the period July, 1933, to March, 1939

Assistance to Gliding Clubs.

An announcement has been made to the effect that assistance will be granted up to £5,000 per annum for five years, starting in 1935.

2. Guarantees given or provided for under legislation passed since October, 1931.

	£
Tanganyika:	
4 per cent. Guaranteed Loan, 1952-72	500,000
Austria:	
3 per cent. International Guaranteed Loan, 1933-53	4,514,200
Newfoundland:	
3 per cent. Guaranteed Loan, 1943-63	17,646,000

In addition to the above, legislation has been passed to authorise the Treasury to guarantee the principal and interest of a loan not exceeding £2,000,000 to be raised by the Government of Palestine.

ENTERTAINMENTS DUTY (JUNIOR SPORTS CLUBS).

75. **Mr. MACLEAN** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has considered the serious position in which the Entertainments Duty has placed many junior football and sports clubs; whether he is aware that many of those clubs have a loss after they have paid the tax; and whether there is any prospect of the tax being abolished where the price of admission to those games does not exceed sixpence?

Mr. COOPER: With regard to the first and second parts of the question, I am not aware that the Entertainments Duty has inflicted any special hardship upon

[Mr. Cooper.]
clubs of the kind referred to; with regard to the third part, I am afraid that I can hold out no hope of the creation of a special exemption of the kind suggested.

Mr. MACLEAN: Since the Financial Secretary admits that his Department knows nothing about the effect of this Duty, will he have inquiries made into the conditions of some of these junior clubs and make representations to the Chancellor of the Exchequer?

Mr. COOPER: I admit nothing of the kind.

UNEMPLOYMENT (ALIEN DOMESTIC AND HOTEL SERVANTS).

76. **Sir A. WILSON** asked the Minister of Labour how many permits he has issued for the years 1932, 1933, and 1934 to date for male and female alien domestic servants, respectively; and whether he is satisfied that the same test of urgent need and non-availability of British servants is applied as in the case of skilled technical workers, and that in no case are lower wages paid to, or longer hours worked by, imported servants than those current in this country?

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the MINISTRY of LABOUR (Mr. R. S. Hudson): The numbers of permits issued during the past three years in respect of private domestic service are: in 1932, 2,897 females and 26 males; in 1933, 2,777 females and 37 males; in 1934, up to the end of November, 3,296 females and 31 males. It is a necessary condition for the issue of these permits that the employer should be able to satisfy my Department that British domestics are not available for the purpose, and that the wages and general conditions of employment are in accordance with current practice in this country.

Miss CAZALET: Can the hon. Member give the comparable figures for 1931?

Mr. HUDSON: The figures for 1931 were 6,172.

77. **Sir A. WILSON** asked the Minister of Labour how many permits he has issued for the years 1932, 1933, and 1934 to date for alien male and female hotel servants; and whether he is satisfied that the same test of urgent need and non-availability of British hotel servants is applied as in the case of skilled technical workers, and that in no case are lower wages paid or longer hours worked by imported hotel servants than those current in this country?

Mr. HUDSON: The numbers of permits issued during the past three years for foreign employés for hotels and restaurants are: In 1932, 341; in 1933, 414; and in 1934 (up to the end of November), 462. These permits relate to male employés only; permits are not issued for female employés for this purpose. The great majority of these permits are in respect of student employés whose admission is governed by arrangements with foreign countries which grant corresponding facilities for British students to go abroad. These permits are for a period of 12 months only; the question of the availability of British workers for the purpose is not in the circumstances applicable. In the remaining cases where the foreigner is required for definite employment, the employer is required to satisfy my Department that British labour is not available for the purpose, and that the wages and general conditions of the employment are in accordance with current British practice.

Sir ALFRED BEIT: Seeing that in the case of Italy there is a majority of restaurant waiters have we any reciprocal arrangements with Italy?

Mr. HUDSON: Not that I am aware of.

IRAQ (PALESTINE JOURNALS).

11. **Mr. JANNER** (*for* **Major PROCTER**) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the banning of the Palestine Post and other Palestine journals by the Government of Iraq; whether any inquiry or protest has been made in this connection by the Government of Palestine; and, if so, with what result?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: Reports of a ban on the entry into Iraq of Palestine journals having reached the Government of Palestine, His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad was instructed at their instance to make official inquiries of the Iraqi Government. I am not yet aware of the result.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

TRANSPORT.

TRAFFIC CENSUS, EDINBURGH AREA.

Mr. GUY asked the Minister of Transport the number of motor vehicles disclosed by the traffic census in August, 1934, on the Edinburgh-Queensferry road, the main roads approaching Edinburgh from the west, south, and south-east, and across Stirling Bridge?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: The average number of motor vehicles per day of 16 hours disclosed by the traffic census in August, 1934, was as follows:

Edinburgh-Queensferry Road, A.90, at Cramond Bridge ...	2,093
A.9, aproaching Edinburgh from the west at Carlowrie ...	2,311
A.9, north of Stirling Bridge ...	5,906

No census was taken in 1934 on the roads to the south and south-east of Edinburgh; the latest available census (of 1931) disclosed the average numbers of motor vehicles per day of 16 hours as follows:

From the south:	
Edinburgh-Dalry Road, A.702, at House O'Muir	670
Hillend-Seafield Road, A.703, at Pentland Mains	743
Liberton Dams-Peebles Road, A.701, at Edinburgh City Boundary	1,401
From the south-east:	
Edinburgh-Carlisle Road, A.7, at Edinburgh City Boundary	1,159
Edinburgh-Dalkeith Road, A.68, at Drumbank	1,270

SPEED LIMIT (HEAVY MOTOR VEHICLES).

Sir P. DAWSON asked the Minister of Transport whether he intends to increase the speed limit of 20 miles per hours for the modern road vehicle if over 2½ tons to 30 miles per hour?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: In consequence of representations made to me in July last, I have already referred to the Transport Advisory Council for their advice a request that I should consider the possibility of increasing the speed limit allowed to a heavy motor car when not drawing a trailer, fitted with 4-wheel brakes and with pneumatic tyres on all wheels; and to certain types of articulated vehicles. My hon. Friend will recall that any amending regulation of this kind would require the approval of both Houses of Parliament.

MOTOR VEHICLES (WEIGHT).

Sir P. DAWSON asked the Minister of Transport whether he will see that no legal action is taken where a vehicle is under its gross laden weight, although one axle has more than its legal load though safely distributed?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I have no power to comply with my hon. Friend's request. Axle loads, as well as total weights of vehicles, have to be taken into account in considering possible damage to roads and bridges. I have, however, referred representations which have been made to me on this subject by the British Road Federation to the Transport Advisory Council, and I will carefully consider any recommendations that they may make.

RAILWAY FARES (WORKMEN).

Mr. N. LINDSAY asked the Minister of Transport whether he will take steps to bring to the notice of the Railway Rates Tribunal the need for a reduction in workmen's rail fares to correspond with the decrease in ordinary fares?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: The standard fares for the conveyance of workmen by railway were fixed by the Railway Rates Tribunal and were brought into operation on 1st January, 1928. They have since been reviewed annually by the Tribunal. The matter is not one in regard to which I am empowered to intervene.

LOW TEMPERATURE CARBONISATION.

Mr. D. GRENFELL asked the Secretary for Mines whether it is proposed to instal further plant for low temperature carbonisation in connection with the coal mining industry; and whether any commercial advantage from the treatment of coal by such processes will be taken into account in determining the wages of men employed in the production of coal?

Mr. E. BROWN: Several statements have appeared in the Press indicating that proposals for the erection of additional low temperature carbonisation

plants are under consideration by the owners of processes, but my hon. Friend has no information concerning the number of the plants or the places at which they are likely to be installed. As regards the second part of the question, this is a matter for the two sides of the coal industry to consider.

SAAR PLEBISCITE (MAINTENANCE OF ORDER).

Mr. T. MORRIS asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether it is contemplated that Welsh troops should be included in the British Contingent to be sent to the Saar on the occasion of the plebiscite?

Mr. HACKING: No Welsh units are included in the British Contingent to be sent to the Saar.

AIR MAILS (SOUTH AMERICA).

Captain ERSKINE-BOLST asked the Postmaster-General whether he will explain the reason why the air mails from South America to this country are much cheaper than the air mails from this country to South America; and what is the rate paid by the French Government for the carriage of French mails by the German Government and by the German Government for the carriage of German mails by the French air mail as compared with our air mails sent by the French and German air mails, respectively?

Sir K. WOOD: The postage charged on air correspondence from South America to this country is based on a unit of 5 grammes, about one-sixth ounce, whereas the fees charged in this country on air correspondence for South America, as for extra-European destinations generally, are based on a unit of half an ounce. I have no precise information as to the actual amounts which the Argentine and Brazilian Post Offices pay to the air companies for the conveyance of their mails to Europe, but their published charges at current rates of exchange are considerably below the charges which the British Post Office has to pay to the French and German Post Offices for the service in the opposite direction. The payments which the French and German Post Offices respectively require from the British and other Post Office Administrations for the conveyance of air letters to South America are as follow:

France to Brazil—1.53 gold francs per 5 grammes.
France to Argentina—1.83 gold francs per 5 grammes.
Germany to Brazil—1.50 gold francs per 5 grammes.
Germany to Argentina—1.80 gold francs per 5 grammes.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS, OLDBURY.

Dr. O'DONOVAN asked the Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Education whether his Department is cognisant of the fact that the Oldbury Education Committee have planned provision for school buildings in their area that will be adequate for all children in the area of school age, including 300 for whom provision might have been expected to be made by the erection of a non-provided school; and has the Board of Education authorised the commencement of building on this principle?

Mr. RAMSBOTHAM: My Noble Friend presumes that the hon. Member refers to the problem of school supply in the Warley district of Oldbury. He understands that a proposal for the provision of a non-provided school in this district for children resident in Birmingham and Smethwick as well as in Oldbury, is under consideration. No public notice, as required by Section 18 of the Education Act, 1921, has yet been issued, however, and in the absence of such notice my Noble Friend is not in a position to form any opinion regarding the provision which might have been or might be expected to be made by the erection of a non-provided school. He has no reason to think, however, that the proposals of the local education authority which he has so far sanctioned for the provision of a new council school for 300 junior children to replace temporary accommodation at present in use, are such as to prejudice the consideration of a proposal for a new non-provided school.

FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE (WEST RIDING).

Mr. T. SMITH asked the Minister of Agriculture whether he can make a statement with regard to the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in the West Riding of Yorkshire?

Mr. ELLIOT: The existence of foot-and-mouth disease was confirmed on 9th December on premises at Clayton West, Huddersfield; at Pogmoor, Barnsley; and at Notton, Wakefield; and on 10th December on premises at Monk Bretton, Barnsley and at Royston, Barnsley. An Order declaring the area within a 15 miles radius of Barnsley an "infected area" was issued on 9th December, and the total stock on the five holdings, comprising 52 cattle and 100 pigs, has been slaughtered. The outbreaks on four of these holdings started among pigs purchased at Barnsley Market on 3rd December, the fifth outbreak, namely that at Notton, Wakefield, being on the farm from which some of these pigs had come. The tracing and examination of all stock exposed in Barnsley Market is in progress. The origin of the initial outbreak in this area has not yet been determined, but inquiries are still proceeding.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

INDIAN CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM.

Order read for resuming adjourned Debate on Question [*11th December*].

"That this House accepts the recommendations of the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform as the basis for the revision of the Indian Constitution and considers it expedient that a Bill should be introduced on the general lines of the report."—[*Sir S. Hoare.*]

Question again proposed.

3.46 p.m.

Mr. COCKS: I beg to move, in line 1, to leave out from "House" to the end of the Question, and to add instead thereof:

"is of opinion that any legislation for Indian Constitutional Reform should be based on the proposals contained in the draft report submitted to the Joint Committee by members of His Majesty's Opposition so as to make provision for the recognition of the right of India to Dominion status and for its attainment by a progressive development and expansion of responsible government, and for placing in the hands of the Indian masses the possibility of obtaining political power by constitutional means, in order to achieve their emancipation from the injustices and hardships of the existing social and economic system."

In moving this Amendment I feel, as every hon. Member must feel who has taken part in this Debate, that whatever I say should be said with the gravest sense of responsibility, knowing that speeches made on this occasion do not merely find their resting place in that most pathetic of all publications, the unread volumes of "Hansard," but are read and pondered over, 7,000 miles away, by the representatives of a proud, an ancient and sensitive people. Those who served as I did on the Joint Select Committee, and who sat through all those discussions, must have felt overwhelmed by the enormous mass of facts put before us in connection with this difficult and complex problem. Many of those facts are of the greatest importance, but still they are matters which can be more appropriately dealt with during the Committee Stage of the Bill rather than in the general Debate, and I, therefore, propose to devote myself to certain main broad principles which are enunciated in the Amendment.

There are four points to which I desire to draw the attention of the House. The first point referred to in the Amendment alludes to the draft Amendment put forward by the Labour Members which will be found in the proceedings of the Joint Select Committee, and can be read by anybody who is interested in the matter. Nothing will be gained by trying to paraphrase it now, and, therefore, I will proceed to deal with the other three points in the Amendment. First there is "the recognition of the right of India to Dominion status"; secondly, the demand for its "attainment by a progressive development and expansion of responsible Government"; and, thirdly, the demand for "placing in the hands of the Indian masses the possibility of obtaining political power by constitutional means, in order to achieve their emancipation from the injustices and hardships of the existing social and economic system."

Take the first—the demand of the Indian people for equality of status. It is a demand of profound importance. India, as we all know, is rapidly changing. The days when the poet would speak of "the unchanging East" and of an India lapped in slumber from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas have gone for ever. Even the India which to our generation has been made familiar by the brightly coloured cameo pictures of Kipling's stories, has practically disappeared. The advance of political education, the results of the Great War, the events that have taken place and are still taking place in Japan, in Russia and in Turkey, the development of such mechanical devices as the motor omnibus in rural India, the spread of the cinema and wireless broadcasting—all those things have made an enormous change in the Indian situation, a change the meaning and direction and consequences of which are as yet unknown to us, perhaps unknown even to them. Anyhow, it is a rapid change. I do not think I need go for any further evidence of this change than to the speech which was delivered by the Lord President of the Council at the Queen's Hall a few days ago. The right hon. Gentleman said:

"There is a wind of nationalism and freedom running round the world, and running as strongly in Asia, as he who runs may read, as in any part of the world."

I think that that point is proved and I need say no more. We are all agreed as to the reality of the change that has taken place. One of the consequences of that change is that the demand is spreading amongst educated Indians for equality of status. That demand was described very well in the pages of the Statutory Commission's Report, sometimes known as the Simon Report, in the following words:

"We should say without hesitation that, with all its variations of expression and intensity, the political sentiment which is most widespread among all educated Indians is the expression of a demand for equality with Europeans and a resentment against any suspicion of differential treatment. The attitude the Indian takes up on a given matter is largely goverend by considerations of his self-respect. It is a great deal more than a personal feeling; it is the claim of the lost for due recognition of status . . . . .

While the experienced Indian member of the services will admit the benefits of the British Raj, and realise the difficulties in the way of complete self-government; while the member of a minority community, putting the safety of his community first, will stipulate for safeguards; and while the moderate may look askance at extremist methods which he will not openly denounce; all alike are in sympathy with the demand for equal status with the European and proclaim their belief in self-determination for India."

That is in the Simon Commission's report. One consequence of this demand for equality of status is a demand for Dominion status. It is quite certain that pledges have been given in this country to India to grant Dominion status as a goal. First of all, of course, there is the very well-known historic declaration of Mr. Edwin Montagu on 20th August, 1917, when he said this:

"The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire."

That was followed by a statement in the revised instrument of instructions from the King-Emperor, of 15th March, 1921. One passage runs:

"Above all things it is our will and pleasure that the plans laid by our Parliament may come to fruition, to the end that British India may attain its true place among our Dominions."

That was shortly followed by the well-known declaration from the Viceroy, the present Lord Halifax, on 31st October, 1929. It was a statement made with Cabinet authority behind it. The Viceroy said:

"Implicit in the declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress, as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion status."

We come to a very interesting speech made in the House of Commons on 7th November, 1929, by the right hon. Gentleman the Lord President of the Council, in which he said this:

"We have promised India, in our Declaration, responsible Government."

A little later on he said this:

"None can say when responsible Government will be established and none can say what shape it will take. But can there be any doubt whatever that the position of an India with full responsible government in the Empire, when attained . . . must be one of equality with the other States in the Empire . . . Surely no one dreams of a self-governing India with an inferior status . . . nor can we wish that India should be content with an inferior status, because that would mean that we have failed in our work in India.—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 7th November, 1929; cols. 1310 and 1312; Vol. 231.]

Lastly there are the words of the present Prime Minister at the final session of the First Round-Table Conference, in January, 1931, a declaration which he affirmed a year later as head of the National Government, with the approval of the Cabinet. The Prime Minister said this:

"Finally I hope, and I trust, and I pray, that by our labours together India will come to possess the only thing she now lacks to give her the status of a Dominion amongst the British Commonwealth of Nations—what she now lacks for that—the responsibilities and the cares, the burdens and the difficulties, but the pride and the honour of responsible self-government."

We feel, therefore, in view of the demand of the Indians for equality of status, that the Government should insert in the Preamble of the Constitution Bill a solemn declaration that they regard Dominion status for India as the goal, and that that status should be attained within a measurable period of years. That was not the view taken by the majority of the Joint Select Committee. It was, however, the view which was very strongly urged by the Indian Delegation on that Committee, and it was the view taken by the four Labour

See The Simon Report, vol II pp. 5-8.

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members of that Committee. In view of the statements that are sometimes made in this country to whittle away these declarations, to take their content out of them, to suggest that they were never literally meant, it is necessary that the Declaration should be inserted in the Preamble in order that Indian opinion may be reassured. I do, we all do, most earnestly press that proposal upon the attention of the Government. But in our Amendment we go further than that. We say that we also want provision made in the Constitution Bill in order that Dominion status shall be attained

"by a progressive development and expansion of responsible government."

In other words, we consider that the new Constitution which is to be given to India should contain within itself the seeds of its own development. The impression abroad—and when we read this report and hear speeches upon it, we cannot help getting the same impression—is that the scheme is a static plan, a rigid plan, a rather cast-iron plan, even perhaps almost a final plan. It does not contain within itself provision for its own development. Looking round for precedents, and turning to the constitutions of our other Dominions and how they have developed, what do we find? Here I quote again from the excellent report of the Simon Commission, in which there is this passage:

"The Constitutions of the self-governing parts of the British Empire have developed as the result of natural growth, and progress has depended not so much on changes made at intervals in the language of an Act of Parliament, as on the development of conventions, and on the terms of instructions issued from time to time to the Crown's representatives."

We want a similar sort of plan inserted in the India Constitution Bill. We want a plan by which from time to time, in accordance with the desires of the Indian people as expressed through their elected institutions, and in accordance with changed circumstances in India, that Constitution can develop and grow to full responsible government by a method either of Orders in Council, or by alteration of the letter of instructions sent to the Governor-General or by the growing up of Conventions, and that any change in the development of that Constitution should not entail all this cumbrous machinery of a Royal Commission, three Round Table Conferences and a Joint Select Committee. We do not think that that machinery should have to be called in, whenever a change in Constitution or whenever more self-government is desired. We think that, as in the Constitutions of other Dominions, there should be inserted in that Constitution provision for its natural growth. Upon that point, may I commend the words of Sir Francis Younghusband in a letter to the Press in which he said:

"Above all, let us keep open the gate of hope. Without hope no people can flourish. Let India be able to look forward to a time when she can be mistress of her own destiny."

Let us also look forward to that time for our own sakes, for the sake of our own country, when India, self-governing, with full Dominion status, will take her place by the side of Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, at once the youngest and the most ancient of our Dominions.

But the demand for equality of status on the part of educated Indians goes deeper than the mere desire for the attainment of Dominion status. As the Simon Commission showed, educated Indian people resent any suspicion of differential treatment, that Indian Ministers should not be treated in the same way as Ministers of our Dominions and at home. I am afraid that the feeling of suspicion that they are being subjected to differential treatment is not removed by the report of the Joint Select Committee. It seems to me that throughout that report and in discussion of the various machinery which is being erected there is a note of caution, a feeling that we have not got full confidence in Indian Ministers or in the capacity of Indians to govern themselves.

Take, for example, the question of Safeguards. As I have said, I am not going into detail on all these questions of Safeguards. They will be discussed in detail in the Committee stage of the Bill. We think that, generally speaking, there are too many Safeguards, that they are too loosely drawn and that the language in which they are expressed is too vague. Powers are given to the Governor-General in many cases which I do not think the people of this country would desire that he should always have. I am going to take only one point as an example of what I mean. The House will remember that under the White Paper

proposals, and adopted by the Joint Select Committee, there are four or five certain special responsibilities which are imposed on the Governor, and in order to carry out those responsibilities he has the power to go to the Ministry and say that certain Bills must not be proceeded with. The first of these special responsibilities is

"the prevention of any grave menace to the peace and tranquillity of the Province."

That sounds very well. If it only means that where there is an insurrection or seditious movement in any Province or any part of a Province the Governor can take steps to put it down, and arrest the ringleaders, no one will have any objection to it. But it means a great deal more than that. It may possibly mean that if the Government in one of the Provinces brought forward a land reform Bill to curb the powers of certain landlords, and if as a result the landowners caused a lot of trouble and uttered threats—as they always will, not only in India but in this country—and perhaps even raised a small riot, some people might go to the Governor and say, "This may lead to a disturbance of the peace and tranquillity of the Province," and, acting upon that, the Governor might go to the Ministry of his Province and say that the land reform Bill must be withdrawn, because it would cause a great deal of disturbance. I say that if that sort of method operated in this country, I am sure a Measure like the Budget of the right hon. Member for Carnarvon Boroughs (Mr. Lloyd George) in 1909 would have been withdrawn by order of the Governor. So with the Land Taxes, which were imposed several years ago by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer.

That is the danger. The Indians feel that it is the danger. We believe that governments ought to have the power to govern. They ought to have to bear the responsibility of their own conduct. They ought to have to realise that they might have to carry through unpopular Measures, because if they were right Measures they ought to be ready to face the unpopularity. On the other hand, as I say, if they make mistakes, they ought to suffer for them. They ought to learn the practice of government by the old method of trial and error. But if the Governor can come in and tell them that they must alter their Bill, or even withdraw it, you are weakening the sense of responsibility in administration, and you are treating the Indian Ministers as if they were of inferior status, and as if they had not got the power to govern themselves.

There is one other point before passing from this matter, and that is the question of terrorism. Many of us believe that the terrorist movement, which is chiefly, as the House knows, in Bengal, could be better dealt with by Indians than by ourselves. Many Indians feel that. I have talked to many distinguished Indians who say, "Give us a free hand; give us responsible government and we can put down terrorists. We can take action which you white people would never dare take, and we can use methods *you are not prepared to adopt.*" Moreover, any action which an Indian Minister takes against his own terrorists is strengthened by the fact that his methods are not suspected. Our methods are suspected; people think we are not trying to put down terrorism, but Indian national feeling. There would be no feeling of that sort when Indian Ministers were acting on their own authority.

Apart from that, under the scheme the Governor is given power to take special measures to put down terrorism. He is given power, if necessary, to take over the whole machinery of government—not only the department of law and order, but any other department of State which may be necessary to fight terrorism. That was in the White Paper, and also in the Joint Select Committee's report. The Joint Select Committee have gone a step further. If hon. Members will look at paragraph 96 of the report they will see that the Governor is given this power, and almost given these instructions. He has not to wait to find out whether the Indian Ministers are capable or incapable of dealing with terrorism, or whether they are not acting efficiently. In Bengal, he can take over the whole machinery of government the very day the Constitution is started, without having to wait to see whether the Ministry is capable or not. This addition was put into the plan of the Majority of the Joint Select Committee but vigorously opposed by us. There are many people in this House, including members of the party opposite, who will agree that that is going

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too far, and certainly shows a very strong lack of trust in the capacity of Indian Ministers.

Over and over again in the course of the report, and in the various machinery that is being set up, the Ministers are not being given a status of equality. Some very distinguished Indian representatives, men who have held very high office, and are still holding high office in India, ministers of native States, some of them certainly quite equal in calibre to any European statesmen, distinguished representatives, too, of British India representing a moderate view—not an extremist view by any means—have asked that the White Paper should be modified in certain directions. They thought the Safeguards too stringent. Such things as I have just mentioned they thought ought to be modified. They talked and argued with us, and put their case very ably, and I think I am right in saying that they did not gain a single point of anything they desired and put before the Committee. Not one concession however small was made to those Indian ministers. On the contrary, the White Paper was stiffened up in various particulars. Those moderate-minded statesmen took a great risk in coming here. They took it because they felt it their duty to do what they could for their own country. They were sent back to India empty-handed and, as a consequence perhaps, they have been defeated in the elections which have just taken place in India. Although I associate myself with all the tributes which have been paid to the members of the Joint Committee and its Chairman and although I know that the Committee worked earnestly and assiduously at its enormous task, yet it seemed to me all through those proceedings that those who represented the Government were, if I may say so without offence, more concerned in conciliating their own diehards of Epping and Hatfield than in pleasing moderate opinion in India.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Sir Samuel Hoare): That is a wrong impression.

Mr. COCKS: I am only saying that that is the impression which I gained and although the Secretary of State denies that that is what he was trying to do, and although I accept entirely what he says, yet I cannot help that impression which I gained during the sittings of the Committee and it cannot be removed in one moment just because of the statement of the Secretary for State. I feel that we ought to try to get the support of the moderate people in India. Unless we get their support for the scheme our work in India is finished. I am sure it will surprise people in this country, as it surprised me when I became a member of the Committee, to learn that in the whole Indian Civil Service, the Europeans number just over 800, and that there are only about 500 Europeans in the police. That is to say, there are only 1,300 Europeans in the Civil Service and police, administering that vast country of over 300,000,000 people. Does it not show that unless there were behind those Europeans, thousands of able Indian administrators and business men giving their support to the administration, it would be impossible for the work to be carried on under such a system? If you disappoint those able and moderate people who have up to now been supporting the administration, if you deprive them of the hopes which they most legitimately hold and if they withdraw their loyal support from the Indian administration, the whole structure as far as we are concerned will collapse and we shall lose India, not in two generations but now.

It seems to me that if in the future we are to rally to the side of the Government of India moderate and responsible opinion in India, we want to place greater trust in the Indian people and in Indian ministers. Although some safeguards may be necessary, we should never forget that the strongest safeguard is the good will of the Indian people. Without that, other safeguards are brittle things and of very little use. When we are speaking of India we are not speaking of some petty German State but of an ancient Imperial people with royal blood in their veins. We ought to speak to them as equals and then, with India and England joined together in bonds of love and loyalty and mutual service, who shall disunite them? Not the sword of Japan. Disraeli once said that the key of India was not in Herat but in London. The key of India's loyalty is not in Delhi but here is Westminster. Do not let us throw that key into the desert sands of mistrust.

I come to my second and last point. The last part of the Amendment runs thus:

"and for placing in the hands of the Indian masses the possibility of obtaining political power by constitutional means, in order to achieve their emancipation from the injustices and hardships of the existing social and economic system."

All through those prolonged and sometimes painful proceedings of the Joint Committee in His Majesty's Robing room and in the Committee room in another place, we had great masses of detail before us and we had interesting and complex discussions but I always had in my mind's eye during those proceedings one or two little pictures of India. The first was a picture of the Indian ryot, the peasant toiling for a small and inadequate pittance all his life from birth to the grave burdened by the many evils of the economic system under which he lives, by a very bad land system and by the exactions of moneylenders and of gentlemen who, having taken tribute from him, spend most of their time in London. Another picture was that of the factory workers who—although there are I know, factory regulations—are herded together outside the factories under the most abominable conditions. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Sir A. Chamberlain) moved the whole House by a speech which he made on the slums of Birmingham, but they are nothing to the slums of Bombay and other industrial centres in India. A third picture which came before me was that of the Indian woman and her children suffering as they are from social evils which are unknown in this country. We can help these people very little indeed. We have not been able to help them very much for the last 40 or 50 years. They can only be helped by themselves. They can only be emancipated by their own efforts and they can only do that if they are given political power—the power of the vote.

Let us consider what is proposed in the Government's scheme. Take first the legislative structure. There are to be two-chamber legislatures in five of the Provinces, and in each case the lower chamber will be very strongly, almost overwhelmingly, representative of wealth, while the Second Chamber will be exclusively representative of wealth. In Bengal there will only be eight Labour special seats out of 250 in the lower chamber and I have been told by leaders of Indian trade unionism that there is very little hope indeed of Labour winning any of the general seats. In Bihar there will only be three special Labour seats out of 152 in the lower chamber and Labour will have no hope at all in the upper chamber, as a very simple mathematical calculation will show, except by nomination. Realising this position my colleagues and I put forward an Amendment at the Committee to the effect that of the six members of the upper chamber to be nominated by the governor three should be Labour members. Although that Amendment was opposed by the majority of the Committee yet the situation was so flagrant that we were supported by His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, whilst the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham very obviously abstained from voting.

At the Centre the position is much worse. I am not going into the details at this stage, further than to point out that at the Centre there will be two chambers both indirectly elected. In the lower chamber Labour will have 10 seats out of 250. The Under-Secretary of State for India admitted at the Committee that these is no possibility of Labour getting a single seat in the upper chamber unless again the power of the Governor-General to nominate is brought into play, in order that two or three Labour members may be included. But in the ordinary way Labour would not have a single representative in the second chamber. I ask the House to remember that the second chamber at the Centre unlike the second chambers in the Provinces will have practically co-equal powers with the lower chamber. It will have the power to reject or amend money Bills. In fact, it will have every power which the lower chamber will possess except that of initiating financial legislation. It was at first proposed that it should have that power also but we got that provision eliminated. As it is the two chambers are practically colequal and, as I say, Labour has no representation whatever in the second chamber.

We want to sweep all second chambers in India. India is not used to second chambers and I do not see why they should be erected there. In fact I think that their erection in certain Provinces

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is almost going against the agreement reached at the Round Table Conference. In any case we consider that all the second chambers should be abolished and that in each case the lower chamber should be retained as a single chamber. We consider that Labour should have 10 per cent. of the seats in each of the single chambers in order that it may have a chance of working to eliminate from India those social evils the existence of which everybody admits. We demand too that in the towns there should be adult suffrage. I do not believe that there is any administrative difficulty strong enough to prevent that reform. Finally, we want for the women of India a more effective franchise and what we mean by that will be explained during the Committee stage. All these points we intend to fight in the Committee and we hope that we shall not fight without avail. On the question of the women, I think everybody who has been in touch with the women's movement in India must realise that its development is perhaps the most remarkable feature of all the change which has been coming over that great country. The progress which has been made towards the emancipation of women in India has been remarkably swift. Many people think, and I am not so sure that I disagree with them, that the future welfare of India lies very largely in the hands of the women of India.

My right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme (Colonel Wedgwood) the other evening made an attack on the communal system. Nobody in this country wants the communal system, if we could possibly get rid of it. Then my right hon. and gallant Friend made a prophecy. He said we were handing over India to the rich, to the millionaires and leaving the workers unprotected. As I have shown, there is a great deal of truth in that. He said that in future you will have the capitalists of India using the great masses of native cheap labour, exploiting it, cutting out our trade, and selling cheap goods in this country. The growth and development of the Labour movement and the women's movement in India cuts right across the communal difficulty. The trade union leaders assured me that there are working side by side in India, in the same factory, people of different castes, different religions, and different races and that they have no communal difficulties among them. All the women, without exception, who came over here as witnesses said that the women in India do not want communal differences and will have nothing to do with them. Therefore, I say that the development of the franchise in India will cut right across the communal system.

Secondly, when you hear of this danger of the exploitation of the masses of cheap Indian labour, what is the way to prevent it? It is by giving Indian labour the vote, more electoral power, by giving them the power so to improve their conditions that they will not be exploited. I would suggest to Members of the Conservative party that, although they are naturally opposed to the growth of the Labour movement in this country, they ought to support whole-heartedly the growth of the Labour party in India, in their own commercial interests. I understand that factory legislation in India was largely brought about by pressure from Dundee in order that labour should not be so cheap and the competition so intense. That is a point which I urge on my Conservative opponents.

I want to make two appeals, one to my friends in India, the other to the Government. One of the greatest evils, one of the things which has caused many historical tragedies, is the attitude of mind which says "If I cannot have a whole loaf, which I desire and perhaps deserve, I will not take a half, I will not even take three-quarters." The Bill which will be founded upon this report will not, in our opinion, be a good one. We shall work to improve it, and we hope we may improve it in certain particulars, but even at the end I do not think it will meet the desires and wishes of the Indian people. I think it will be an imperfect Measure, but I hope that the Indian people will work it. If I have any influence among Labour friends in India and the people whom I met on the Joint Select Committee, I would implore them not to regard the Constitution as untouchable, and as a member of the British Labour party I hope that they will work it and try to improve it, and we hope the time will come when we here shall be in power to help them to another stage on the road to self-government.

The other appeal, which I am afraid will have less response, is to the Con-

servative Government. There is another historical tragedy, and that is the fact of gifts, good in themselves, being given too late or given in too grudging a spirit. It may be, some people may say, that this gift of the form of government suggested by the Joint Select Committee is even now perhaps too late, as the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms were too late, that India has gone forward to another stage, and that we ought to give her a wider and more generous Measure. Most of us remember that when we were children we had relatives who used to give us small sums of money, small tips, sometimes a 6d., or sometimes it may have been as much as half-a-crown. But among those relatives there was often one, usually an aunt, who, although she gave the money, gave it in such a grudging way and hedged it about with so many restrictions, about not spending it on ourselves but putting it in the savings bank, that we felt no gratitude for the gift and no affection for the donor. I feel that the danger is that we are giving India a Measure so hampered by restrictions, which might never have to be used, but which are wounding to the self-respect of the Indian people, that they may take the gift without giving in return the gratitude which we should all desire.

I therefore implore the Government, between now and the time when they draft the Bill, to remember once again the precedent of South Africa, and I would particularly ask the Lord President of the Council to remember that precedent and what the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman did then. I have sometimes had the impression—it may be wrong—that I have seen a resemblance between the career of the Lord President of the Council and that of the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. The late Liberal Premier was at one time underrated, but afterwards he became the shrewdest party manager of his time. At one time he was rather scorned and despised by some of his more showy colleagues, and I believe the Lord President has had that experience also. Yet each of them mastered the House of Commons by gifts of simple, common sense speech, illuminated, in the case of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, by a pawky Scotch humour, of which the Lord President of the Council possesses the Worcestershire variety. Curiously enough, they were both affectionately known by two letters, the one as "C.B." and the other as "S.B."

At one time Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman rose to great heights of statesmanship, when, in spite of doubts and protests, he gave freely, even generously, South Africa to the inhabitants of South Africa, to the Dutch and the British who had till then been fighting each other, and so bound us, I hope for ever, to their hearts. I do therefore ask the Lord President of the Council to use what influence he can, and I ask Ministers generally, and particularly the Secretary of State for India, who has worked so well and so long upon the Joint Select Committee, to pay attention to the suggestions which we are putting forward, which Indian moderate opinion is putting forward, and to act in such a way that India will be given a better Measure than this, a Measure which she will accept with gratitude and work with loyalty.

Mr. BANFIELD: I beg to second the Amendment.

4.40 p.m.

The SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir John Simon): I apprehend that, notwithstanding that the Amendment has been moved and seconded and put by you, Sir, from the Chair, on this the third and final day of this great Debate, the broad field of discussion still remains open, and most of what I have to say—I will endeavour to compress it within a reasonably brief interval, for many others wish to take part—refers to the issue which I think is, in the mind of the House and the country, the main issue at present, namely, whether the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee shall be accepted as a basis for legislation, or whether the criticism, which is set up against them, of those who think they go too far shall prevail. While that is, I think, the main issue which the House and the country wish to have examined, I could not turn to that without first saying a word about the Amendment which has just been moved and about the speech in which it was presented to the House by the hon. Member for Broxtowe (Mr. Cocks). I hope the hon. Gentleman will permit me to say that

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I believe the whole House recognises with great approval and sincerity the moderation and the careful terms in which he has presented this important Amendment. It would have been very easy, in a speech advocating that Amendment, to raise possible misunderstandings and to start feelings which would go far beyond the confines of this House, and I think we owe it to the hon. Member to say at once, as I do most gratefully, that he set an example in the care, statesmanship, and moderation with which he presented his Amendment.

As regards the proposal of the Amendment, it is really nothing more than an invitation to the House to approve of the minority report which was added to the main report of the Joint Select Committee, as indeed the hon. Gentleman himself frankly said. We cannot, of course, discuss all that to-day, nor would he wish us to do so, but perhaps I might be allowed to make one observation before I turn to the main subject of the Debate. I think it is important for us all to realise that neither the Amendment nor the minority report which was presented to the House from certain Members of the Committee proposes to establish here and now complete self-government in India. Neither of them does that. That is to say, there is a recognition from that side of the House as well as elsewhere that in this matter it is inevitable that we should proceed by stages, that there is a goal, which was proclaimed in the declaration of Mr. Montagu and in the Preamble of the Government of India Act, which was described as working towards the progressive realisation of responsible government in British India.

But be it noted that the Opposition in this House, I think very sensibly, if I may say so, is in agreement with the rest of us that it is not possible by legislation here and now to declare that that goal is attained. The Opposition, following the Minority Report, recognises that this can only come in the future, but, while recognising that, there does appear to be a feature in the proposal which the official Opposition puts forward which deserves comment here. If hon. Members examine the Minority Report, they will find that it contains this feature: It suggests that here and now Parliament can fix a precise time-table laying down that 10 years from now certain changes shall be made and that 30 years from now other changes shall be made; that 10 years from now adult suffrage shall be universal over India, and that 30 years from now the present reservations in regard to the Provinces shall cease to exist. My own experience, and it was the experience forced on all those who were on the Statutory Commission, is that the worst of all errors in providing for the Constitution of the Government of India is to imagine that the rate of advance depends on nothing more than a time-table.

The Statutory Commission during its two or three years of very arduous toil constantly found how embarrassing their work was because the Government of India Act had enacted that 10 years from the coming into operation of the Act there should be a Statutory Commission. I am clearly persuaded that, however far we may go, however we may fix our choice with the undoubted risks on the one side or the other, there is one thing we must not do. We must not proceed as though we could fix calendar dates when some constitutional change must come about. These changes do not depend on the passing of time. They depend on what happens, on the way in which the co-operation between British and Indian elements enables the scheme, whatever it may be, to be advanced rapidly or otherwise. I make that observation now, because, although the hon. Member for Broxtowe naturally did not expound the contents of the Minority Report, it does seem to me—reading it I can assure him with a great deal of interest, respect and sympathy because I know something of the difficulties of this subject—that it is a fundamental mistake to contemplate legislation which will provide to-day exactly the rate of advance by calendar years in the future.

I should like to address the House for a short time on two or three specific matters only. It is impossible to survey the whole of the field. Many important parts of it have been admirably treated in the last two days of the Debate. If I may be so bold as to make a selection, the speech which created the greatest effect, apart from the speeches of my colleagues

on this bench, was the valuable contribution of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Hastings (Lord E. Percy). If anybody will read it, he will find a great deal of the philosophy and truth of this matter most persuasively and admirably stated. I can best crave the indulgence of the House if I deal with a particular aspect of this matter. I hope that it may be of some little service if I am allowed to deal briefly with the comparisons and contrasts between the report and the views of the Statutory Commission, over which I had the duty and honour of presiding, and the report of the Joint Select Committee which the Government now invite the House to approve as a basis for legislation. I am glad to have this opportunity, because it is the first time that the House of Commons has ever devoted five minutes to discussing the report of the Statutory Commission. I will give some of the most important points of comparison. I am the more concerned to do this, because the fiercest critics of the Joint Select Committee's report and of the proposals of the Government do us the honour of constantly calling us to witness as being one of the buttresses—I do not venture to say one of the pillars, but one of the external buttresses—of the edifice which they are engaged in erecting. I am much obliged for the compliment, but I do not want to receive any compliments which I do not deserve.

In the first place, the Statutory Commission unanimously recommended, so far as the Provinces were concerned, responsible government over the whole field—what is sometimes, though not quite accurately, called Provincial Autonomy. If we used words strictly "autonomy" would refer to the relations between an autonomous unit and some authority outside. What is really meant here in part is that within the boundary of the Province, and so far as provincial subjects are concerned, the method of responsible government should be adopted. There are minor differences between the recommendations which we made and the present scheme, but substantially, as far as the provincial field is concerned, there is a very close resemblance between the views of the Statutory Commission and the views of the Joint Select Committee. I may carry this first point a little further when I remind the House that both the Statutory Commission and the Select Committee took the view that the Provinces should, as far as possible, be autonomous units in the sense that they should not merely have delegated from the Centre certain powers—the comparison with local authorities in this country is grotesque—but that they should themselves, as great important areas corresponding to European States, have in their own right within the limit of their proper powers very great responsibility discharged on the principle I have described, subject to some measure of control from a higher authority. The House will agree that the first point of comparison is very important, and I call attention to the fact that, so far as that goes, the Statutory Commission and the Joint Select Committee found themselves almost exactly in the same position.

I take the second point. I now pass to the Centre. I must remind the House that by the very terms of the Statute under which the Statutory Commission acted, by the very terms of the mandate which we were given, our purview was confined to British India. We not only had no authority to examine the situation in the Indian States, but we were expressly directed by the terms of the Statute to confine ourselves to the Provinces of British India. There is a second point of resemblance. The Statutory Commission rejected the idea of responsibility at the Centre of British India for British India, and so does the Joint Select Committee. There is a complete identity of view in respect of that second point, and the importance of it cannot be over-estimated. Anybody who has studied this subject with the care that many Members of the House have done will appreciate how absolutely impossible it is to regard British India as though it were a separate entity to be dealt with by itself at the Centre without regard to the Indian States, which are interlaced and bound into it like the items of a filigree puzzle.

When you get into the railway train in Bombay for the purpose of going to Delhi by the express, you will not find as you pass from British India into an Indian State that there is some change in physical scenery or that there are natural boundaries of the area; you bowl along through the plain full of interest in this new and wonderful world which you

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may be seeing for the first time, and as the train goes rushing along you see a great board beside the line announcing, "Here you are entering the State of Gwalior." It looks like the country through which you have just been passing. It has not a boundary that represents any natural and physical difference. You come to the capital of Gwalior with its great hill fortress facing the railway station, one of the most historic and wonderful buildings in the world, and you resume the journey. Soon you come across a second board stating, "You are leaving the State of Gwalior." So it goes on all the time. The truth is that the boundary between British India and the Indian States is not a boundary that has been drawn on any scientific principle, but is due to a hundred little incidents and pressures and conquests and withdrawals in times past, so that I have often declared that there are not two Indias but only one India. There is that second point of complete agreement. I might put in here a point which may be of interest, particularly to my hon. Friends below the Gangway, namely, that there is complete agreement between the report of the Statutory Commission and the Joint Select Committee's report on the subject of direct or indirect election. That is really a minor point of machinery, and it is a great mistake to spend too long in discussing it on this last day of the Debate.

There is a much more important point of analogy. It is the third and most important of all. Both the Statutory Commission and the Joint Select Committee consider that the only really satisfactory conclusion of the Indian constitutional problem is a Federation which embraces all India, both Indian States and British India. There is an absolute identity of view on that point. The only difference is simply this: first, that the Statutory Commission were not directly concerned or authorised to deal with the Indian States in any way, but we were perfectly satisfied that you cannot make a great development at the Centre without them; and, second, that since our report, beyond any question a new prospect has arisen, estimate it as you may, as a result of a number of declarations that have been made which have caused the possibility of All-India Federation to come considerably nearer. We developed in our report, at the risk of going outside our proper terms of reference, an elaborate argument to show how necessary it was that All-India Federation should be pursued. We took the view, and I think anybody being our companion at the time would have taken the view, that while that was the ideal it was the distant ideal. But we went this far, in our confident belief that this was the thing to aim at. The Statutory Commission recommended what we described as a Council of Greater India which should contain representatives of the Princes as well as representatives of British India, and we made a list of 13 subjects, which we described as coming into the common concern, to be the subject of consideration by such a council, and on looking now I observe that every one of those 13 subjects is included as proper for an All-India Federation in the scheme presented by the Joint Select Committee.

We come now to the real issue which has to be decided. It has given me, and I daresay other hon. Members, much cause for reflection. The question to be decided is: "In the light of this new prospect of the Indian States coming now within an All-India Federation, is the wise and politic course to provide that opportunity in our new legislation, under conditions which are the only conditions which would secure the adhesion of the Indian Princes, or should we say: No, it is a danger even in order to secure All-India Federation, even in order to attain sooner than anybody thought we could the carrying out of that solution, that step is too dangerous and too risky, and we must decline it"? That is the real issue, that is the thing which really matters, and that is what we are going to vote about to-night.

I would like to make one further observation about the Statutory Commission. I hope that hon. Members will not think that I seem to be attaching too much importance to the Commission. A good deal has happened since, but, after all, hon. Members will not forget that those who constituted that body did devote a great deal of time to the subject. Every single surviving member of those who served on the Statutory Commission four years ago, is to-day of opinion, for what it may be worth, that, instead of standing stiffly by the proposals contained in those two volumes, we should at any

rate advance as far as the Joint Select Committee propose. The question cannot be decided by citing names or counting heads. It is a question for statesmanlike consideration and reasoned judgment. I would be the last to claim to speak with any special authority about it, but I am entitled to call attention to the facts. I was gratified to find that that body of seven men—two from the House of Lords, two from the Conservative Benches of the House of Commons and two from the Labour Benches of the House of Commons, with myself, as a Liberal, presiding—produced a report without a single dissentient minute.

I think it is even more remarkable to find that every single surviving member of that body—two unhappily have left us, Lord Burnham, and a man whose name I must be allowed to mention, because we all hold his memory in high regard in this House, Mr. Vernon Hartshorn—is agreed about this. The hon. Member for Finchley (Mr. Cadogan) spoke on the first day of the Debate and told the House, as I have told it, that after going through a period of very considerable anxiety of mind he had come to the conclusion that it would be right to support the report of the Joint Select Committee. I am informed that the same view is taken by the surviving member of the House of Lords who served with us. I have explained to the House my own view. The hon. Member for Limehouse (Mr. Attlee), who was a most admirable colleague and whose pen, if truth were known, is responsible for a good deal of what is in those volumes, also supports that view, though we know that in some respects he and his friends would like to go further. I present that set of considerations to the House purely for the purpose of inviting the House and the country to observe how far it can truthfully or plausibly be said that this is a fight between people who are standing for what is called the Simon Commission solution and other people who are standing for the report of the Joint Select Committee.

Now I want to take a different point. If it were true that the scheme now recommended to the House, so far as the Centre is concerned, while it contemplated and hoped that the Indian States would join, proposed that even if they did not join we should go on just the same. I, for my part, would oppose it, so deeply am I convinced that the future development of government at the Centre of India such as I should like to see can only take place if we recognise that India is one, and that the Indian States must contribute to and form part of the whole. If anybody were to say—I do not know whether they are going to do so or not—that even if the States drop out we shall be able to go on with the scheme, I should not agree. That is not the proposal, and it cannot be too clearly understood that it is not the proposal, and that nobody inside or outside the House should imagine, or pretend or represent that it is the proposal. The proposal is that as far as the change at the Centre is concerned this scheme depends upon the adhesion of the Indian States.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: Will you give the same option to the Indian people?

Sir J. SIMON: I must make my own points in my own way. I will say something about the Indian people later. I know that my right hon. and gallant Friend feels most deeply for their lot, and so do I. I say that the new Constitution depends upon the Indian States saying, when the time comes, and the time is coming now, that they are prepared to implement the prospect which has been held out. The new Constitution proposed for the Centre depends upon a majority of the Indian States, having regard to their importance and their population, coming in, and I say here, as far as I am concerned, and I am sure I say it with the approval of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for India, who has had a bigger burden in handling this matter than any other man in the whole history of Indian Constitutional reform, that such a Constitution would not be possible, and it is not proposed, unless the Indian States do come in. Whether they come in or not remains, I agree, to be seen. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Chichester (Major Courtauld) made a speech yesterday in the course of which he took a very despondent and cynical view of that prospect. That is not a matter we have to determine to-day.

It is essential that it should be realised that the plan presented for the approval of the House of Commons is one which will only operate if the Indian States do

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come in in the way I have defined. If they do, what is it that we shall establish? We shall have helped to establish the federation of Greater India upon its only possible basis, we shall have ended a separation which any one who knows India intimately knows is, from many points of view, unreal, and—I venture to add my own view—a separation which if it be perpetuated may easily become dangerous. That is the prize which can be gained if things go well. The risk is not that this scheme, as it stands, could be carried through at the Centre if the Indian States drop out. The risk we see is a different risk, and it is a serious risk; it is a risk as to whether or not, even with the Indian Princes coming in, so immense an additional advance—a tremendous advance, by far the biggest single advance in India's constitutional development—is a risk that ought to be taken. On that I will say a word or two before I sit down, but I hope I have made clear to the House what, as I see it, is the real character of the issue which we now have to face.

Returning to the provincial field, I would like to say a word on a very curious use or, as it seems to me, an occasional misuse, of the recommendations of the Statutory Commission. This has to do with the most difficult subject of law and order. I have read a great many speeches made outside this House by critics of the Government plan which have appeared to represent that the critics were prepared, in the provincial field, to adopt the unanimous recommendations of the Statutory Commission but would not agree that the subject of law and order should be put under the control of an Indian Minister. I wish to make this matter entirely plain to the House. Do not let us have a misunderstanding. Hon. Members are perfectly at liberty, if they like, to say they reject the recommendations of the Statutory Commission in the provincial field—and there are very strong arguments for doing so—and they are at liberty, if they like, to say that they approve, but there is one thing that they are not at liberty to do, and that is to say "Yes, I am in favour of what some people call the Simon solution, but, of course, I am opposed to the transfer of law and order." That means absolutely nothing at all.

I wish to present to the House as I have seen it, and as it presented itself to my colleagues and myself in India, what the real position is, because there is an enormous amount of misunderstanding about it. No man who understands the work of Indian Government and administration will doubt that the administration of law and order is the key. There is nothing in Indian life that can compare with the importance of securing that the peasant, the poor man, the depressed class man, the man who is unpopular, the man in debt is not made a victim of oppression. My right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme interposed an observation on this point. I go with him all the way. He is quite entitled to say that he is convinced that this matter cannot be safely put into the hands of an Indian Minister and that we should keep it where it is now as a reserve service, but, if we do that, we must not at the same time tell the Indian people that we are in favour of provincial autonomy, because that would really be deceiving them in a way that is not in the least likely to take them in. Law and order in India is not a departmental subject.

The Noble Lord the Member for Aldershot (Lord Wolmer) made a speech the other day which struck me as, perhaps, the most powerful presentation of the case from his point of view. His sincerity and his dispassionateness in all he said gave the greatest pleasure to the House. The question of the police runs through the whole of the provincial administration. Law and order in an Indian Province, if I may give an illustration, is no more a departmental question than is law and order in the Saar during the next few weeks. It pervades everything. You may have disputes about education, roads, water, or other things, but at every point it is the law and order administration which determines whether a government is to be supported or not.

What happens now? There is the provincial legislature. As the hon. Member for Broxtowe said just now, it is surprising to find what a very small element the British administrative element is. You have Indian Ministers who are doing a series of very important departmental jobs in regard to education, roads and local government, but up to the present they have not had charge of the police.

What happens? I have not only read about this, but I have seen it in provincial legislatures. The whole force of the criticism of the elected legislators of the Province is addressed to this very subject of the police, and the whole of the blame is thrown upon the authorities responsible for the police, while the Ministers who have responsibility for the separate departments are content sometimes to let the blame dwell upon the heads of others. They have the easier part of the administration without any of its difficult responsibilities.

There are only two ways in which that can be cured. One is frankly to take away from the Indian Ministers the departments which they have now. I expect there are hon. Members in this House who think that that is the right way. To my way of thinking it is a wholly impracticable way, and it is the wrong way. If you do not do that, there is only one other way, and that is to say to the Indian Ministers in the Provinces: "We cannot leave you and your friends of the legislature to spend the whole of your time throwing the whole burden upon those who have the difficult work; you must share the burden and the difficulty as well as the advantage, the honour and the opportunity." In no other way is it possible to secure in the Provinces of India that which is described as responsible government.

I will tell the House, if hon. Members will forgive me, this anecdote. Perhaps they will take the trouble to turn to a passage in the Report of the Statutory Commission—it is in the second volume, paragraphs 57 to 64. I remember when my colleagues and I began writing paragraphs which set out as fully and as forcibly as we possibly could the arguments against transferring the police to the Provinces. If anybody requires a text book on the subject he will find it, in my opinion, in those paragraphs. I remember when the work was finished that I showed those paragraphs confidentially to a very distinguished Indian administrator, and that he read them and said, "Well, Simon, if the arguments for keeping the police away from Indian Ministers are as strong as that, you will never be able to write a sufficient argument on the other side to convince them." My friends and I then proceeded to write the paragraphs which appear in the report, and which I most respectfully commend to anybody who really desires to get to the heart of this subject. It is quite plain that we all unanimously took the view that transfer must take place, but my friends thought that it was just as well to set out the arguments in full force against it, because only so could we ever be able to persuade—as I think we shall persuade—the people of this country that if provincial autonomy is to be transferred it is necessary that you should transfer also the subject of law and order.

I want to say a word or two about another subject, which has been more particularly raised by the hon. Member for Bodmin (Mr. Isaac Foot) and yesterday by the hon. Member for East Birkenhead (Mr. White), that of direct or indirect election. I will only spend a moment upon it, because, as I have said, it is not really the point upon which our decision to-night should turn. It is a matter upon which, no doubt, we shall have some discussion later on. My hon. Friend the Member for Bodmin, in one of the most eloquent passages of his speech on this subject, was remarkably surprising. As I gathered from him—I have the report here—that Liberal principle in this matter was, no indirect election. I listened with growing surprise, because I know that my hon. Friend is a student, as I heard from him that it is one of the fundamental Liberal principles which commend themselves to all just and wise men, that in no circumstances should you indulge in what is called indirect election. I did not know it before, because I thought that that was just a question of electoral mechanics.

I suppose my hon. Friend will agree with me that if there were two recognised repositories of Liberal philosophy of the purist kind to which we can refer in the last generation and the one before, one would be John Morley, and the other John Stuart Mill. At any rate we might begin with them. What was the part which Lord Morley, who was a most distinguished pure Liberal, played in the administration of India? We all know his attachment to Liberal principles, but Lord Morley was the statesman who introduced into India the Morley-Minto reforms which, both in the Provinces and at the Centre, make a

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most extensive use of a system of indirect election. It has remained for my hon. Friend the Member for Bodmin, so many years after Lord Morley is in his grave, to discover what a traitor and an apostate he was to true Liberal principles. Even more ancient is the case of John Stuart Mill who wrote a book about representative institutions. If the chapter is consulted I think it will be found that John Stuart Mill, in express terms said—I have it here:

"Here is a case in which indirect election appears to be an extremely good method."

It is interesting to note what his illustration was. I am sure that he would never have agreed with manhood suffrage for India. His illustration came from the United States. For over 100 years since the Declaration of Independence in the United States, the system of indirect elections prevailed, in composing the Senate at Washington. The Upper House of the many States composing the United States and every House in each State which itself had been elected, proceeded to elect two members to the Senate at Washington. We have had to study these things in the various stages in our career. John Stuart Mill, while pointing out the great objections to this method, goes on to say:

"The elections thus made, have proved eminently successful, and are conspicuously the best of all the elections in the United States."

He also says:

"Under certain conditions it is the very best system that can be adopted, but those conditions are hardly to be obtained in practice, except in a Federal Government like that of the United States, where the election can be entrusted to local bodies whose functions extend to the most important concerns of the nation."

Mr. ISAAC FOOT: I think I am within the recollection of the House when I say that I dealt with indirect election and stated what the arguments were against it. I stated that indirect election was contrary to Indian opinion, contrary to the opinion of the Government of India and contrary to the recommendations of the Franchise Committee set up by this House. I do not recollect that at any time in that speech I was basing it upon Liberal principles. I suggest that the right hon. Gentleman, instead of dealing with what I did not say, should meet the argument I put forward.

Sir J. SIMON: I have spent far too much precious time on this point, but I will read a passage from the hon. Member's speech:

"This House set up a Franchise Committee a few years ago and sent it out to India under the chairmanship of Lord Lothian."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 10th December, 1934; col. 85, Vol. 296.]

The hon. Member was quite wrong. The House did nothing of the kind. The committee was appointed by the Prime Minister. There was a committee which this House appointed, and which went out to India and made a unanimous report. I will tell the hon. Member what its name is: it is the Statutory Commission.

Mr. FOOT: Five years before.

Sir J. SIMON: The hon. Member should listen. He is quite wrong when he tells the House that the House appointed a committee. Nothing of the kind. The hon. Member is quite right when he says that he confined himself to pointing out the objections to indirect election. Perhaps he will forgive me if I point out what is the real difficulty the other way. There are 260,000,000 people in British India. How many members is British India to have in the Central Legislature? According to the plan now proposed the number will be 250 or, shall we say, 260. If the House will be good enough to divide 260,000,000 by 260 they will find how many people are to be within the constituency of every member. That would be true if the population were spread equally over the whole area, but people are concentrated in great towns returning many members, and the rest of the population is mostly spread over the country. That means that many of the rural constituencies will have to be far from the towns. Then there is the difference between Hindu and Mohammedan, and according to the system which has prevailed, and which I am very sorry must continue, we must group the Mohammedans into constituencies by themselves. Have hon. Members any idea how big those constituencies will be? The Statutory Commission worked this out for everybody. They pointed out that whereas the county of Yorkshire, with an area of about 6,000 square miles, returns 57 Members to this

House, each one of whom can get to his constituency in a few hours, under a system of direct representation at the Centre in India, not one rural constituency is less than 6,000 square miles, and many of them contain an ever more enormously wide area.

The hon. Gentleman is under a misapprehension if he thinks that this point is raised for debating purposes. I would say to him, in a final word about it, that there is such a thing as a Member being responsible to his constituents, and one of the things about which we have to be careful is whether we can help India to devise a system which as a fact will enable Members to be responsible, in the real sense of the term, to those whom they represent, as well as themselves take part in a responsible Government. I apologise for this digression. It was merely designed to correct what appears to me to be a slightly disproportionate excitement about this new proposal, which the hon. Gentleman tells us the Liberals intend to fight at every stage. We now know that, when they go into battle, they will go under a banner with the strange device:

"This is the Eleventh Commandment: Thou shalt not have any indirect election."

I should like now to say something to which, possibly, those who oppose these proposals from the point of view of my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping and others may be prepared to assent. I have tried to point out that, if it is a question of being anxious about the risks involved, I share that anxiety. I am entitled to say that, considering the part which I have had to play in this matter. I have examined it with the very greatest care, and nothing, I assure the House, would deflect me from my sense of duty. I know something of the immensity of the issues involved. But, after all, what is it that we are to choose between? If it were a choice between a great risk, on the one hand, and something which involved no risk, that would be another matter; but that is not the choice at all. The real choice that we have to make—and it is one of the greatest choices that Parliament has ever been asked to make in hundreds of years of its history—is whether or not you can be wise enough to decide as between two courses both of which present very considerable difficulties. The hon. Member who moved the Amendment concluded his speech with a passage which, as I thought, was full of moderation. He declared, speaking for the Socialist party in this House, that their words would reach India, and that they would advise their friends in India to do their best to work this Constitution in spite of its imperfections. If I may say so, that was well said; it was a very statesmanlike declaration to make.

I want to address one word to those who are criticising the proposals from another angle. I would say to such hon. Members that I understand very well that, if they were not convinced that this system was right, they would, quite naturally, determine to carry on a fierce conflict in opposition to it. That would be quite right. But there may have been a time when they thought that the arguments they could use, and all the influences they could most honourably bring to bear, would be such as to cause the present Government to deflect from its course. It may have been thought by loyal members of the Conservative party that this matter raised an issue which would seem to split the Conservative party in such a way as to compel a change of course. If at one time these were the calculations, they cannot be the calculations any longer. It is quite obvious that this scheme, coming into force after full and careful consideration, and after the passing of a Bill in Parliament—that this scheme, in substance, will pass. I cannot believe that those who have thus conscientiously raised their objections desire to use an immense period of the time of this Session in continually repeating in every possible variation objections which they sincerely entertain, but which they now see, or will see to-night, are not in fact embraced by the vast majority of Members of the House. I know that they, like the rest of us, want to do this work thoroughly and well and deliberately, and desire that it should be done in a way which will enable other work to be done too in this Session of Parliament.

I wonder whether, in response to that wise declaration which was made just now on behalf of the Labour party by my hon. Friend opposite—I wonder whether it is not possible for us, while of course discussing the main issues as they arise in all proper fullness, none the less to

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co-operate to do the one thing which remains to be done by the House of Commons, and that is to show public men and public opinion in India that we, too, recognising the force that events are bound to take, add to the gift which we are prepared to give the grace of acquiescence if not of support, and the highest possible degree of unanimity. It is now 150 years since Edmund Burke, in one of his great speeches about the Government of India, used a sentence with which I will close. I owe it to my hon. Friend the Member for Bodmin, who is the greatest authority in this House on Edmund Burke. This is what Burke said in this House on the 1st December, 1783:

"Depend upon it, this business cannot be indifferent to our fame. It will turn out a matter of great disgrace or great glory to the whole British nation. We are on a conspicuous stage, and the world marks our demeanour."

5.49 p.m.

Sir ROBERT HAMILTON: The right hon. Gentleman is, I supose, more than anybody else in this House entitled, both by virtue of the position he occupied on the Statutory Commission and of the reputation which he enjoys in his profession, to analyse the points of the position which we have before us to-night. To one of those points I shall refer later. The Debate is now drawing to a close, and before long we shall be taking a Division, with all the momentous results that it will have for India, the British Empire, and, I may say, the whole world. I wish that India could have listened in to this Debate. If she had been able to listen in, she would have heard, I am afraid, some statements with which she would have disagreed, and she would have heard expression given to certain sentiments which would have affected her susceptibilities; but, at the same time, I think she would have carried away two impressions. The first would have been that, from whatever quarter of the House a Member might have been speaking, whatever views he held, whether he belonged to what I believe to be the great majority of the House, who support the proposals, whether he belonged to the Labour party, or whether he was to be numbered among the followers of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill), there ran through all the speeches a sincere undercurrent of desire to do what is right and fair by India.

The second impression that, I think, she would have drawn is that, whatever our sentiments, whatever our political theories and affiliations may be in this Debate, we have been anxious above all things to grapple with realities. I think that India, listening in, would have realised that we have attempted throughout, not to deal with India as it might be, or with India as we would like it to be, but with India as it really is to-day, and that we are devising, or attempting to devise, a scheme that will work. After all, that is the great test that time is going to apply to the result of our labours—will it work? That is what we are bending ourselves to do.

The structure that we are attempting to build is one of unprecedented size, and is composed of very diverse elements. From none of our minds has there been absent a sense of the diversity of those elements with which we have to build. That, again, is one of the realities of the situation which we have tried to keep before us. During the last seven years, in which an intensive study has been made of the Indian problem, I have sometimes thought that Indian politicians have been inclined to underrate the difficulties of framing such a Constitution as that which we are now in this House attempting to frame. That is, perhaps, because they are a little apt not fully to keep in mind the realities of which I have just spoken, and also have been somewhat inclined to underrate the opposition that might be raised to any such proposal in this country. To-day they can be under no delusions on that score. The opposition to the schemes which are before us have been very vocal, not only in this House but in the country, and, although we have, with the greatest advantage to either side, been in close contact with representatives from India, and have adopted the system which was initiated at the Round Table Conference, with the resulting benefit of raising the whole question of India and its discussion on to a higher plane—although that has been a great advantage, and Indian representatives have discussed the problems with us across the table, I think they have very often felt, perhaps all the more for that reason, that the opinions for which they were asked, and which they

put forward, have been disregarded when they might have been adopted. I think that in many cases we should, perhaps, have done better to pay fuller attention to some of the Indian opinions that have been put forward, but I should like here again to remind my Indian friends that the disregard of some of these opinions was necessary and inherent in the position if we were to succeed in arriving at the greatest common measure of agreement in this country. The difficulties of the problem are two-fold. There are the difficulties inherent in the building of the structure in India, and the difficulties that have to be met in facing the political situation in Great Britain.

We have before us the labours of the Joint Select Committee. I should like to take the opportunity of joining with all those who have paid a tribute to the enormous assiduity with which the members of that Committee, under the distinguished chairmanship of Lord Linlithgow, carried out their duties. We have had very frank discussion of the proposals contained in the report. It is eminently desirable that we should frankly discuss these questions. There is nothing to be gained by pretending that difficulties do not exist, or trying to slide round difficult corners. All these difficulties have to be probed to the bottom and thoroughly discussed, and I would ask our Indian friends again not to find fault with us if, in the discussion of these very difficult questions, we use the utmost frankness between ourselves in looking at the problem from every possible point of view. The actual Motion before the House is that the proposals in the report be accepted and that they form the basis for a Bill for the new Constitution for India. When the House votes on it, I certainly do not take it that means that every Member who votes for the Motion is prepared to cross every "t" and dot every "i." I certainly do not. There are many matters which are dealt with in the proposals, and which must be contained in any Bill that is based on those proposals, which will need the very closest scrutiny and on which I am sure Members will be apt to take sometimes very different views, and though we may vote wholeheartedly for the general Motion, the Government must not imagine for a moment that we are content to say ditto to everything that may be put before us in the Bill.

At this point I should like to refer to the very important point that was raised originally by my hon. Friend the Member for Bodmin (Mr. Isaac Foot) and which was dealt with in a very cavalier fashion by the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken. It is a matter to which the Indian representatives attached the very greatest importance, though not one to which Liberals as such attach particular importance. It was never suggested that this question of direct or indirect election was a sort of test for Liberals, but it was what the Indian Office put forward originally. It was what opinion in India wanted, and it was a most unfortunate thing, at the very moment when we are offering a new Constitution to India, that we should deprive the Indians of a franchise which they already have and have enjoyed for the last 12 years. The right hon. Gentleman, in making fun of this subject and pretending that, after all, it was only a very small one, tried to point out the absolute impossibility of ever having a federal assembly elected on a direct franchise, but I would remind him that the very report itself envisages the possibility of this in five years' time. Why should we, therefore, fly in the face of Indian opinion in the matter and, by doing so, create what I am afraid will be a fossilised and dug-in assembly quite irresponsive to Indian opinion? It may be said that, after all, this is a Committee point, but it is a big Committee point and one which will be fought, I am sure, very stoutly when we reach it in the Bill.

I now come to what the Secretary of State called the three pivotal points—Provincial Autonomy, Federation and Responsibility at the Centre. Those who vote for the Motion to-night will vote in favour of those three pivotal points, and, put like that, I am sure if there were any Indians in the House to-night they could not vote against it. They would be bound to vote for those proposals, because they are proposals on which any Indian constitution must inevitably be based. If you desire to have a united India with federation, a policy which was made possible by the announcement of the Princes at the first Round Table Conference, and if you desire to have Provincial Autonomy, you must have some binding

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element, and that binding element can only be found in a responsible centre. The point is so obvious that it seems to me futile for anyone to try to argue that you can have a part of the proposals without having the whole, because the three points hang or fall together.

I should like to say a word or two on the question of Safeguards. The Secretary of State argued that on the facts of the situation Safeguards and Reservations were an inherent necessity if we are to secure the greatest measure of common agreement. Anyone who has studied the framing of Constitutions in any shape or form knows that what are called Safeguards are necessities. You must have checks and reservations in any constitution if it is to be a workable one. We have them, of course, in this country, but they are not very prominent, because we have learnt a certain amount of political responsibility in the course of centuries and we work our Constitution in such a way that it is seldom or ever necessary to have regard to them. But, if I were an Indian politician and were listening across the seas to some of the talk that goes on and, further, were to see some of the safeguards that are being introduced in these proposals, I should say, "I think you are going rather too far. You are making too much of these safeguards and you are putting in safeguards which may be entirely unnecessary." An Englishman replying on this side, rather timid and walking very cautiously a new road, would say, "You will never get your new Constitution unless we are satisfied that there are plenty of safeguards in to prevent the machine breaking down." It is between those two points of view that we have to consider these safeguards. As regards Safeguards generally, I think it is safe to say that unnecessary safeguards will never be used and, equally, necessary safeguards will never be used if Indian Ministers rise to their responsibility. I have particularly referred to this question of Safeguards because the First Commissioner of Works last night said something which, I am afraid, must give a very wrong impression abroad. He was speaking of his experience during the time that he was at the Colonial Office. He said:

"Let nobody imagine that under these proposals any more than in any of the Colonial Constitutions safeguards and special powers are put in with the idea that they will not be used."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 11th December, 1934; col. 342, Vol. 296.]

He laid very great stress on the fact that the safeguards were put in with the intention of using them. I am quite aware that he was speaking on the point of responsibility and irresponsibility, but I think it is very necessary that attention should be drawn to that point and that, on the other hand, we shall do what the report says on this very important matter.

"It is in exact proportion as Indians show themselves to be not only capable of taking and exercising responsibility but able to supply the missing factors in Indian political life of which we have spoken that both the need for safeguards and their use will disappear."

I do not wish to labour the point further, but I think it was very necessary that any possible misapprehension should be cleared away at the first opportunity.

I should like to say a word or two on the Labour Amendment. I join in what the Foreign Secretary said about the admirable way in which the case was presented by the hon. Member for Broxtowe (Mr. Cocks). I look upon the Amendment as rather in the nature of a demonstration than of a practical alternative to the proposals of the Joint Select Committee. There are various points in it with which, no doubt, I should feel myself fully in accord and, when we come to disputes, questions and divisions on the Bill, I daresay we shall sometimes find ourselves in the same Lobby, but the test that I would like to apply to the Amendment is, Is it in fact related to the practical politics of the day? Is it a proposal which would reach the greatest common agreement in this country? To both those questions I am afraid I should have to answer in the negative. The Labour party is looking a great deal further ahead than the point that it is possible to look to at present. We may all see the possibilities of development in the future and may be glad to welcome them, but because we see them and shall be glad to welcome them, that cannot be used as an argument for taking a political step at present which would not be justified by the realities that we have to face.

I think that the hon. Member for Broxtowe was not quite fair in saying that the proposed Constitution does not contain

the seeds of development. Anyone who considers the matter fairly and without bias must realise that all possibility of future development lies in the hands of the Indian Ministers who will be appointed under that Constitution. If I believed that that Constitution did not contain the seeds of future development, I should be the last person to vote for it. It is because I firmly believe that such a Constitution as is outlined here is one which contains every possibility for the advance to greater and greater responsibility on the part of India, that I am so cordially a supporter of it. The Labour scheme is at least constructive. We have had, on the other hand, a great deal of destructive criticism without any attempt at all at construction. I refer to speeches to which we have listened. There was the speech of the Noble Lord the right hon. Member for Aldershot (Viscount Wolmer), in which he admirably put forward the case he was representing, and which was still more admirably answered by the Noble Lord the right hon. Member for Hastings (Lord E. Percy). Then we had the speech of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft), which was a speech delivered on a very narrow and unsound basis, and far more fitted to a platform where he wanted to arouse the fears of the old ladies of Bournemouth or elsewhere, than suited to the discussion of the problems we have before us. It was a speech which was admirably answered again by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sparkbrook (Mr. Amery), who, at the same time, made a very satisfactory answer to the speech, which one might say was one of inspissated gloom, of the Noble Lady the Member for Kinross (Duchess of Atholl), in which every attempt was made to pick out everything that could be criticised and found to be bad in the past few years in the great sub-Continent of India, without giving any hope of a single constructive idea or of anything which could be accepted by this House.

No one will deny the sincerity and honesty of the views of any hon. Member who desires to put them forward. But I wish to take this opportunity of saying how much one objects to the use in this connection of such a word as "abdication" which is used up and down the country, and to the suggestion that those who favour constitutional advance in India are runing away from their obligations and responsibilities. Which, I ask, requires the greater courage. To sit still and do nothing, or to attempt to do what is perhaps the biggest thing that has ever been attempted in political history? Perhaps those hon. Gentlemen who desire to take an entirely negative attitude and to take no forward step would realise that there is something in the pledges which this country has so often given. I should like to remind the House again of the instructions given to the Governor-General of India in 1921 which have already been referred to by the hon. Member for Broxtowe because they are very important. Just 13 years ago the instruction from His Majesty said:

> "Above all things, it is our will and pleasure that plans laid by our Parliament may come to fruition to the end that British India may attain its true place among our Dominions."

I am not one who quibbles about the meaning of "Dominion status," but I look forward to the time when India may take her place among the Dominions. We are now in 1934, and Parliament, I am glad to say, is still making plans so that India may attain her true place among our Dominions. Some people think that we have gone far too slowly and been too timid and cautious. If we have gone slowly, I hope and trust that we are going surely. Indian opinion desires that we should go much faster, but it is often wise on the part of the master of a ship sailing across an uncharted course to go somewhat slowly in the midst of his difficulties if he hopes to arrive safely.

In conclusion I would like to say a word which, I hope, will reach Indian ears on the other side of the world. I would ask Indians to remember that the granting of a Constitution can be made, and must be made, by Parliament alone. It is only Parliament which can grant this Constitution. It may have many imperfections and may not fulfil the immediate aspirations of India, but let Indians remember that we are handing over to them immense responsibilities in asking them to become joint partners with us in this common enterprise of enormous magnitude. Fancy the idea of a federation of one-fifth of the world—a stupendous conception! If that enterprise is to be made a success, it will need

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the utmost confidence and good will on either side. India may be assured of the good will of this country. I hope that she will not withhold hers when she realises that her destiny is in her own hands.

6.8 p.m.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Everyone will agree with the Foreign Secretary when he speaks of the importance of this Debate, dealing, as I think he said, with a subject as momentous as any upon which the House has had to come to a decision in the last hundred years. Who touches India touches history, and when, as the hon. Gentleman the Member for Orkney and Shetland (Sir R. Hamilton) reminded us, we are dealing with the lives and fortunes of one-fifth of the globe or one-sixth of the human race, we touch not only history but world history. I feel that it will be the endeavour of all who take part in these Debates to try their best to raise them as far as possible to a level worthy of the subject and worthy also of the tradition of this House, which in former generations has lavished time and thought upon the study and discussion of the affairs of India. Those of us who are in a minority here will certainly exert ourselves in that way.

I may say that, speaking for this minority, we claim in this matter belligerent rights. We are concerned in defending a cause and putting a case whose dignity and magnitude are such that we are entitled to those rights, but we realise that it is quite impossible—it would, indeed, be intolerable—that the settled will of the House of Commons should be arrested by merely dilatory procedure. Let the Government give a fair opportunity for discussing this great controversy. Let us discuss it in such a way that the 20 or 30 items of principal and cardinal points of method can be debated fully, and I am sure that the Government will find that those who differ the most strongly from them will be the first to render them aid in achieving the execution of their plans within a reasonable and orderly period of time. I hope, indeed, that it may be possible to come through the whole of these Debates on the India Bill which, when we consider the procedure in the other House as well as the procedure here, may well take us into the latter part of next year without the application of those processes of Guillotine and Closure which were introduced in the latter part of the nineteenth century and are an excrescence on the traditional Procedure of the House of Commons.

I know that there is a mood in some quarters to ride rough-shod over the minority, and I am very glad to find that it has received no encouragement from the Prime Minister and from the Government. I have also heard it said that modern democracy takes no great interest in India—it is too remote, too vague, too complicated—and will resent the occupation of our time upon the Indian problem. I hope that that is not true. If it were true, we should have ceased to be an Imperial people and shown ourselves unfitted to continue to fill that considerable place in the world to which the exertions of previous generations have raised us. I was so much encouraged by the fine Parliamentary action of the Prime Minister in regard to a suggestion which was made to send the Bill to a Standing Committee, that I will persevere on this favourable wind, and I am emboldened by the speech of the Attorney-General a few days ago in the country in which he talked about the splitting of the Conservative party from end to end. The Attorney-General—who is a great authority on these matters, though not so great an authority as the Lord Chancellor, who has something on his conscience, but still always ready to advise on matters of correctitude as well as law—the Attorney-General laid down the principle that it was unworthy for anyone in dealing with this India question to consider such an issue as the unity of a party. Unworthy! I think that it is a very heroic doctrine and a very heroic mood, and I hope that we shall rise to it. As far as we are concerned, I may assure the Government that there is nothing that we should like better than that this issue should be decided on its merits according to what Members really think about it, and without any introduction of adventitious or extraneous influences or suggestions from anywhere. I hope that the Government, following the high line which the Attorney-General sought to take, will ask my right hon. Friend the Patronage Secretary, who is very busy these days, to desist from his systematic and official

unworthiness and allow us all to have a free and open vote this evening when the Division is called.

I listened, as did all the House, with deep attention to the speech of the Foreign Secretary. I listened to his lucid, luminous explanation of such points as he considered it was necessary to draw our attention to on this occasion, but when he had finished I am bound to say that there came across my mind this feeling: Here is the greatest event for 100 years. Is this all that you have to say to induce Parliament to take the step which it is now being asked to take? Is this all the reason which you are prepared to give us before we embark upon this, as you admit yourselves, hazardous voyage? As I listened to his speech I had the feeling that the right hon. Gentleman with his sweet reasonableness was reducing this matter to petty conditions, to the mere matter of a few provisions here and there, putting the Liberal soul at rest on the troubles of indirect election; and that these were insufficient arguments to induce the House to launch this country into something which may well turn the whole history of the State. The feeling came across my mind that I was on a ship which was going down in a calm sea, and some very reassuring observations were being addressed to the passengers, because there were no boats, I will not say by the captain but, at any rate, by the chief steward.

Let me say, first of all, that I do not think the Socialist Opposition have treated the Government very generously or even very fairly. Whatever advance has been made at any time to meet them, and immense advances have been made, they have accepted it only as a starting point for a new departuree. Take the Statutory Commission. Representatives of all parties were on the Statutory Commission. They reached a unanimous conclusion. Many of us did not like the report of the Statutory Commission. Many of us thought that it might have been well said that the use of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms did not warrant at this stage a further advance. Still, when a commission of that quality goes to India, travels all around, comes back and makes its report, people try to submit, even if they cannot have their own point of view given effect to. I suppose the Conservatives on the commission made derogations from their view. Certainly members like the late Vernon Hartshorn did. To his memory a very worthy tribute has been paid by the Foreign Secretary. He was a charming, gifted and patriotic man. Members from all sides came back and endeavoured to produce, and did produce, a unanimous report. That was a very considerable fact, and it marked a great advance on the part of those who are doubtful whether further advances should be made.

What happened to that report? The Foreign Secretary reminded us that it had never been debated by Parliament. No sooner had the report been presented—the ink was hardly dry upon it—when the Prime Minister pitched it into the wastepaper basket and called together a Round Table Conference, which reopened the whole topic from the beginning; true, in the light of the information collected by the report, but, stil, a complete reopening of the whole subject. Out of this Round Table Conference came the point that really divides us to-day and really has caused the trouble and the whole division which is growing in the country. The cause has been the additional surge forward, the lurch downwards I should describe it, at the first Round Table Conference from the basis which had been reached by the Simon Report. Again, I must point out that it was the Socialist party who had their way. It was their plan. It was their plan which was accepted. It was their plan which was recommended by the first Round Table Conference. It was their plan which was embodied substantially in the White Paper, and it is their plan which emerges, with certain additions and improvements, from the report of the Joint Select Committee. Does anybody dispute that it is the Socialist plan, the plan of the Socialist Government?

Sir S. HOARE: Yes, I do.

Mr. CHURCHILL: I am glad to hear that remark, because there is a certain amount of controversy as to the parentage of the interesting prodigy before us. The hon. Member for Bodmin (Mr. Isaac Foot) laid claim to it, and he was rather controverted from the Socialist benches. Now there is another competitor for this dubious honour. As there is some difference on the subject, I will read the perfectly plain statement

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which was made by the hon. Member for Bassetlaw (Mr. M. Macdonald), whom we know as the most popular, agreeable, and competent Under-Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs. This is what he wrote in a newspaper in his constituency. It is very important that we should know these facts, because there is a dispute. This is what he wrote three years ago:

"How accurate was the Government's calculation of what would be the ultimate conclusions of the Conference, and of what policy it would finally be able to announce with the approval of all delegations, is illustrated by an interesting fact. The drafting of the Prime Minister's concluding statement of the Government's policy, actually delivered on the 19th January"—

that is, January, 1931—

"was already in hand before Christmas. The text of the statement was completed during two all-day conferences between the Prime Minister and his principal Government advisers, which I attended at Chequers on 27th and 28th December. This was several days before the Conference itself began to consider the all-important question of Indian responsibility in the Central Government. It was before the Indians themselves had stated their ideas in detail,"

Here I must disappoint the hon. Member for Bodmin—

"before Lord Reading had made his famous speech announcing the Liberal party's support of the Indian claims, and before the Conservatives' definition of their policy. Yet only minor alterations had to be made in the Government's statement as a result of these events following its original drafting. So much for the tactics of the Government."

So much for the statement of the hon. Member for Bassetlaw. So much for the tactics of the Socialist Government. There can be no dispute about the origin and the genesis of this scheme which we have before us, on the part of anyone who will consider that frank and open avowal. It may be asked: Why bring this up? I bring it up because it is challenged in some quarters. I also bring it up to show hon. Members opposite what obligations they have towards this scheme. Their paternity is proved without any doubt, and they are not going to escape the consequences by merely abusing the wretched brat which has been foisted on the guileless Conservatives. What did we then see? No sooner had the compliance of the Conservatives been achieved, no sooner had they agreed—no doubt they agreed of their own free will, and no doubt they agreed with the scheme on its merits; I do not argue that it was done under any duress—but no sooner had the matter been pushed forward to this stage than hon. Members opposite started moving forward on another downward march along the slope.

I must really warn His Majesty's Government that they will never be able to reach an agreement with the Socialist Opposition. The more they go forward the more they will be led on. Even now, if they were to meet all the suggested amendments which were made by the hon. Member for Limehouse (Mr. Attlee) in the Joint Select Committee, it would only be the starting point for a new departure. The Socialists are ready for that. The right hon. Gentleman who leads the Opposition is much ahead of the hon. Member for Limehouse, and is careering along on the path towards the abyss, with a policy of his own. I am told that the highest caste in India boasts of the distinction of being twice born. The party opposite—if they will allow me to say so in no offensive way—have been twice born in regard to this matter. What is the result? The result is the formal opposition of the whole of the Socialist party and extreme denunciation by that party of the whole of this scheme, after the Government have done so much to meet them, and which they have carried on so far at such great risk. That is a very formidable fact.

We hear a lot about national unity and the importance of acting as a nation and not as parties in this matter. Where is the national unity if a party which represents a very large proportion of the country and is advancing confidently, as it believes—there may be more to be said about that before they reach that point—to power, definitely dissociates itself from such a scheme, and denounces it and opposes it formally in the House of Commons? My hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury made a very thoughtful speech the other day. He does sometimes make very thoughtful speeches. He referred to the Irish parable. Let me say, as I am going to quote his words, that I do not intend to shirk my responsibility for any concern in that. The hon. Member, with great force and great cogency, said:

"We allowed the Irish question to become a party question, and from that moment we were lost. Once the Irish realised that they had two opposing parties to contend with their success was assured, for they could, and

did, play one party off against the other until Great Britain was reduced to the most shameful surrender in her history. The Indians are not less astute than the Irish. They are more numerous and more powerful. Once allow them to believe that they can get more from one party than from another and there will be no end until we retreat from India with the same ignominy that attended our retreat from Ireland."

There you have the analogy. Here you have the alternative party, the only party which can replace this Government, and it has definitely come forward in direct opposition to and denunciation of your policy. The Government are entitled to review the situation in the light of the fact that what they have to offer now to the Indian people is not any more the gift of the nation. It cannot be pretended to be so. It is only the gift of a number of gentlemen who at the present time are able to marshal a Parliamentary majority in the House of Commons.

Many false analogies are drawn from past events, and we have had in these Debates continuous references to Ireland and South Africa. Of course, we all try to learn lessons from the past, but in extracting those lessons we naturally draw and extract the ones which are the most agreeable to our mood at the moment. I had something to do with most of those decisions. It fell to my lot to carry the South Africa Constitution Act and the Irish Free State Act through this House. I will tell hon. Members the particular lessons which have remained in my mind from them. First as to the South Africa Constitution Act. The lesson there was that it is not enough to be right and well meaning, but that you must find big men with whom you can make a bargain which will be faithfully observed. In General Botha and General Smuts you found two great men, two great warriors, and fathers of their country, who, for a quarter of a century, have used their extraordinary gifts in order to preserve the solemn contract which was signed between the two belligerents in the Treaty of Vereeniging, and subsequently in the South Africa Constitution Act. It is no use comparing the South Africa Constitution with what we are now asked to do for India. It is only to darken counsel to bring that in. I am sorry that General Smuts, for whom I have such admiration and a long friendship, seemed to make some comparison the other day. I wonder what the distinguished General would say if a proposal was put forward to give seats in the Union Legislature to Indian immigrants to South Africa, or to the native inhabitants of South Africa? I think the fine and expansive phrases of his Liberalism would shrink to a very much more narrow and effective practical demonstration of his will.

In Ireland also, I shared in that sombre decision, and I am not going to attempt to elaborate it to the House now except to say that there, again, we tried to make a bargain with the men who really controlled the opposite forces, and, if that has failed, it is largely because those men, Michael Collins, Kevin O'Higgins and Arthur Griffiths, gave their lives quite soon in an effort to maintain the honour, as I believe it to be, of the Irish people in the faithful execution of Treaties entered into with good faith on both sides. We have had great disappointment and disillusion in Ireland. I wonder whether the then leader of the Conservative party, the right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Sir. A. Chamberlain), feels that disappointment. I certainly do, poignantly, and every reproach which naturally attaches to it; to the prophecies which were made, the hopes which were aroused, but which the passage of time and the march of events have falsified. I feel it very much indeed. Although one must act according to the circumstances of the moment, and grave indeed were the circumstances of that moment, I cannot feel that one ought not to accept to some extent the hard teachings of experience.

But how much worse lies the Indian situation? There you have no one to deal with, nobody that can execute their side of the contract or agreement. There you have no one who can answer you; you have only vague noises coming back to us across the ocean, incoherent noises, as the result of all we say and do. The House must ask itself: How shall we stand on this Indian matter, not in a year or two, but 10 years hence? After all, the lesson that you may learn from Ireland is that at the beginning things may go fairly well, that the first lot of men you deal with will keep their word. There are in India men trained under your system, their minds habituated to a certain course. But the second lot of men, who come along and get into office by attacking the first lot, care nothing

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for the contracts which have been entered into or the agreements which have been made; they brush them all aside; they are nothing to them. And thus we have been insulted, derided, defrauded and mocked in our Irish policy.

Where shall we be 10 years hence in our Indian policy? Ten years is a very short time. I have been twice engaged in big matters in my experience as a Minister in which 10 years was the limit when they were to be reconsidered—the Washington Treaty and the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. It seemed to be all right and that we need not worry about them any more. They are both here. Where shall we be 10 years hence in this Indian matter? That is the question we must ask before the House votes to-night. In 10 years time the foundations and pivot of British authority will have simultaneously weakened in every part of India. You will have shifted the axis of India. You will have altered the focus of Indian loyalty. Everywhere the waves of so-called popular government and democratic movements will be lapping against the foundations of your institutions and pressing upon the structure of your power. Where will hon. Members in this House find themselves in 10 years time? If you resolve to proceed upon this path, to take this step now, it will be absolutely no use afterwards complaining of the consequences. We were criticised, the Lord President of the Council and the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, for what we did in regard to Ireland, sometimes very harshly. Believe me, what you are going to do now is far more risky and ten times as large and vast.

But we are told by the Secretary of State for India that the case of India is different, that we are keeping an Army in India and kept none in Ireland. I do not believe that that really affects the issue. At this stage of the difficulties in front of us it is not a question of the Army. If it comes to that the British Army is not so far away from Ireland. If the Irish trouble could have been settled by the use of military forces, we should not have put up with the treatment which we have received. No one dreams of using military forces against Ireland, great and grievous as are our complaints against the Irish Free State; nor would anyone. Once you engage yourself in this constitutional process and deliberately hand over power, set up a responsible Government with Ministers and Cabinets, who may present to the Governor-General their minutes according to the Constitution, you are upon a path where you may suffer mortal injury before any situation arose, and without any situation arising where military power had to be employed.

One other lesson I learned from the Irish Treaty proceedings, and I am sure that the Lord President of the Council learned it too, and a great deal better than I did. It was this. On a matter of great Imperial issue the votes which are given by Conservative Members in the Lobby or at the National Union of Conservative Associations are no true measure of the feelings of the party on the subject at stake. They are naturally influenced by their trusted and honoured leader. I well remember when we were both engaged in the Irish matter that everything seemed to be going very well—I think there were only 30 or 40 who voted against us in the Lobby on the decisive Division—we had the great advantage of Lord Derby's assistance in bringing Lancashire along quietly and in turning the opinion of the National Union, and at the Liverpool conference only 70 delegates voted against the Irish decision out of 1,800 delegates. The "Times" newspaper recorded this with lively satisfaction. But the right hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well that underneath the surface passions and feelings were boiling and that deep injury was done to the structure of unity and harmony within the party. So well did he judge this that within less than a year he went off to the Carlton Club and blew the Government sky high.

I venture to draw a lesson from the Montagu-Chelmsford Commission, and it is this. It is not the slightest use the House of Commons depending on a Joint Select Committee to give them advice about India. We had a very fine Joint Select Committee, not quite so loaded arranged and marshalled as the one ove which the Secretary of State for India h reigned, but it was a very authoritati Committee and contained many men intelligence, experience and authori We took its advice. Many people th the advice given by that Committee been the seed of the difficulties and

we are suffering from to-day. For a long time I felt some reproach when hon. Members came along and said: "Mr. Churchill, it is all very well your coming forward now, but what were you doing when the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms were passed." There, we took the advice of a Joint Select Committee, and the lesson I draw is that the House of Commons should not allow itself to be too easily gulled by an array of complacent notabilities and dignatories, but should address itself with earnestness to the topics which come before it and form an opinion of its own. That is what we shall endeavour to do in the months before us.

I will not linger longer upon the past, although I have, I hope, extracted some gleams of guidance from it. The past is over, the long process of examination has come to an end, and with it many violent controversies which were associated with it. When the House has approved of the report of the Committee, which no doubt it soon will do, the Constitution Bill will be brought before us, and then we shall have to take a new view of that piece of work as a whole. We shall have to try it, as I ventured to say out of doors the other day, by the test of a few simple questions. Will it work? Will it last? Will it satisfy the people for whom it is designed? Will it make a better government in India and a more assured and permanent connection between India and the Crown? These are the questions we shall have to determine next year, and we must go into them fully in the time allowed, which is enough to make it possible for us to do so. It is by the results of its work that the House will be judged. It is no good saying that we were at it for seven years, that we had a Joint Select Committee, and that we took enormous pains, the test by which our work will be judged will be: Is it good? Is it vital?

The great Napoleon said that a Constitution should be short and obscure. Although we have not yet seen the text of the Bill, we know enough about it to know that this particular Constitution will never fulfil one of those desiderata. But you may ask of any Constitution two questions: First, will it make a better Government; and, secondly, will it be acceptable to those for whom it is intended? Justification is, I think, possible on either of those counts. You may say that it will be unpopular in the country, that they will not like it, but that it will be a much better Government for the great mass of the people; or you may say that the people will have to put up with a lower level of administration, that the conditions will not be so good, but that it will gratify their ideals and that that is what they really want. Either of those defences can be made. But can His Majesty's Government make either of them upon this proposal? I believe it is possible to demonstrate that your policy fulfils neither of those conditions in any way. I know what we are going to hear. We are going to be told: "Here are the extremists of the Labour party; here are the Die-hards; and in the middle this great central phalanx of the sober-minded, steady, prudent, patriotic, matter-of-fact, common-sense, British Members of Parliament moving forward along the middle way." But it does not always follow that the middle way is the best way, as the man found who fell between two stools.

That is the difficulty of the Government. However large may be the number of people with them, they are still confronted with that difficulty. I do not agree with the party opposite; I disagree violently with the proposal they put forward. But at any rate they have a theme. Their theme is to do what the Indians wish. We also have a theme; it is to discharge the mission of Britain in the East. But what is your theme? That is what we want to find out in the months that lie before us. This scheme offers neither efficiency nor consent. We are launched upon a project which political India rejects. We parade it as grand and magnanimous; they reject it as a hollow sham. We consider that it is an immense relinquishment on our part of vital control; they accept it, if they accept it at all, only as the means of wresting further controls from us. We have deserted our duty to the Indian masses. Well I know that. But we have not gained the consent or gratitude of the Indian intelligentsia. We have wrested, wrenched, plucked the roof-beam from our house in the hope of building a bridge across a gulf, and when we have torn it down we have found that the beam is much too short. That is the answer which I give to those who say: "Go along in the middle with

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the moderate people." It is not the least use doing so unless they have a policy which somewhere or other achieves a definite purpose.

I was very glad to see that the report of the Joint Select Committee does not in any way under-rate the importance of provincial government. It speaks of it as a fundamental departure from the present system, and indeed Indian Ministers who have had so little experience can really not consider themselves slighted when they are asked to take over the government of countries as great as France or Germany, or Spain, or Italy, and when they have the whole of these vast populations and their affairs submitted to them. No one can complain at all that these tasks are unworthy. On the contrary, they constitute, I believe—provincial Governments alone, whether the police is fully transferred or not—a class of rulership as great and as august as are being exercised by any body of men in the world.

But there is this objection to the provincial scheme. I should have acquiesced in it and supported it and submitted to it, although from many points of view I do not like it, but there is this objection to it: Absolutely no provision is made for ensuring that we discharge our responsibility to the mass of the Indian people—none whatever. It is quite callous and disgusting the way in which the whole of their services are transferred without any desire to follow up and see what happens and to make sure that efficiency is maintained. I ventured to submit to the Joint Select Committee a proposal to have a system of grants-in-aid similar to those which we have in this country, which ensure the efficiency of our education system, and inspectors from the centre who would get in touch and make the conditions of the people between one province and another attain a certain standard. This could be done without the slightest derogation from the dignity of those whom it affected. There is not the slightest derogation. It is only what the Chancellor of the Exchequer and other Ministers here, who are giving money to local bodies, are continually doing.

There is no reason why something should not have been done. But the right hon. Gentleman yesterday boasted in a very pointed way that there would be no question of grants-in-aid or inspectors following up or anything of that kind. He can do that, and no doubt his Indian friends, as he rightly called them, will be pleased. Of course they will be pleased. But where does he stand himself? He stands himself in the position of one who has announced that the British Government completely disinterests itself in the welfare of this great mass, handing them over without caring even to inquire whether or not their hospitals, their schools, and all their different social services undergo a great deterioration. I call that a lamentable thing.

Sir S. HOARE: They are transferred now.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Yes, but there are many other things that are going to be transferred. At any rate, the right hon. Gentleman in rejecting the suggestion I made at the time made it clear that he did not interest himself at all in any way in what happens there. I noticed that the hon. Member for Limehouse made a very far-reaching and rasping statement upon this subject. He said: "Let us suppose that we have this Constitution"—he was speaking generally of the Constitution—"what will be the position of the masses under it? Self-government is only a means to an end. We do not want to hand over the workers and peasants of India to the Princes, the landlords, the moneylenders, the industrialists and the lawyers. I fear that that is what we are doing." It is a very serious matter for the Government that that should be said by the official speaker of the Socialist party, because it is going to be repeated on hundreds of platforms throughout the country, and I believe it will find an echo in many Conservative hearts when it is known, especially among those who have great personal experience of India, that a lot of this talk about liberty for India only means liberty for one set of Indians to exploit another.

But the crux of the dispute between us is the question whether you should limit yourself to the provincial scheme or whether you must go forward and have federal autonomy. My Noble Friend yesterday put that very fairly. He said: "That is the great issue between us." It is true that without that undoubtedly

the Bill would have an easy passage, even among those who very much dislike many features of it. But the Government are very conscious of this weakness, and an elaborate argument is being fabricated to prove that you cannot have provincial autonomy without central autonomy, that provincial autonomy without central autonomy would be rejected by the Indian people, and even that it is impossible—some go as far as that—not only is it pernicious but physically impossible to have the one without the other.

Evidently this is the sensitive spot. Anyone who has listened to the Debates will see that this is the point upon which the advocates of this policy feel most uncomfortable. They have to prove that the one form of autonomy is inseparable from the other, and it is this link between the two that causes them the greatest anxiety. Consequently there is a regular chorus of protestations whenever it is approached. I have heard the Secretary of State here, the Chancellor of the Duchy at Manchester, and the First Commissioner of Works here last night, and my Noble Friend, and no doubt we shall presently have my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham, all engaged in proving that you must have the central if you are to have the provincial, and if they cannot have the central some of them even go so far as to say that they would rather have nothing at all and drop it all. It is rather rash to put the case so high.

After all, the Statutory Commission made a plan which presumably was a watertight plan, which envisaged provincial government only. They might have liked to have had something more, but they never said it was impossible, and Lord Irwin's Government in India, writing an elaborate critique upon that plan, went even further and treated federation as even more remote than the Simon Commission did. They contemplated a workable scheme without it being necessary to introduce this federal scheme. How can you pretend that it is unworkable when these bodies definitely made their plans upon that basis, and put them before us at such great length and with so much force? Besides, supposing in the course of our Debates we are able to prove, as we may well be able to do, that the federal structure and apparatus will not work, will not stand and will break down because of these many anomolies and contradictions and unsolved difficulties; or supposing that the Princes do not come in. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs placed that in the very forefront of his argument and held it up as the most notable fact.

I am not now going into the question of their action, because we shall see in due course, before the Second Reading of the Bill; but if we are able to show that the scheme is unworkable, if we riddle it and hold it up to the censure of Parliament as bad workmanship, or if the Princes do not come in or in the reduced number that you want to come in, where will you be after you have been persuading your followers that the provincial scheme is impossible without the central, and in a few months time you have to come to this House and say what a splendid thing the provincial scheme alone is or by itself?

I must address myself to this weak point—the junction between the two schemes; because that is the point on which all our battles will be fought in the months ahead. Talk of the unity of India! We heard a great deal about it and of the danger of centrifugal forces from the Chancellor of the Duchy. He is very much against them. But my right hon. Friend must remember that, after all, it is centrifugal forces which now keep the earth, including the Duchy of Lancaster, from falling into the sun, when our destruction would be total and immediate. But we are told that the unity of India must be the goal. The unity of India is not an end in itself. I think there is danger in assuming that it is axiomatic in our arguments that we should work for the unity of India as the end. Unity is not the end in itself. The welfare of India is the end, and the unity may or may not be the means of attaining that end, according to circumstances. Let those who seek the unity of India listen to these words of John Stuart Mill. I knew that my hon. Friend the Member for Bodmin would like to hear them, so when I came across them I thought I would save them for him. They are taken from the volume on Representative Government already quoted by the Foreign Secretary:

"When nations thus divided are under despotic Government which is stranger to all of them, which . . . chooses its instruments indifferently from all, in the course of a few generations, the identity of situation often produces harmony of feeling and

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the different races come to feel towards each other as fellow-countrymen . . . but if the era of aspiration to free government arises before this fusion has been effected the opportunity has gone by for effecting it."

These are remarkable words from a remarkable man, whom Lord Morley said he approached as a calm lamp of benignant wisdom at which he was glad to kindle his rushlight. These are remarkable words. Are we to hand over the unity of India which is simply the result of British rule? There is no real, practical unity in India apart from British rule. Endeavour as you may to diminish British control and influence and Indianise the services of Government, to that very extent, step by step, you will see the unity of India decline. The only unity left when your rule has sunk will be a unity of hatred of all foreigners, particularly the foreigners with whom they have been brought into close contact. We used to be told that if provincial autonomy were offered without central autonomy, it would be rejected. As they are rejecting everything offered, obviously that argument has lost some of its force.

If provincial autonomy is set up without central autonomy we are told that provincial governments, instead of concerning themselves with the great responsibilities entrusted to them, will be occupied in trying to obtain control of the central administration, and that they will exhaust themselves in that. I think that that is a very far-fetched, and an unconvincing argument. If Indian political classes who control provincial legislatures are not satisfied, if the Congress party, who are the same party throughout the country, are not satisfied, obviously they will endeavour to press for changes in the central legislature. Will they not be able to raise more power if, as in the central legislature, they have already got an advance guard, a dyarchy established, and have got their foot in the door, not only in the central legislature but in the Cabinet? You will not escape this agitation; you will only arm it. On the contrary, if you are to look at this question of the interests of the Provinces as compared with the dual system of the Provinces and the Centre, I have heard great authorities on India say how great a pity it would be if in the provincial legislatures the best men were drawn away from their work and forced to engage in the sterile constitutional struggle, which, on the passage of this Bill, will begin at the Centre of India.

Then we are told—"Alas, the central government is so weak. The poor, weak central government cannot continue like it is; we want a stronger government." What do you mean by a stronger government? The Secretary of State must declare an act of liberation or have a stronger government. I do not accept that for a moment. Never was there a government so strong as the existing Government of India. It is quite true that it does not use its strength, that it defers more than is desirable to the opinions of the unsatisfactory representative legislative assembly which has been gathered together at Delhi. But the inherent, latent power of the Government is indisputable. We have seen that power exercised, and skilfully exercised. Why, the whole of the formidable movement of civil disobedience led by Mr. Gandhi, was completely defeated without the use of a single British battalion, and with hardly any loss of life. Such a demonstration of power, of strength of the central government has never been seen. Of course we are told that reforms are needed, that members of the legislature ought to become members of the executive council, but to pretend that the condition of the central legislature is so weak that you cannot allow it to continue, that you must strengthen it by setting up a dyarchy, a parliament of 600 men with, as the hon. Member for Limehouse told us, "Very little to do or few subjects to deal with," is an argument which ruptures the bounds of reasonable thought.

Lastly, we are told that the Princes have offered to come into the Federation, and that the opportunity may never return. Why will the opportunity never return? Do you anticipate failure in the Provinces? If you go on with them alone, will failure be so marked that once the Princes see it they will not consider the possibility of re-entry? For only if they anticipate failure will they not return. If provincial governments are a success, there is a far greater inducement for them to associate themselves with it. When units are found to be coherent, they will wish to join in the central system. However, we are told that when the Princes made their offer to come in

they stipulated that in return there must be responsible government at the Centre. I thought it was a very funny thing that these autocratic Princes with lineages that go back for hundreds of years insisted that there must be responsibilities. I share the objection of my noble Friend to the word "irresponsible." I note the curious terminology which described as "responsible" the antics of the parliament at Ceylon, while the Select Committee dubs on page after page as "irresponsible" the majestic polity which has raised India from the misery and anarchy of former centuries. How anyone can abuse the English language, the English achievements in that way, passes my wit. What they meant was "non-responsible." Consultation of a dictionary would have relieved them from that error.

How was it that the Princes made their offer? In the dark and dismal days of the Irwin-Benn regime in India, a feeling, quite unwarranted, that the English really meant to hand over their responsibilities in India resulted in a tremor passing through the country. Every toiler who could spare a moment stopped to find out what was happening. Everywhere people were thrown into confusion. You saw a manifestation in the second horror of Cawnpore. You saw another manifestation when between some Princes and the Congress party there was an agreement reached, that if the Princes asked for responsible government the Congress party would guarantee them their hereditary despotic power in their own States. The idea that the Princes were enthusiastic about the proposal is arrant nonsense and humbug. It could never have been put across if there had been a Conservative party in this country. But when "The Times," the "Daily Herald," the "News-Chronicle" and the "Manchester Guardian" all sing the same tune in cacophonous chorus a great imposture can be maintained against the public for a considerable period of time. I could go further into this matter, but I will not, for I do not wish to trespass on the time of the House. But I have tried to put some arguments forward which, in my opinion, show that no case has been made out that Federal and Provincial Governments are inseparable, and that the desperate efforts made to bridge the gulf between them have not succeeded.

I hope that the right hon. Member for West Birmingham will, perhaps, be able to address himself to that. One other favour I would venture to ask him is that I do hope he will tell the House the charming story of his conversion. I have heard it myself before, but I would enjoy it very much again. There are some in this House who have never had the opportunity of hearing it at all. I ask the right hon. Gentleman to tell us what sturdy feelings of independence led him to undertake the task of joining the Select Committee, with what grave misgivings he viewed the kind of policies and proposals upon which he might have to pronounce, by what infinite soul-stresses, and how he was forced inch by inch by the logic of immeasurable fact to come to the conclusion that he must vote in the Government Lobby on this subject as he had always done on previous occasions.

The Lord President told us that unless we accepted this scheme we should lose India in two generations. That is a long way to look ahead. I do not know what is the exact measurement of a generation; it has never been computed. It seems to me that a remark of his old friend the late Mr. Bonar Law would be applicable—That you cannot argue with a prophet; you can only disbelieve him. As a matter of fact, looking even a few years ahead, it is a great mistake to assume that the future is a mere continuation and extension of the present and the past. The most unexpected turns back are taken by mankind in their journey. The trees do not grow up to the sky. Very often we see the sharpest zig-zags here and there, saving nations and saving great areas of the world from disaster at the last moment by sudden revulsions. You cannot look as far ahead as that but you ought to look ahead as far as you can, and ask yourself where you will be in 10 years time? This particular scheme which no one believes in really, not even the most enthusiastic Samuelite Liberal, is by no means the only way in which we can maintain our connection and our honourable contact with India.

I should like to point out to the House that we are now asked to adopt this scheme of Federal Home Rule at the Centre, and that not one of the condi-

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tions, which were envisaged at the time when it was first discussed, has been made good. There is no acceptance of it by the Indian political classes. There is no agreement betwen Mohammedans and Hindus upon the communal issue. The communal award made in default of their agreement has not been accepted by them. The anomalies of in-and-out voting in the Federal Assembly have not been solved. The franchise is wholly unsatisfactory. I daresay I prefer the one which you have now adopted but consider what it is. You are adopting a franchise which the Secretary of State and the whole India Department and the Commission which you sent to India considered was not the right franchise. It tosses to and fro on its feverish bed, now to one side and now to the other, finding nowhere in which to rest. All that is unsolved and unsettled. The financial stringency is unrelieved—though we have not heard much of it in these Debates—and there is not the wherewithal even to start the Provinces off with certainty under Federal conditions.

Nevertheless, in spite of all that the House of Commons is now asked to sign, as my noble Friend has said, what amounts to a post-dated cheque, to be presented three or four or five years hence, by unknown hands, in circumstances which no man can foretell. That is what we are asked to do. Of course, the Government will win. We do not doubt that. But when they have won, when their vast majority has shuffled through a hundred lobbies, what will they have gained? They will have gained the right to impose upon India a system wholly unsuited to the welfare of its people and abhorrent to all who speak in their name. They will have plunged vast regions into prolonged political agitation and disputation which will proceed, not only in every Province, but also at the centre and summit of the Government of India. Meanwhile, every political agitator in India will look forward to the arrival in power here of a Socialist Government which has announced beforehand that it is prepared to out-bid your proposals at every point. Meanwhile, you will have injured, baffled, discouraged and divided the great political force and party which, in a world of gathering fears, must remain one of the chief instruments of British strength, and, more important than any question of party, you will have depressed the vital heartbeat of Britain all over the globe.

7.19 p.m.

Sir AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Members in all parts of the House will feel that my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) has made a speech worthy of the great traditions of this House on one of the House's great occasions. He has been good enough to address some invitations to me, and I shall endeavour to accept them as far as is possible in the course of the short time for which I propose to ask the indulgence of the House. May I begin by remarking upon a statement of his with which I find myself in the most complete sympathy. I hope for the credit of this House that we are going to conduct the Debates, when we come to the Committee Stage of the Bill, on the lines which my right hon. Friend has indicated; that we may concentrate upon the great issues which undoubtedly are raised, discuss them at reasonable, but not obstructive length, and avoid all those various forms of torture which our exuberance of speech has forced us to devise against ourselves.

I feel that we cannot obtain much help in dealing with the problem now before us from the analogies to which so much allusion has been made. Hon. Members of His Majesty's Opposition are wont to cite the South African precedent. But they are not prepared to follow it, and it is therefore irrelevant. My right hon. Friend appeals to me as one who shared with him responsibility for the Irish Treaty and asks me whether I do not feel grave disappointment at the results. Of course I do—profound and grave disappointment. But if he means to say that if he were faced to-day with the conditions which confronted us at that time he would refuse to attempt any form of settlement, then I do not share his views and I say that, even badly as it has turned out in many respects up to the present time, I do not lose hope yet that in that Treaty the ultimate reconciliation of our peoples will be found. But what bearing has the Irish Treaty upon these Indian reforms? The treaty may have been right or wrong, but it contains no conditions and no safeguards except for Ulster, and the position of

Ulster to-day is inexpugnable. The suggested analogy would seem to be introduced for prejudice and not for reason.

I leave that analogy, and I come directly to the question before us, and the point which I wish the House to consider for a few moments is: What is the policy which my right hon. Friend and his friends commend to us and upon what basis are they going to ask the support of the Indian people for it? Something was said earlier in the Debate, I think by my Noble Friend the Member for Aldershot (Viscount Wolmer) in that very remarkable speech of his, about settling this question in a day. Surely no more careful or prolonged preparation and consideration has ever been given to any question before the House has approached its definite solution. Let me say in passing that my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary performed a useful service when he disposed once and for all of the idea that my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping is a faithful follower of the Statutory Commission or that there is, anywhere, contradiction between the Statutory Commission and the Report of the Joint Select Committee.

The Statutory Commission declared in favour of Provincial Autonomy, including the transfer of law and order. It declared for a Federal Government for all India as the ideal at which we should aim and on the realising of which responsibility at the Centre could alone begin. My right hon. Friend can find in the Statutory Commission's Report no authority to which he can appeal in support of his policy. He can find none in the Round Table Conference. He can find none in the Report of the Joint Select Committee. All have united in support of the plain principle of the Measure which the Government will presently introduce. With what moral force then can the right hon. Gentleman go to India to ask support for principles of government which have been condemned by all those authorities? What support does he expect to get from the rest of the world for a Parliament which, having caused all these inquiries to be undertaken and made, rejects the united and unanimous advice of them all in order to go back to ancient prejudices rather than look facts in the face?

I have sat in opposition with my right hon. Friend. I have sat with him as a colleague in Government. When he is in Government he judges questions under a great sense of responsibility and brings a much cooler judgment, if I may say so, to bear upon problems than he does when he is in Opposition. Above all, when he is working with colleagues like that on an equality, he cannot ride himself in blinkers as he is too often disposed to do. My right hon. Friend is apt to form swift and decisive judgments and, when he has once formed them, he excludes from his vision any fact which tells the opposite way and shuts his ears to any argument which does not conform to his preconceived notions. Until my right hon. Friend can get over that mutilation of his own talents he will never rise to that height in the Government of this country which his brilliant abilities might cause all of us to wish him to hold.

It is not merely that the supporters of the Minority Report can find no basis in the judgments of that long series of bodies for the policy which they have recommended. They do not believe in that policy themselves. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) said that for his part he saw no reason for any reforms. My Noble Friend the Member for Aldershot did not, I think, go quite as far as that. But take my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping. He is ready to concede provincial government. But, tried by his own test, does he think that it will work? He does not. Does he think it will satisfy the people to whom it is given? He has never pretended that he does. Is it going to be better government? He asserts loudly that it will be worse. Will it strengthen the connection between this country and India? He asserts that, on the contrary, it will weaken that connection. But then, if those are his views, with what right does he come to us and advise us to adopt that policy which he himself expects to fail and hopes will fail?

I take a different view. I am not in the least disappointed at or surprised by the result of the recent elections in India. I venture to think they have some lesson for the moderate politicians of that country. If they will not defend that which is reasonable, that which marks a great advance, they will derive no profit from their timidity or their cowardice. The advantage in attacking, in opposition, will always go to the extremists,

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and a party places itself in an impossible position when it takes its stand upon a platform which it has not the courage to defend. I do not regard these elections as the considered opinion of India on the reforms which are proposed, and I say that, even if I did, there is one significant fact which is worth considering. It is that the idea of refusing to work the reforms has vanished, or practically vanished, from the Indian stage. It is so generous an offer, it affords so wide a field for the legitimate activities and ambitions of India's public men, that there is no section of public opinion that will not try to work it, even though they look forward to expanding in the future the liberties which are now granted to them.

I am not discouraged about the results of the elections, and my course will not be altered by them. My course has been altered, and my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping particularly desired that I should once again tell the story of my conversion. When is my right hon. Friend going to tell the story of his frequent conversions? I am sure that you, Mr. Speaker, to whom my right hon. Friend appeared to think these matters were peculiarly interesting, would say at once that the story of my right hon. Friend's career, how he got round the many sharp corners in it, at such opportune moments, was more worthy of your attention and afforded you both more instruction and entertainment, than anything in my more humdrum career. My conversion, if you call it so, was a process of reasoning, founded on facts which were impressed more and more upon me in the course of the sittings of that committee. The right hon. Gentleman denies that the present Government of India is weak. That is not the opinion of the Lieutenant-Governors and Governors who have to uphold law and order and the British Raj in the Provinces, and I should be surprised if it was the opinion of the Central Government itself. We were in that committee, I should think without exception of party or of ultimate view, struck, not by the strength, but by the weakness. I think that is a paragraph in the report which was not challenged from any quarter in the committee.

I do not say that that Government would fall if we did nothing, I do not say that we cannot rule India by the sword if we wish to, or repress disorder and discontent with the mere force at our disposal, but I do say that we have never tried to govern India in that way, that we conquered India with Indian allies and Indian soldiers, that we have governed with Indians and through Indians, and it will be a new departure, unknown in the whole of our long connection, if you reject and refuse the natural development of the institutions in which you have bred them, the hopes which you have instilled into them, the education which you have given to them, and say you have reached the limit at which you are prepared to make further concessions to them. I was reading the other day the volume which Lady Minto has devoted to the memory of her husband, which sets out for the first time his full share in the initiation and framing of the Morley-Minto reforms. I am not going to claim for a moment that he foresaw within any measurable time, or indeed foresaw at all, a Measure of the nature that we are discussing to-day, but he laid down a principle which I think is as applicable to-day as to the day in which he wrote it. He said:

> "There is no doubt a great deal to be uneasy about, and I am more and more convinced that our control of the future will rest largely upon the mutual action of ourselves and the thoughtful portion of the Indian community, but we cannot count on their support unless we trust them and enable them to share our responsibility with them."

The weakness of the Indian Government arises from the divorce between the critics, the great mass of the Indian public, and the Government, the divorce of power to annoy from any responsibility for the consequences of the annoyance. Is it contended that Indians are not to take their part in government? It is common ground to everyone that not only the Indian police have done their duty magnificently, that not only the Indian Army is a loyal, disciplined, trustworthy force, but that throughout the Services there are Indians innumerable, in enormously greater numbers than Europeans, whom we trust with the highest responsibilities and duties, who sit in the High Courts and do justice over the European as well as over the

Indian, and do justice fairly as between man and man and race and race. There are Indians who, in these difficult days, have filled posts which have marked them out for the animosity of the terrorist and have discharged their duties with a courage that no one in the House or out of it could exceed. That is common ground. Why do you suppose that those men differ from the politicians whom you distrust? They are of the same race, they have had much the same training in their early years, they come from the same family sources. Why do you trust the one and distrust the other? Because you have put the one in positions of responsibility, and you have left the others without any reesponsibility. Unless you can bridge the divorce between the Indian politician and the responsibility for the action which he takes and the consequences which will follow, you will govern India, but you will govern it always with increasing difficulty, and the longer you delay to attack that problem the more difficult it will be ever to solve it. My right hon. Friend and those who act with him refuse to follow the Simon Commission even in respect of Provincial Autonomy.

I come now to the question of law and order. What is the result of freeing the politicians and the Indian Legislature from all responsibility for law and order? It is that the police become the target of all the bitterest attacks, of all the racial feeling, and that they can draw no support in the discharge of their duties from any popular source. As Lord Zetland said upstairs, you can do nothing which will have a more sobering influence on Indian politicians than to make them responsible for law and order. It is really absurd to talk of a Government as responsible if it is deprived of the means of discharging its first duty to a civilised community. We have a right to take precautions that, if they fail in their charge, law and order will still be maintained. The Joint Committee have taken them. I say, in the same way, that if you want to strengthen the Government of India, you must bring a body of Indian public opinion to support it, and that you can only do that by initiating them into the responsibilities which hitherto you have carried alone, leaving them no longer to a barren criticism, but inviting them to fruitful co-operation. There too, we have a right to take security, and we have taken it. Progress must be gradual. Some services are to be reserved for an indefinite time. There must be a breakdown Clause, and there must be special authorities and responsibilities vested in the representative of the Crown to meet any grave emergency. I am confident that if you decline on this occasion, after all these committees and their reports, to do more than my right hon. Friend, unwillingly, unbelieving even the wisdom or safety of what he proposes, suggests, you will concentrate an ever growing force of Indian public opinion against your rule; you will widen instead of narowing the gap which racial conditions and different traditions place between you.

There is one other thing that I should like to say. I am no more competent to interpret the minds of the Princes than any other Member of this Assembly, except in so far as their motives have been explained to me by themselves or their representatives. If I were an Indian Prince I should join the Federation. I should join it because I should feel that it was in the interests of my dynasty and my State. Those who for their own purposes encourage the Indian Princes to hold aloof take a great responsibility. I should join it if I were they. If they refuse, there can be no responsibility. The scheme of government would be that which my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping desires to see adopted by the Government.

Sir H. CROFT: It is the Simon Commission.

Sir A. CHAMBERLAIN: No, it is not the Simon Commission. The chairman of that commission may be credited with a surer knowledge of that report than even so shrewd a reader as my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bournemouth. There can be no responsibility at the Centre if the Princes refuse to federate, but, for my part, if that happens, I shall view the future with the greatest anxiety. It is within the power of this House now to satisfy the claim of those who ask that Indians shall be admitted to a share of the responsibility in the Central Government and a share of responsibility in the Provincial Governments. It is in the power of this House

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to lay down here and now the conditions on which it thinks it is safe to grant them. If you leave that issue undecided, if you leave it to drift for five, ten, I know not how many years do you think, are you sure, the hands of this House will be as free then? Are you sure that the conditions which you can obtain and maintain will be within your reach then? I see, on the contrary, the downward path of British rule not in refusing that which so many authorities have combined in thinking fair and reasonable, which so many purely British authorities have combined in thinking fair and reasonable; I see the danger to our rule in shrinking from doing what is safe and prudent to-day because some other party at some other time may do something which is foolish and unwise. We can only strengthen government in India and preserve our connection if we are true to our own selves and to our own tradition. It is not our tradition to be fearsome or grudging in welcoming, as they become fit, the assistance of what have been subject peoples in the government of their own country, nor in due course in resigning to them a large share of the burden of its responsibility.

7.50 p.m.

Mr. BAILEY: Before I subject the remarks of my right hon. Friend to the criticism which I am afraid it is my duty to subject them to, I should like to assure him, on behalf of those of us who hold views in the strongest opposition to his own, that, although we disagree with his conclusions, we nevertheless appreciate the selflessness of his labours and the great distinction he has brought to bear on his task. If I venture to criticise with freedom, as one must if one is to criticise at all, I am sure that the right hon. Gentleman will know it is from no desire to belittle him, because no one can do that, but from a desire to examine this question thoroughly from every point of view. At the outset of his speech the right hon. Gentleman—I will not say taunted, but very severely criticised the right hon. Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) and those of us who share his views in that our position was one of complete illogicality and unreasonableness. I tried to take down his words, and I understood them to be these: "You do not even believe in your own policy in regard to Provincial Autonomy. You yourselves do not think it will work, you have no faith in it, and you even hope it will fail."

There is only one emendation that I should like to make to this picture. We certainly do not hope that provincial autonomy will fail. We hope it will succeed, and no one will be more pleased if it does succeed, though our better judgment tells us that it will fail. What we feel is that to some extent we have been committed by the mistakes of a previous Joint Select Committee and that we have to make an experiment of some kind which would give to the Indian politician a reasonable opportunity of showing whether our views are right or wrong. We must take a risk of some sort, and we say that since we have to take a risk, and since we have even reluctantly to give Indian politicians the chance of showing whether we are right or wrong, let us not take a risk from which there can be no retreat. Let us not completely cross a Rubicon which we can never recross. Let us, if we find that we are mistaken, and that the risk was not as serious as we thought, then face an extension of the system of self-government. Let us, however, be in a position to be able to recede from our attitude if we were wrong. Our policy enables us to watch and to control what would be the results of self-government in India. The Government's policy only enables them to watch but not to act if the results prove to be disastrous. That is why we think our policy is to be preferred to the policy of the right hon. Gentleman.

The right hon. Gentleman made a certain number of criticisms of what I might call a subordinate character, although they were of considerable importance. One thing he said was that if we do not hand over the police, the police will become the target of the Indian politicians against which all the forces of Congress or agitation will be concentrated. I accept that, but if you transfer the police and if you have to exercise your safeguard and take them back, will they not trebly become the target of the agitators whom you ask them to suppress? If the fears in the one case will be such as almost to deflect them from their duty, the task which you would impose on them by your safeguards would make their

position almost impossible. If their position in the one case would be unworkable, in the other it would be unworkable too. That is why we think that what is proposed on paper will be meaningless and impossible when you try and put it into practice.

The right hon. Gentleman also said that our rule has been to take Indians into our confidence. Actually, that has been done in a subordinate and not an executive capacity. They have followed and we have led. That has been the secret of that great and glorious partnership. It has not been a case of their leading and our following as is proposed under this scheme. Then the right hon. Gentleman asked if we make a distinction between these Indian politicians and the great servants of Empire, the value of whose work no man can seek to diminish. I say without any hesitation that we do, and I draw the most profound distinction between the two. The ones have showed their worth as soldiers, as loyal servants, as men who have risen by honourable toil; and the others are claiming power as the result of assassination and by instigating the shooting of officers' wives. We know that to be true. There is the widest distinction between those who have served us loyally and those who have sought to destroy our rule and to whom we are now conceding all that we have won so gloriously. I read with the utmost interest the article of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Sir A. Chamberlain) in the "Daily Telegraph" of Monday week. In it he laid bare with complete lucidity the processes of his own reasoning. I listened also to the speech of the right hon. Member for Hastings (Lord E. Percy) yesterday, in which he also set out the processes of his reasoning. It is difficult to argue with two supporters of the report of the Joint Select Committee who seem to support it for entirely different reasons. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) gave as one of our main reasons for opposing the reforms that no section of Indian opinion wanted them. The right hon. Member for Hastings suggested that the argument was hardly a fit one, and he used these words:

"Our case against Provincial Autonomy and nothing else is not that the Governor General in Council is an irresponsible Governor, or an unfit person to administer the affairs of the Central Government; nor is it our case, as he seemed to think, that the mere fact that we are not going the whole way will cause such popular feeling in the Provincial Legislatures that they will continually agitate in favour of going further at the Centre. That is not our case at all. Our case is that certain functions of the Central Government are so intimately linked with provincial administration that to attempt to separate them between two authorities, each responsible to a different constituency, is a form of dyarchy, probably the worst form of dyarchy conceivable."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 11th December, 1934; cols. 262-3, Vol. 296.]

That is the view of the right hon. Member for Hastings. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham tells me he does not dissent from that view. Yet the right hon. Gentleman in laying bare his soul in that article in the "Daily Telegraph" said that at one time he would have accepted Provincial Autonomy, but he had come to Federation because he did not think that Provincial Autonomy would be acceptable to the Indian politicians. The right hon. Member for Hastings said, "That is not our case." The right hon. Member for West Birmingham, when laying bare his soul, said his reason for accepting Federation as well as Provincial Autonomy was that he did not think Provincial Autonomy would be acceptable to the Indian people. I do not wish to score debating points, but I feel that we are entitled to know which of these two points of view is really the point of view of the Joint Select Committee. If they think that Provincial Autonomy and Federation are essential, and that Provincial Autonomy without Federation is the worst form of dyarchy, is it reasonable to suppose that we should have had a unanimous report from the Simon Commission in favour of Provincial Autonomy? I do not think the Simon Commission would have committed themselves to that. I think a little more highly of the Foreign Secretary and the others associated with him on that commission than to think they would have committed themselves to the worst form of dyarchy. I admit that the alternative of Federation was not then open to them, but I say that if Federation was not open to them they had no right to commit India to the worst form of dyarchy, and therefore I find myself unable to accept the arguments of the right hon. Member for Hastings and in sympathy with the arguments set out by the right hon. Mem-

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ber for West Birmingham in the article to which I have referred.

I will examine that article a little more closely, because I think it is so illuminating. What are the arguments of my right hon. Friend against Provincial Autonomy? Is it that Provincial Autonomy does not provide a fair field for the Indian politician to operate in? Is it that it does not provide a fair field for him in which to exercise his responsibilities? I think there is much in the argument that unless you give people an opportunity to co-operate they will remain aloof. But do not we give them an opportunity to co-operate under Provincial Autonomy? Let me quote the words of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, which are better than any words I could utter. Speaking of Provincial Autonomy he says:

"There is work and ample scope for Indian patriots and reformers in the field allotted to these Provincial Governments if they will settle down to the task which is nearest to their hand. There is a career here which is as useful and interesting as any that is open to all but a few Englishmen in the public life of this country."

Is not that enough as an instalment for co-operation—an opportunity equal to that which only a few people in the public life of this country have got? I say that if they will not co-operate on those terms, when they have only had self-government for ten years, they will never co-operate. That is our fundamental objection to the whole thing. If the Indian politicians will not accept these terms the onus is on the Government to show that they will accept any terms. As to treating the statements of these Indian politicians as being bluff, are the Government quite so sure that the Indian politicians are bluffing as much as they are? I am very much more inclined to think that the men who organised terrorism throughout India will stick to what they desire rather than co-operate with the hand of weakness. It may be said of these Congress leaders that they are the "rough necks" of Indian politics. When I listen to those arguments I think that some hon. Members would suppose that if we let the convicts out of Dartmoor and put them in charge of the police they would respond to the responsibility placed on them. I do not believe it myself, but I am not a Liberal. I say that we might ignore the Congress leaders as men who, like de Valera, will accumulate wisdom with responsibility, but what about Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, that peerless son of Indian democracy, that person about whose ability there has never been a shadow of doubt, one of the elder statesmen, a man with 30 years experience of Indian public life, a man who is always spoken of in terms of exaggerated reverence? What did he say about our handiwork when speaking at Allahabad University on 16th January, 1933? His observations upon the present report of the Joint Select Committee, we are told in the "Times," were unfavourable, but for some reason or other, whether it be distaste or lack of complete information, the "Times" has not published these observations in full, and so, not to do the right hon. Gentleman—I refer to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru—an injustice, I do not quote them, but quote what he said on the 16th January, 1933. In advising the Conrgess men to accept the White Paper he said:

"It places such a powerful weapon in your hands that if you can send into your legislatures the right sort of men"—

A nice sort of definition—the right sort of men—

"I have not the least doubt you can achieve all you want probably much quicker than you imagine,"—

and much quicker, I should say, than we or the Government imagine—

"because the cumulative weight and effect of these changes will be such that they dare not resist your demand for the further extension of the Constitution, its natural and logical evolution being Dominion status. I am approaching the question from the point of view of a practical man who wants what you want for this country but who differs from you in method."

That is the most significant sentence of all—"who differs from you in methods."

"It is far better that you should send those who oppose you to gaol than suffer yourself to be shut up."

So, according to the anticipations of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru he will send the Governor who invokes the safeguards to gaol. It will not be a case of the Governor sending Indian politicians to gaol any more. But, seriously, because I do not want to make debating points, if the great Indian moderate, not the school boy of Indian politics, says that, can we place any faith upon the proposed co-operation of the Indian Congress and Indian politicians generally? Of course we cannot. I challenge the

Government or the right hon. Gentleman to produce a single statement by a single Indian politician of repute that he or his party will co-operate in these reforms, and will not use them as a lever to get whittled down the safeguards which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham tells us are essential if this scheme is to be carried out.

The right hon. Gentleman in his article, writing of provincial autonomy, says that the Indians will not co-operate if we do not give them Central Government. He says the provincial Governments will become instruments for the overthrow of the Central Government. I say that the new power we are setting up at the Centre will become an instrument for the overthrow completely of all the safeguards by which the right hon. Gentleman sets such store and the complete ruin of the British connection.

Take the question of the transfer of responsibility for law and order. The right hon. Gentleman says in that article there are grave risks, but he thinks the way to deal with the matter is by safeguards sufficient and efficient enough to eliminate those risks—I am epitomising what he said. The first of the Safeguards is that if a Minister is inefficient or corrupt or unsatisfactory in any serious way he may be dismissed by the Governor. That is only a paper safeguard, because if you dismiss the Minister you have no alternative, you have to exercise your final Safeguard. So that is only an imaginary safeguard—I do not say the final Safeguard is imaginary. The next Safeguard is that the Secretary of State can still recruit Europeans for the higher offices in the police and other Government services. That, I admit, if carried out, is some measure of safeguard. Again, the rules and regulations of the police force are not to be altered without the consent of the Governor-General or the Governor. We have already been told by the hon. Member for Broxtowe (Mr. Cocks) that these Europeans are only a mere drop in the ocean of Indians employed as police. These Safeguards will be of the utmost value if they can be carried out, but can they? The efficiency of a police force does not depend upon the rules by which it is governed, but whether those rules are carried out. Can those rules be carried out?

I will give one or two illustrations of how, in my mind, that Safeguard will work. Perhaps four or five Europeans will know that things are going wrong with the police in their Departments, that things are deteriorating and the rules are not being carried out. They go to the Governor-General and say to him that he must put his foot down, because the efficiency or loyalty of their subordinates is being undermined by the policy of the Minister. The Governor-General sees the Minister, the leader of Congress, or whatever agitating party is in power. The Minister meets him with a flat refusal to alter the position. What a terrible situation the Governor-General will be in. For the sake of efficiency in five or six Departments he has either to have a first-class constitutional crisis or to let the matter go by default. He will communicate with the Secretary of State for India—it may not be the present Secretary of State. Is the Secretary of State, especially if he happens to be one committed to the abolition of safeguards, going to risk a terrific campaign in the British Press and a first-rate crisis in India, the upshot of which he cannot foresee, for the sake of five or six European officials who say that their Departments are being corrupted or being made disloyal in some way or other? We know perfectly well how, as British citizens, they have been let down in the past under our present weak Administration at home. That is why we are weak in India—because the Government are weak here, not because they are weak there.

I say the Government will be weaker still in the future, and that one by one these officers, recruited by the Secretary of State, will know that it is no use appealing to Caesar to see that their position is kept as it should be. One by one they will give up the fight, as I believe many have done now, because they do not believe there is any hope. I say the regulations will go by default. It is not as if we shall have a sudden crisis, but day by day there will be infiltration until, finally, when it is required to use the forces of law and order, it will be found, as was found in the case of Ireland, that all the safeguards were nothing but a scrap of paper. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman that the Irish situation does not lend any analogy to the Indian situation. I do not say that the Coali-

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tion Government could have found a better policy for Ireland, but I do say that the unanimous opinion of our party leaders, with that of the right hon. Member for Carnarvon Boroughs (Mr. Lloyd George) thrown in, that the estimates they formed of the results of the Irish treaty have proved completely wrong. I do not say the Treaty itself should not have been entered into, it may have been the only thing possible in a terrible situation, but the views they formed as to the results of it have been completely falsified. I will read to the House one or two very short passages showing the views they formed, because I never think it is fair to attribute views to other people in your own words. The right hon. Member for Chelsea (Sir S. Hoare), who was an architect of that Constitution, said in moving the Address:

"Henceforth the scene of the triumph of Irish statesmen will be transferred from the sterile deserts of opposition in this House to the fertile fields of reconstruction in Ireland. We are taking to-day a long step forward on the path of peace."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 14th December, 1921; col. 10, Vol. 149.]

Was he right? I wonder what the Dominions Secretary thinks of the long step forward on the path of peace. What do the Irish people, who are suffering to-day from the duties, think of that long step forward on the path of peace? What did the architects of the Treaty themselves think of that long step forward on the path of peace? They may have been right, but the predictions that they made as to the results of their policy were completely wrong. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham who was leading the Unionist party on that occasion, also made some references to it. He said:

"My hon. Friend the Member for South Antrim says—I do not quote his exact words—that the Government have shamed themselves, and have brought, I think he said, dishonour on their country, by signing a treaty which deserted their friends and curried favour with their enemies. That is the judgment of my hon. Friend speaking under great stress and amidst difficulties of a very peculiar character. I will give no expression to a judgment of my own. Is my friend so free from partiality, so detached in mind from all that is going on at the moment and all that has been going on in these last bitter years, is he so detached and impartial that the judgment of history is to be written by him? I appeal from his judgment—an honest judgment as it may be, but profoundly unjust as I think it—I appeal from his judgment to the judgment of the world, and what I care more for than the world, the judgment of the Empire, which has hailed this treaty as a great act of statesmanship, a God-send to the Empire, and a new addition to its strength."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 8th February, 1922; col. 208, Vol. 150.]

Has it proved to be a new addition to its strength? I do not read these quotations in order to revive unhappy memories of battles long ago, but I am bound to ask myself, when the right hon. Gentleman says that all the weight of authority is on his side, whether the weight of authority was not on his side then, and were not we who were alone—not myself, but those who took that view—right as to the consequences of what was being done? Those who opposed them were wrong in thinking that they had a better policy. They thought they were the best judges of the future.

I wish to judge no man. Every Member must act according to his own conscience, including Members of the Government, but will Members act according to their own consciences when, to-night, they go into the Division Lobby to support the Government? Or are they, on the other hand, following the line of least resistance? To resolve that doubt I suggest that they should put this question to themselves: Suppose Lord Salisbury and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping were to-day at the head of the Government. Hon. members may say "Impossible," but many things have happened that the Liberal party have thought impossible. Suppose that we assume the impossible—if it be not too difficult a feat for the intellect—and that those two right hon. Gentlemen were at the head of the Government and had the Conservative party machine in their hands. Suppose that they were able to use that party machine in opposition to these proposals. Would hon. Gentlemen be voting still with their consciences, or would they find, after grave misgivings, that their consciences had suddenly seen another light?

I do not know, but many of us feel that the Government have not given us a fair deal and that they have tried to force this matter through. We believe that the sort of pressure which cannot be proved hase been exercised both against us and the Princes. We believe that. If there were a free Vote, the situation would be different, but we feel that it is our duty

to resist and to have no part in it. We feel that this is the product of an unprincipled Coalition, a spineless party and an indifferent people, and that when we look back on the part that we have played, it will be one of the brightest passages in our public life.

8.18 p.m.

Lieut.-Commander AGNEW: I have not previously intervened in the Debates upon India, but if I had it would have been with the intention of criticising the course which His Majesty's Government have from time to time invited the House to take in regard to this very great problem. Outside in the country I have taken some part in the active campaign which has been waged against the proposals contained in the White Paper. Since the publication of the Report of the Joint Select Committee, with the weight of evidence and of argument that it contains, and with its modification of the original scheme, in the way of extra safeguards, I have dissociated myself from my Noble Friend the Member for Aldershot (Viscount Wolmer) and his Friends, because, in broad principle I have accepted the new Government and am prepared to consider favourably a Bill which the Government may see fit to produce on the general lines of Provincial Autonomy, federation and central responsibility. I think the hon. Member for Finchley (Mr. Cadogan) in his speech on Monday, appeared to be egotistical, but his fears have proved groundless. I am expressing a similar anxiety, and I ask for the indulgence of the House if I prove guilty.

When, in my short political life, India first came into prominence, the Statutory Commission had made its report. Following very soon upon that, a further step had been taken in the inauguration of those Round Table Conferences which had been provided for and recommended by the Statutory Commission. Therefore I was never in the position of considering the report upon its merits as an isolated production which we should have to judge as to whether it was wise or not. My own inclinations, in the matter of reform of a kind that we could impose upon Eastern peoples, were very much against democracy, and I think they still are. I have spent some time in the Service in Eastern countries, though not in India itself, and I had only to compare the conditions that you would find in one of those Eastern countries, namely China, with conditions in Japan. I make no comment upon the forms of their respective internal governments, because the question is not whether we like their form of government or whether we do not. The fact is that anybody who may be called upon to serve in His Majesty's ships in Far Eastern waters never knows at any time whether he may have to take part in some Force, landed for the sole purpose of law and order which the Government of China have failed to keep; whereas you know that any visit which you may make to Japan will be purely of a ceremonial nature. The lesson which was indelibly stamped upon me was that democracy in China had failed. That was nearly 10 years ago, and I took the view that there was no chance in the future of that democracy coming to success. It seems true that the tradition form of Eastern government is authoritarianism.

I was therefore inclined to take a view quite opposed to democracy in India. Another factor exercised my mind. The Prime Minister came down to this House quite soon after the National Government was formed, and when our attention was taken up in surviving as well as we could the national crisis which was then before us. He said that his policy with regard to India was the same as it had been in the previous January, at a time when he was Prime Minister of another administration. In the short time that we had then to consider such a problem as India, I felt that the Prime Minister's declaration was not altogether free from the risk that the Prime Minister had not shed some of the ideas in which his former colleagues had enshrined him, and, for the sake of preserving certainly a continuity with regard to the peace of India, but an unwise continuity, had come down to a new House of Commons and had endeavoured to get its Members to endorse that view.

Mr. BUCHANAN: Has he not altered every one of his views, because he came into the National Government?

Lieut.-Commander AGNEW: No; he altered a great many of his views, and we know how the country has benefited. Taking the question at its face value, without looking into it too deeply, it would seem as if he had changed his

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view upon almost everything at that time, but he took the right course. Then came the White Paper. It is a grandiose scheme; even those who support it wholeheartedly say that. My first reaction to it was one of great disgust. I considered that the advance made in it was too rapid. I knew that the authoritative document which we had at that time in our possession—the report of the Statutory Commission — had recommended in substance an immediate grant of provincial autonomy, and that anything else which it went on to advise was purely in the future, and purely in the direction of an ultimate ideal. Therefore, I felt that it was right to attempt to associate myself with those who, equally sceptical and with far greater experience than I had myself, were organising something in the nature of a public consciousness, with a distinct and strong tinge of opposition in it, up and down the country. It was because it was desired to organise in the country an opposition to these proposals that two bodies were formed, the one in support of the Government proposals, and the other against them, the latter of which I joined.

That campaign which was conducted in the country was almost entirely and purely destructive in its character. It sought to set the proposals at naught, and to say that they were unwise. But it must inevitably happen that, when you set out to destroy anything, you will be asked what you intend to put up in its place, and that was the cry that came back to us a little later from the people who listened to the speeches that were made in the country. Then the body with which I was lately associated were trapped irretrievably, and they could not escape from the net in which they put themselves. They said to themselves, "What shall we do?" They took from the bookshelf the only thing that was to their hand—the report of the Statutory Commission—and they said, not "The whole hog," but "Half the hog." That was provincial autonomy.

It is of course quite clear that in saying that they entirely ignored the whole proceedings of the Indian Round Table Conferences and the new developments that had taken place at those conferences, culminating in the quite unexpected declaration of the Sovereign Princes of India that they would take part in a Central Government of India, and a responsible Central Government of India. I would say in passing that there could be no question of Sovereign Princes taking any part in a Central Government of India where they were placing themselves in the position of being subordinate to a bureaucracy. That is a position which they would not contemplate. Indeed, in the past they have in some cases been only too fully inclined to resent the measure of bureaucratic control which, as they have sometimes maintained, the Government of India has exercised quite apart from its power of paramountcy.

The campaign, of course, went on in the country until the report of the Joint Select Committee was produced. I need not go into the broad provisions of that report, because they must be very well known to all hon. Members in the House towards the end of a three days' Debate, even if they had not studied them before. Now, as we have heard in the Debate, my Noble Friend the Member for Aldershot and his friends are prepared to accept provincial autonomy. The Noble Lord said in his speech that he would accept it, but that it would be a very different kind of provincial autonomy from that which was envisaged in the report of the Joint Select Committee. He did not, however, except on the one point of the transfer of law and order, go on to tell us where the difference would lie.

If we are to take our cue in that matter from the speech of the hon. Member for Gorton (Mr. Bailey), who is not here at the moment, we are to gather that it is to be left to the Indian politician to decide whether we risk right or wrong. In other words, the Noble Lord and his friends are prepared to grant provincial autonomy, but to leave it to the Indian politician to judge whether the experiment which they are prepared to make in provincial autonomy is a right experiment or a wrong one. Later on the hon. Member for Gorton went on to say that the administration will fail, and it will fail because we are weak here, not because we are weak in India. One can only deduce from that that, whatever kind of administration there is in India—whether the present one is left un-

changed, or whether the proposal of provincial autonomy only is adopted, or whether the proposals of the Joint Select Committee are adopted—the cardinal point remains that, provided those who exercise the administration are steadfast, the dyarchy will operate according to the way in which Ministers in this country decide on the question whether the safeguards contained in the report are to be used.

That is bound to be the case. You can never eliminate dyarchy from India; you can only decide, in making your proposals, to put that dyarchy in the wisest place; and I believe that in giving this almost unlimited power—power such as certainly the Stuart sovereigns never had—we are saying to the men on the spot: "Exercise your own discretion and your own judgment—you have the power, whether by special responsibility or by Governors' Acts, to carry on the government of your Province or your Federation, as the case may be—and we will back you up." We say that now: "We will back you up." Hon. Members will ask at once what is to happen supposing that a Government of a very different complexion should come into power in this country, and did not back up their own Administration on the spot. That is no new story in the history of Colonial administration in this Empire. It has frequently happened that the men on the spot have not been backed up. There is nothing new in the success of our scheme resting on the carrying out of that principle.

This scheme will depend for its success on two things—first, on the co-operation which Indians give in its working; and, secondly, and equally and complementarily, on the fair backing up which those who are charged with the duty of administering it get from this end. It has been said that you could grant Provincial Autonomy and yet not give Federation, that you could employ a new and greater Indian Council as a unit which would bind together both your Provinces and your States. I do not believe, if you really do grant Provincial Autonomy, if you give the large measure of power which my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) has said he is willing to give, although he does not think it would succeed, you could possibly make that scheme work, because you would have such a pressure coming from the Provinces, such an uprush of healthy but perhaps raw Parliamentary effort, that you would make the position of your bureaucracy in the Centre quite an impossible one. I believe the only real check on an unwise and rash policy pursued in the Provinces, the only check upon, shall we say, an undue demonstration of their nationalism in these provincial units, is to have exactly the same kind of men, just as astute, taking a full part and a responsible part in the government of your Centre also.

Brigadier-General Sir HENRY CROFT: How does the speech that my hon. and gallant Friend is delivering now work in with his declaration at Bristol on 4th October that he was dismayed at the policy of federal self-government to be forced through without the sanction of the electorate?

Lieut.-Commander AGNEW: Since that date at Bristol a most important fact has occurred, that is the publication of the report of the Committee and, if the hon. Baronet has not himself changed in his view—I know he has not—by having read that report, I admit that I have. I believe it is a most weighty document and one which not only makes its case out but absolutely proves it.

Sir H. CROFT: Is there anything between the Simon Commission and the Select Committee which alters this vital principle that my hon. and gallant Friend stated when he said he was dismayed that the Conservative Government should be a party to setting up central self-government in India?

Lieut.-Commander AGNEW: It has become clear to me, although perhaps I may not be able to make it clear to the House, that the Federal self-Government that you set up—self-government is the hon. Baronet's word and not mine—is a safeguard, a check and a break on the excessive steps that the Provincial Governments might try to take. Let me take another case, and perhaps the hon. Baronet will be persuaded himself. In the case of finance, there is no doubt that the principal tax collector will be the Federation, but, as time goes on, although there will certainly be important non-voteable expenditure which must be incurred by the Central Government in the form of the military

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Budget, that part of the Budget that can be controlled at all will deal very largely with the expanding social services in the provinces. Therefore, with the tax collector as one authority and the tax spender another authority, it seems to me that, if you were to have Provincial Autonomy, a responsible and elected body, bringing pressure on a purely bureaucratic Centre you would have a position approaching chaos.

I do not wish to argue further the main provisions which underlie all this controversy. I am quite satisfied that federation is the right plan to support. The die is cast. I believe it was cast many years ago when, as the First Commissioner of Works said, politicians for the most part indulged in the policy of trying to see through their coloured glasses the same kind of civilisation springing up in India as they had in England. Instead of fostering the indigenous institutions that Indians had, although admittedly they were in a somewhat disorganised and disrupted form through many hundreds of years of civil war, they certainly set out to reproduce, as far as they could, an exact copy of the society and the life that we have here. I regard it as an almost disastrous error that throughout the latter part of the eighteenth century and the nineteenth century the British suppressed many of the native monarchies that existed in India and that we ourselves created this problem of two kinds of India, the British India and the India of the Indian States. If we were in the position now—but I do not think it would have been now; it would have been long before this—of desiring to federate merely a large body of Indian States, we could do it certainly far more easily and with far less apprehension than we have now. But there the problem is and I believe the wise thing and the only thing to do now is to go forward with courage.

I believe my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping and his friends are going out into No Man's Land, and they will subject themselves, I am afraid, not only to the fire of the enemy in front but absolutely unavoidably to the rifles of some of their own men who are waiting to shoot straight at the objective. They have taken up a position which I believe they know themselves is an untenable one and, when they find that the Princes will come into the Federation, as they most surely will, they will before long see that Federation set up. Much time must elapse before then. Provincial Autonomy will have to be put into working order. We have yet to know that the Princes have expressed of their free will a desire to come into a Federation. Letters written by Princes have been published; I have seen a copy of one of them. I should describe it as a letter of a Prince who had certainly taken the far wiser course than I took myself of waiting until the Joint Select Committee reported to see what the report was, and since the committee has reported I have yet to learn from any hon. Member speaking in this Debate that any one Prince has stated that he will not come into the Federation. Certainly it would be premature if individual Princes or anyone, so soon after the report was published, and before the Government have produced their Bill, were to state that they were willing to come into the scheme. We must go forward with courage, and I would say to the hon. Baronet who is the sole representative of his friends at the moment——

Sir H. CROFT: Your friends up to a week ago.

Lieut.-Commander AGNEW: I have fully admitted that fact in the course of my speech, but I would say to the hon. Baronet before I resume my seat, in the words of a minor poet:

> "Man finds fulfilment never in retreat,
> Escape in giving, not in taking toll."

8.46 p.m.

Sir REGINALD CRADDOCK: I regret very greatly, as a supporter of the National Government, that, because of their Indian policy I have to oppose them in this Motion. I feel that when this great question is out of the way, whichever way it is settled, there can be no reason at all why those who have differed from this policy and those who have maintained it should not join together and combine in the interests of good government in this country. It has been my lot to be consultant in the Morley-Minto reforms as head of an Indian Province, and in the case of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms as a member of the Executive Council of the Viceroy, and now in the White Paper Report as a Member of this

House and of the Joint Select Committee. I will contrast these two countries with which we are dealing, the vast areas of arena with which we are concerned, the heterogeneous peoples, the divisions and antagonisms, the undemocratic outlook and the mass ignorance. Compare at the same time the gradual evolution of our own country and Constitution. Sixty-four years have passed since education became compulsory. We have mass education. Compare those two; look on this picture and on that. Is the criticism unreasonable that we are going too fast and too far—three upheavals of the Constitution in 25 years, a single generation? Surely in regard to the criticism that we are going too fast and too far, we stand on very sure ground.

What is the second criticism? What advantage will accrue to the 97 per cent. who agree with us and wish us to stay and who are behind us if we only knew their minds? Will their lives and property be more secure? Will landlords and moneylenders abate their demands? No, quite the reverse. It looks to me that when we have gone on a little we shall have reversed the Magnificat, and shall find that we have given good things to the rich and that we have sent away the poor man. Lord Reading, in his first speech on his arrival in India, said that he hoped that by reason of his race he would be able to hear the almost inaudible expressions of the multitude. He used striking phrases, but I should think that they have passed from his memory. It was said that we ought to listen more and that then the people would understand more. It has always been so with us. We have listened much more to the clamour of the few than the murmur of the many.

My Labour friends above the Gangway are ready to admit that we are creating in the country an oligarchy of self-seeking. I ask my Labour friends if the extended franchise will enable these ignorant people to defend themselves? In time possibly, but how long will it be? My Labour friends will chastise these people for their good, but will it be for their good? Some of the echoes of the millions of people come across to me from serving officers who come home on leave. They give an illustration of what those masses of people understand. They tell us that there will be no justice there. When Congress had been suppressed they said, "Why on earth did you not suppress it before? We do not want to be bothered with these things." One very bold peasant proprietor, who was extraordinarily blunt in what he said, described the oligarchy to whom powers were being committed as a den of thieves.

I would like to refer to the criticisms that are hurled at the Conservative minority of the Joint Select Committee. We are reminded constantly of statements made by authorised high authorities, the Viceroy and the Prime Minister and so forth, and that we shall be breaking pledges if we do not agree to the whole scheme and nothing but the scheme. As far as the statements of high officials are concerned, I would point out that the Joint Select Committee, on page 6 of their report, have already made it clear that in their opinion all such statements of policy have added nothing to the substance of the 1919 declaration. That at once disposes of their subsequent declarations. In the opinion of the Committee they are all covered and they have added nothing to the substance of previous declarations. They reproduce the whole of the preamble, and with it special qualifications to which notice has been paid. I wish to lay stress on one of those qualifications which says:

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

That is made clear. The opinion of the Indian people is one of responsibility. Another qualification is:

> "And whereas the action of Parliament in such matters must be guided by the co-operation received from those on whom new opportunities of service will be conferred and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility."

Those words are not verbiage to be cast away. They are the great safeguards which Mr. Montagu introduced to calm the doubts of the people at that time. It was said, "There are all those safeguards and you need not be afraid." Where are those safeguards now? No attention whatever is paid to them. Long periods of non-co-operation have elapsed, and there was the boycott of the Statutory Commission, which was advanced by two years. All these things were

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done but that policy has never received due attention.

One thing is certain, and that is that the idea that we shall be breaking any pledge if we do not accept the whole Constitution put before us, is nothing but a myth. There is no truth in it at all. We are told that the minority policy is quite sterile, and that we give them nothing. We are told that the minority policy is a mere negation and contains nothing constructive in it. The concessions of the minority, they tell us, are mean and petty. The subject of land revenue, which we are willing to concede, is most important. Anyone who says that control over land revenue is a mean and petty concession, must either be wilfully blind or woefully ignorant. Land revenue covers half the whole administrative field and many subsidiary departments. It gives power to assess, collect, revise, suspend and remit the rent and revenues. It gives power over the administration of famine relief, covers land tenures and the rights of landlord and tenant, and deals with more than half the revenue of every Province. Therefore on the successful administration of this Department depends the future prosperity of 90 per cent. of the population living in town or village.

Take the question of finance. Surely nobody would say that the control over Provincial finance is a mean and petty concession. Forests and Irrigation are two other great subjects which are to be handed over to the new Tribunes. I need not take time discussing the importance of these subjects. Not only are they well known but their importance is fully emphasised in the Majority Report. The first criticism that I have to answer on the question of our proposals is, why are we prepared to transfer land revenue, and why are we opposed to the transfer of law and order. I will tell the House as best I can what an extraordinary difference there is between these two subjects. The land revenue system is based on an ancient foundation which comes to us from the Moguls, entirely oriental in its conception. We have improved it, removed its harshness and it has continued on the old foundation. Therefore, there is no subject, no department of State, no section of administration which is not accustomed to it and understand it. If the system is so well understood by the rural classes, and if the franchise peasant can make his voice heard, this is the one subject on which he will have knowledge.

As regards finance, obviously, any failures and deficiencies are bound to stand out. They cannot be concealed. Concrete figures and accounts have to be published. The Finance Member cannot hide his budget of the last year, with its possible failures or the budget that he is to pass in the following year. The failures of the one or the prospects of the other are known to his colleagues, to the Ministers and to everyone who can understand figures. Therefore, however disagreeable they may be, they will not be hidden. We separate these departments and give them over to the people, including irrigation and the land revenues, in order that they can carry on as far as possible what the Simon Commission advised. Although there is no pledge that compels us to do these things, we realise that expectations have been aroused and we want as far as possible to meet those expectations and to give the Ministers in the new provincial Governments powers so that mistakes that have been made may more easily be rectified.

When we come to law and order, that is a totally different matter. The lives and liberties of the people are at stake. The decline of respect for the law is invidious. You cannot say exactly how far it is going and how far it has gone. What is the record in regard to the maintenance of law and order in pre-British India? Is there anything to encourage us to think that the people have a natural aptitude for maintaining peace in their own country? There is one thing that we may be certain of, and that is that if the law does not overawe the law breaker, before very long the law breaker will overawe the law. Even in the Indian States we have been asked as British administrators to go in and restore law and order. Again, we are faced with the fact, and we must recognise it, that there are no municipal authorities, not even the great corporations, that have ever had the duty entrusted to them of supervising the police or taking any part over the control of crime. I ask this House, what confidence can we repose in handing over to unskilled hands, hands that may be not only inexperienced but timid, and

may be, unfortunately sometimes surrounded with graft, the master key of the stability of the Indian Empire?

The entire structure of the Pax Britannica is maintained by the chain of obedience from village headmen to Governor-General in Council at the top, and we cannot afford to weaken any link in that chain. The whole thing may break at one link. That is the reason why we of the minority are not able to agree to the transfer of law and order to hands that are so inexperienced and incompetent. We are told that there is the Army. How can the Army administer the peace of a whole Continent? You cannot administer a country the size of India with only the Army. The British Army in India is only 50,000 or 60,000 strong and, therefore, the number available for these purposes is very small. I should like the House to realise that internal disorders usually arise when there is trouble on the frontiers. How can the Army continue to function if several links in the chain should simultaneously go slack, and we may be sure that when frontier troubles arise internal disorders will also occur; they would be synchronised with design.

The right hon. Gentleman the Foreign Secretary referred to the observations of the Statutory Commission on the subject of law and order. It is like bearding the lion in his den for someone like myself to deal with a subject which the Foreign Secretary, whose powers of debate and forensic eloquence we all admire, has already dealt with in his report. Nevertheless, I will not be daunted by my formidable antagonist, and, in order to show that I am quite right in my view, I will read the passage, about which the right hon. Gentleman was thinking, in which the Commission say they are opposed to the transfer of law and order. They candidly stated the case on both sides, and then said:

"There are British politicians sincerely desirous of helping India along the road stated in the Preamble to the Act of 1919, who may find great difficulty, whether from want of appreciation of Indian conditions or from an innate conviction of the curative effects of self-government, in realising why it is that many experienced and disinterested administrators, who are familiar with the actual situation, as well as important bodies of non-official opinion, hesitate to give their support at the present time to the proposal. It would do a great injustice to these men to dismiss their view as mere bureaucratic prejudice, and it would be a grave failure in the discharge of the Commission's duty to the British Parliament if we did not state with fulness and candour the reasons which, in the minds of so many men with actual experience of India, have led them to advise against this step. We are bound to point out that it is a view by no means confined to the majority of British officers who are Inspectors-General of the police in the Provinces, or to others, whether British or Indians in important official positions, but it has been expressed or impliedly supported by large bodies of non-official Indian opinion."

That shows that it is not mere blind prejudice of an obstinate bureaucracy. It is a knowledge of the country, a knowledge of the administration, upon which my doubts are based. I have worked with Indians, I have been in charge of small areas and large areas, and I am speaking from a practical knowledge of India. I have had thousands of consultations with them and thousands of opportunities to observe their actions and compare them with their conversations. Let me give another quotation in order to show that this view was also taken by the committees which were appointed by the Provincial Legislative Councils to accompany the Simon Commission through the Provinces. All of them, with the exception of Madras, proposed shifts and devices of one kind or another to mitigate the dangers consequent upon the transfer of law and order. The Bombay Committee, elected by the Legislature, was frankly opposed to transfer. They said:

"All subjects with the exception of law and order should now be transferred. With regard to law and order, we think that for some years this subject should continue to remain reserved. The existence of serious communal disorders between two major communities in this Presidency and elsewhere in India makes the immediate transfer of this subject to the control of a newly elected council difficult and dangerous. Such transfer may have a very serious and prejudicial effect on the efficiency and impartiality of the police and magistrates."

Let me give just one more quotation, a short one, from the Mohammedan members of the Bihar and Orissa Elected Committee, which was appointed to join the Simon Commission. This is what they said:

"We earnestly advocate the proposal contained in the confidential Memorandum of the local government that law and order should continue to be a reserved subject. We have given this matter our fullest consideration, and are confident that our con-

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munity and a large section of the public outside will not consider our views reactionary, but will see in this recommendation the expression of a widely held conviction that not until our politicians proved in less important spheres of administration their ability to discharge their responsibility can we entrust them with the protection of our lives and property and the vindication of our rights in the courts of justice. We strongly support the proposal made by the local government in their Memorandum."

That was the fear of these elected persons; and no doubt it was a genuine fear. The commission, after all, came down on the side of transfer, and gave two reasons for their attitude. One was that it was constitutionally inconsistent, and that it would be regarded by all in India as a proof of weakness if we were afraid to reserve law and order because of the pressure put upon us. We have been having pressure put upon us for years and years, ever since these councils began. We have been attacked in the Press, but it did not deter us from keeping the question of law and order in our own hands. This is the very reverse of a bold course. The second reason was that they declined to apply occidental considerations to an Oriental country. What Indian cares or understands whether it is a constitutional inconsistency or an anomaly? He does not trouble his head about that. There may be half-a-dozen lawyers and politicians in the country who may make a fuss about it, but these people do not care about constitutional anomalies. What they want is to come in quietly and govern. Surely the British nation is not so devoid of courage as to incur grave risks to the peace and liberty of their fellow subjects rather than sustain the pressure which has been put upon them by a few glib politicians. That is not the way in which we either started our rule in India or have kept it since. These fears of the minority, not only as expressed then to the Simon Commission, appear again and again in all the later documents. The people of the country, the minorities, know far better than we in England can ever do the manner in which the powers conceded will be used to gratify every ancient feud according to the favour of the community to which the leading party belongs. This is the last sentence in the Simon Commission's Report:

"In writing this report we have made no allusion to the events of the last few months in India. In fact the whole of our principal recommendations were arrived at and unanimously agreed upon before those events occurred. We have not altered a line of our report on that account, for it is necessary to look behind particular instances and take a longer view."

But the House has to take those events into account, and has also to take into account all the events that occurred later. We cannot call the revolutionary movement, the civil disobedience and the terrorist campaign "particular instances" and neglect them. There were also the Cawnpore massacres, which lasted four days.

Major MILNER: How about Amritsar?

Sir R. CRADDOCK: I would not call that a "particular instance." Certainly it was not; there was a long history behind it. I had intended to have made some remarks upon one or two other subjects, but I will conclude with a few words on the question of the Princes. I am not going to touch on the question whether pressure was put on them or not. I do not know. Anyhow, whatever happened, let us assume that it was some form of peaceful picketing. The question is not whether the Princes will come in or not. The much greater question is whether it is wise for the Government to urge them to do so. I agree with the swan song of the greatest friend that England ever had among the Princes, the Jam Sahib. He felt fears, which I think are very well grounded, that it might be dangerous either for the Crown to fulfil its obligation to the Princes or for the Princes to fulfil their obligations to the Crown. There is one reason behind all that which has not been referred to. It is well known that the politicians, especially the more advanced members, put pressure on the Princes to enter the Federation. Why was that? Does anyone suppose that if the politicians, Congress and their associates, thought that the inclusion of the Princes would help the British Government and thwart all their aims, they would exert pressure on the Princes to enter the Federation? Surely that is not so.

I wish the House particularly to take note of the dangers of that kind in the scheme before us. We in the Services have had as a guide all the years the words "Justice, equity and good conscience." I would utter a warning after my experience during all those

years. If we give these powers unduly early until Indians have proved themselves in some of the lesser fields, we shall have Ministers who are unable to carry on, even if they are honest, and no matter what precautions we take underground intrigues will be used. Those words have been our guide and inspiration for all those years, and I hope they will not be allowed under this dangerous scheme to fade away until they perish out of the land.

9.24 p.m.

Sir JOSEPH NALL: My right hon. Friend the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) reminded the House that during the three days Debate the financial situation has not been discussed. I do not propose at this time of the night to enter upon any analysis of the financial position as it affects the proposals now before the House, except to remind the House that it is generally accepted as the case that the inevitable addition to expenditure in India on the inauguration of the federal scheme and the raising of revenue to-day are not an easy matter, but a very acute matter governing certain questions of trade and fiscal policy. I want briefly to refer to matters of fiscal policy, and to remind the House that in the White Paper as it was first presented there was, in fact, no real reference to or provision for the continuance of what we know as the Fiscal Convention. An explanation of that convention is contained in the volumes of the commission's report. In the report of the Joint Committee it is observed that without some special provision in the new Bill defending the fiscal liberty of the new Federal Government, the Government under the White Paper proposals would have complete and absolute freedom to do what it liked in matters of fiscal policy. That matter has been to a certain extent cleared up.

I was one who joined in urging the trading community to deal with this matter of policy on its merits, and as trading organisations to avoid becoming mixed up in a political issue, which in all conscience has produced enough division among people of the same political party. I did say that I thought there was a confused amount of talk on the matter of good will. My hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster visited Manchester the other day and told his hearers that you could not sell cotton shirts at the end of a bayonet. Nobody in his senses supposes that you can. To go down to Manchester and talk in that strain is really begging the question. The British manufacturer has never really lost the good will of the masses in India. If there be any lack of good will, it has been in official circles and in the delay in dealing with trade matters. The trade agreement has been under discussion for over a year. Certain modifications of the existing tariff were, if not agreed, arranged between the British and Indian interests when the British Cotton Mission was in India to the extent that the Indian interests would not oppose certain readjustments. Notwithstanding that, official circles have taken all these months to get on with the implementing of that understanding, which, in any case, amounts to a very small thing.

I want to remind the House of this, and put it on record so that we may have it in our minds. In 1931 the ad valorem duty on British cotton goods was raised to 25 per cent. and on foreign goods to 31¼ per cent. There were alternative duties, specific duties, of 4⅜ annas per lb. on English cloth, and the same duty per lb. on foreign cloth in proportion. These duties worked alternatively with the ad valorem duties, whichever was higher, having to be paid. In September, 1932, the duty on British goods remained at 25 per cent., while that on foreign goods was raised to 50 per cent. and a specific duty of 5¼ annas per lb. In June, 1933, the duty on foreign goods was again raised, this time to 75 per cent. or an alternative duty of 6¾ annas per lb. That was in 1933. These increases in the duties, although one would suppose they would have some effect on the volume of British goods entering India, did not in the particular circumstances of the case prove sufficient to give any real measure of preference to British manufacturers. In 1934, when the question of the negotiation of an agreement was reached, following the agreement of 1934 that the 75 per cent. tax on foreign goods should be reduced to a tax of 50 per cent., with the specific duty of 5¼ annas per lb., the duty on British goods was not altered. Notwithstanding the talks and agreements, the duties have remained where they were ever since. Not only was the duty on foreign cloth

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reduced from 75 per cent. to 50 per cent., but in May of this year on certain small special lines the 50 per cent. was actually reduced to 35 per cent. in the case of certain foreign goods.

All this time the question of the Indo-British trading agreement has been dragging on, and month after month the trading community has been expecting to be told what is to be done. I understand that, if not actually completed, the agreement is in process of completion, but I sincerely hope that when the completion of this agreement is announced there will be something more useful and material than a mere reduction of 5 per cent. in the ad valorem duty, because without an effective increase in the duty on foreign imports this would be of little or no use. I would remind the House that this question of an ad valorem duty only relates to part of the trade. What still remains is a specific duty per lb. Any agreement that does not achieve a substantial change in this will not be worth the paper it is written on. It is this question of duties to which we ought to address ourselves. The good will of the masses has never changed. All through the Congress boycott they wished to buy from us, and it was only by violent intimidation that the boycott was pursued. It collapsed when Lord Willingdon applied the Ordinances in 1931. The moment a strong Government took the place of vacillation, order was restored and the boycott collapsed. The market has to some extent been restored, but as long as the duties remain at their present high level, neither can this country sell what it should in India, nor can the consuming masses buy what they require.

I mention that subject because I feel that this good will, about which Lancashire and the British trading community in general have been so much lectured, ought to begin at home. We want to see, even under the present Government of India, a bigger display of good will in this matter of trade and trading relations. If we cannot get a better display of good will under the Government as it is, what on earth will it be like under the Federal proposals? I do not know that any of my hon. Friends have said so in these Debates but some of them have certainly said on other occasions, "If you have a Federal Centre in which the Princes and the States are represented is it not obvious that you will get a better understanding of this matter and that the needs of the consuming masses will be better considered"? In British India to-day the consuming areas are far greater than the manufacturing and industrial areas. If this question of the preponderating interest had any influence in the matter at all, the present Government in British India ought to be able to effect a change, but, in fact, such a change has not appeared.

That brings me to the point relating to discrimination. It is laid down—and this is a point to which further attention will have to be directed by the House—that the proposed Federal Government is to be free to engage in trade agreements with any country, with certain restrictions about imposing unfair disadvantages on Great Britain. We must have regard to the fact that in the East to-day we are faced with a competition which hardly existed, not so many years ago. We have to realise that even Soviet Russia, Manchuria and China have been penetrating commercially and industrially in a manner which was never contemplated in this country a comparatively few years ago. The same kind of penetration may go on in India, through the medium of Indian agencies, to the great detriment of this country unless special care is taken to preserve our relations with the Indian market. It is a fact that big financial interests concerned in Eastern trade are gradually clearing out of British industrial securities. Why are they doing so? Because they view this question of our trade in India and the East with misgiving. They realise that unless this country takes more care in these matters, particularly in regard to India, we are going to lose ground not only in cotton, in which we have lost considerably already, but in other sections of our export trade. The last Coalition Government made the great mistake of abrogating the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. I should be out of order in discussing that matter now and I only make the comment that that blunder of the last Coalition Government set up reactions from which we are not yet clear. Let it not be said that this Coalition committed the consequential blunder of weakening

our control in India, throwing together a combination which might be disastrous to us in the years to come.

I pass from these matters to the questions which have been under debate regarding the Federation and the Provinces. It is difficult to reconcile the arguments of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen who support this scheme. The Foreign Secretary and others have said that the provincial scheme will not work unless the subject of law and order is handed over. On the other hand, we are told that the provincial scheme will not work unless the federal scheme is inaugurated at the same time. My right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Sir A. Chamberlain) and others have continually told us that the present Central Government is weak and that there must be a stronger Central Government. It is just as logical and cogent to argue that the Centre should control defence and foreign affairs, and that there is no real responsibility unless the Centre has control in these matters, as to argue that the provincial governments must control the police. If the provincial governments cannot function without control of the police, how in the world is the Federal Centre which is not concerned with defence or foreign affairs going to be stronger than the present Centre which does control those things? I hope that the Lord President when he replies will indicate how that anomaly can be explained away.

We are told on the one hand by my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham that unless the federal scheme is inaugurated at the same time, the provincial scheme will never work. We are told by the Foreign Secretary that progress must depend upon events and that it is no use trying to work to a time-table. Which is right? We are told to-day that the provincial scheme set out in the Joint Select Committee's Report will not work unless the federal scheme is passed at the same time. How, then, did the Statutory Commission come to suppose that their provincial scheme would work without any federal scheme at all? On the one hand, it is argued that there is no difference between the two provincial proposals. On the other hand, we are told that there is a considerable difference. When the Foreign Secretary said, as I understood him to say, that the Statutory Commission had proposed complete provincial self-government with control of the police in the manner indicated by the Joint Select Committee he might have made it clear that in the Statutory Commission's Report there was a very important qualification on this subject of law and order. If hon. Members turn to Volume II of the report, page 46, paragraph 63, they will find this passage:

> "It will be recalled that we are not suggesting that a provincial Government must be deprived of the strength and experience which official training supplies, and we contemplate that at any rate in some provinces, an administrator of this experience would be in charge of the Department of Law and Order, though the Statute would not enact that this must be so. It will, of course, be understood that an official member of a provincial Cabinet is not necessarily a man of British birth; in fact, the Department of Police has been administered with acknowledged success in more than one province by an Executive Councillor who was an Indian and moreover was not a member of the Civil Service."

Pursuing the same question we find on page 48, paragraph 64, of the report the following passage:

> "We are unanimous in presenting the views that provincial dyarchy should now come to an end in the sense that a unitary Government should be established, composed of members appointed by the Governor and that the Statute should be in such form as to make it possible for such a Government to include an element drawn from official and other non-elected sources."

How does the Foreign Secretary reconcile that with what he was telling us this afternoon? The fact is that this argument that the provincial scheme or any advance in the provincial field cannot be effected without enacting a federal scheme at the same time is a latter-day S.O.S., dragged up at the last moment to try to stampede the people who have misgivings on the whole scheme.

I am sorry the time does not permit me to say all that I would wish to say on some aspects of this matter. It has been said, and said very truly, by the Secretary of State and by other Government speakers that unless the Princes come into the federal scheme, it would be impossible to let a federal scheme work as a purely British-India Federation, but under the provisions of the scheme we have already heard how the half-dozen States with the largest population are being specially enticed into the Federation, and if those half-dozen

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States, or the necessary minimum proportion of States, indicate their wish to accede to the Federation, and the Federation is in fact inaugurated on that basis, it follows that unless some special provision is made to give an entirely undue loading and weighting to the representation of those States, the Federation must in fact and for all practical purposes be a British-India Federation, and that difficult mosaic, of which the Foreign Secretary spoke, of little States intermingled in among the Provinces would still be there, the only difference being that in the actual Legislature there would be a representative of Princes from the larger States.

I suggest that it is a most unfortunate, indeed a humiliating, coincidence that at this time, when the question of the accession or otherwise of the States is under discussion, the India Office should have thought it necessary suddenly to try to adjust with several States those incidents of ill-feeling and irritation which in some cases have existed for many years. We heard in this House on Tuesday night about the negotiations for the retrocession to Mysore of the settlement of Bangalore, and we heard about the negotiations with Travancore for the retrocession of Tangasseri. Why should these matters come to a head just at this time, and why in particular should this question with Travancore arise at this time? I will admit at once that there is a difference between it and Bangalore, but the French and the Portuguese are not being asked to give up their settlements on the coast of India. They are not in the Federation. Pondicherry and the other French Settlements and the Portuguese Settlements are not asked to pay their quotas towards the purchase of the Princes. Why then should these matters of adjustment with the States suddenly arise at a time when the States are showing unwillingness to come into the Federation? I suggest that where these matters require adjustment, they should, in the ordinary British way, be discussed and be put right, independently of and without any regard to the federal question or the pending legislation.

Sir S. HOARE: That is exactly what is happening now.

Sir J. NALL: The right hon. Gentleman says that that is what is happening now, but it has already been made pretty clear that it is only after many years in the case of Mysore that this thing has come to a head at this time, and while my right hon. Friend may be convinced that it is merely a coincidence, opinion outside will not quite accept that view. I suggest to the House that in the arguments that have been advanced upon this question of the Federal Centre, we have not been shown any real reason why an advance should not be made in the provinces. I do not accept at all what was said this afternoon by my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham that we who are opposing the whole scheme cannot logically support an advance in the provinces. We can and we do criticise what has happened in the provinces. It may well be, as I believe is the case, that it is because they have not been guided by a sufficiently strong hand in the early years of provincial autonomy in certain departments, it is because the British element has been too rapidly withdrawn, that things have gone wrong in so many departments, but there is no reason why that should not be put right and why further departments should not be transferred, provided the guiding hand is retained and chaos is avoided.

The whole history of the association of this country with India is in the balance. I believe that not only is our association with India in the balance, but our prestige throughout the East is in the balance too. Let us not, in a moment of hurried reform, relinquish that essential control upon the brightest jewel in the Imperial Crown, but let us rather continue with a guiding hand to advance, and to encourage Indians to participate in the government of their own country.

9.53 p.m.

Mr. LANSBURY: It is said that adversity makes strange bed-fellows. We shall find ourselves to-night, in the second division, if there be a second division, with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) and his cohorts supporting us in our vote against this Motion. We shall be glad to welcome their assistance.

Mr. CHURCHILL: We shall not object to your presence.

Mr. LANSBURY: I cannot help saying that I have certainly enjoyed the

right hon. Gentleman's attack on his friends on the Treasury Bench, but I wish it had been in connection with another subject, because, although we are going to vote against this proposal of the Government, I think it is a rather terrible thing that it should go out to India that a right hon. Member of this House, with all his record behind him and knowing quite well what the position of things in India is, has so little faith, so little confidence in the people of India and their good will. His attitude of mind is the most reactionary that I think I have ever listened to in this House. It is a long time since I first heard him here, and I believe I have heard him box the compass on almost every question. Certainly, when I have listened to him in the past, when he has stood at that box speaking for the Government of the day, I never thought that I should live to see the day when he would be the leader of a band of—I do not know know how to describe them—nondescript disheards. I think I may as well leave him to the tender mercies of his friends in the Conservative party. It is certain that if they follow him, the Socialist party, which he loves so much, will soon exchange places with his friends. We are grateful to him from that point of view, but from the point of view of the well-being of the people of this country and of India, I think that, brilliant as his speech was to-day—it was one of the best which I have heard him deliver—it was far and away the most mischievous speech he has made. Our friends in India and in this country will quite understand that he is with us, because in the House of Commons there are only two Division lobbies.

I should like to say a word about democracy. People always support democracy when democracy does what they think it ought to do. I do not think any of us have any complaint about our personal relationships with hon. Members, but I am always amused when they talk about our political action. When we do something of which they approve, we are good, common sense and reasonable people, but, if we say something of which they disapprove, we are something totally different. We have grown out of that sort of nonsense. It is exactly the attitude adopted towards the Indians. I want to make a plea to Members who have served in India and others to have a little regard for the feelings of Indian scholars and the Indian people generally. It has been my privilege to know a great number of Indians for the past 40 or 50 years, and I am always ashamed when they address meetings in first-class language, which is up to that of the right hon. Member for Epping, that I, as an Englishman who is helping to rule them, can hardly say a word in any language but my own. I raise my hat to them for their acquirements, education and knowledge.

At the end of nearly every speech in this Debate it has been asked whether, as democracy is on trial everywhere in the world, this is the time to give more democracy to the people in the East. Democracy nowhere has really failed, for nowhere in the world has it really been tried out. Even in this country true democracy—that is, with the whole of the people with universal suffrage—has been in operation for only a relatively few years, and it is beside the mark to say to us, who are always taking our stand on the side of democracy and asking for its extension to other nations, that democracy has gone so far and that it must now be arrested. I think it was Mr. Gladstone or someone like him who once said that you should apply more democracy, not less.

There is a lot of talk about our making this a party question, and we are told that we ought not to take the party view of it. That is sheer nonsense, because what question is there, unless the nation is at war, that is not a party question? The worst of being old and having come to this place as a listener and a Member for a very long time is that I remember all these things being said on both sides of the House against one another. What political advantage will my friends here gain by our action in regard to India? It may be said that there are votes in the country. I will say a word on that later. When Lord Durham was fighting on the Canadian question he was almost on his deathbead before the party opposition was overcome so that the proposals with regard to Canada could be carried. With regard to South Africa, I remember that famous election when we were all indulging in "terminological inexactitudes," as the right hon. Member for Epping described them, in regard to Chinese labour. Was there ever a more furious party conflict than that? And the issue was South

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African Confederation. Does anybody imagine that if the Liberals had not won at that time we should have got out of these difficulties in the way that we did? Then, in regard to Ireland, this House was divided for 40 years, and this sort of nonsensical rhetorical charge was made against one another. Is it not time that we learned a little wisdom? I try not to make those charges either outside or inside the House, because, strange as it may seem, I am trying to learn wisdom, even as old as I am. I daresay many hon. Gentlemen think that it is time.

The fact is, however, that I have always understood that people are divided about great principles. We as Socialists are internationalists. We are as nationalist in our love for our country as anybody in the House, but we also respect those who love their own countries. Someone said something about obstruction when this Bill comes in. We shall not obstruct, and because we take that attitude the right hon. Member for Epping has once or twice chivvied us by saying, "You are not an Opposition; you do not fight the Government. It is we who fight the Government." One of his friends on the mountain behind me described us as a rabble. I said many months ago that, as far as this party was concerned, we would not attempt to try and obstruct the business of the House. We have never taken the view that it was the business of the Opposition to oppose merely for the sake of proving that it was an Opposition. We have tried hard in this Parliament to fight on matters of principle. We have been told during these discussions what certain people will do when the Bill comes forward. I only want to say that I hope the House will not remain a sort of Tory caucus in which members of the Tory party will continually bring charges of selling the country or doing the Princes down, and that sort of thing, but that they will allow us to discuss the Bill in a rational manner. We at least will do that, and will stand the "chivying" of the right hon. Gentleman when the time comes.

I may remind the House, amid all these rhetorical fireworks, that it seems to have been forgotten that we have been discussing questions affecting the lives of 350,000,000 people, and that no voice from India has been heard in these debates, no Indian has been able to take part.

[Hon. Members: "Why should they?"]

I think they ought to have taken part. The Secretary of State knows, and he has admitted it, that a large proportion of those who came here to give evidence and to assist the Joint Select Committee with information are entirely dissatisfied with the report, and I want to ask the Lord President—and I hope the answer will be in the affirmative—whether the Government will not ask the British Broadcasting Corporation to allow representatives of the organised parties in India to broadcast their opinions, so that the voice of India may be heard. It may be said that the Government cannot control the British Broadcasting Corporation. I say the Government can. The Government have the right, according to the charter, to ask that certain things shall be done, and if we want to be fair to the Indians we ought to allow them to choose their own speaker or speakers. I am perfectly certain that if there were a general strike on and the right hon. Member for Epping were in the Government, we should see what the British Broadcasting Corporation could do. One thing for which I really admire him is that he does do things, especially if they tell against us. In all seriousness I put it to the Lord President that the Government should make representations to the British Broadcasting Corporation that persons in India representative of Indian opinion shall be allowed to broadcast their views. Unless something of that kind is done the people of this country will not be in a position to judge fairly. I also want to ask the right hon. Gentleman a question which my hon. Friend the Member for Broxtowe (Mr. Cocks) put to the Foreign Secretary. One of the main reasons why this report is being rejected in India is that those who came to give evidence, and those who did not, believe the Government have given up all idea of dominion status in the true sense of the word. The right hon. Gentleman will remember that the Indian delegates put before the Committee a Memorandum in which they said:

> "Indian public opinion has been profoundly stirred by the demands made during the last two or three years to qualify the repeated pledges by responsible Ministers."

And I think this is worthy of the attention of the House and of the Government:

"Since it is apparently contended that only a definite statement in an Act of Parliament would be binding on future Parliaments, and that even the solemn declaration made by His Majesty the King-Emperor on a former occasion is not authoritative, we feel that a declaration in the Preamble is essential in order to remove the present grave misgivings and avoid future misunderstandings. My colleagues say we therefore consider that this country is bound to implement this pledge of honour."

The Viceroy, the present Lord Halifax, said on 1st November, 1929:

"The goal of British policy was stated in the declaration of August, 1917, to be that of providing for the gradual development of governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire."

Then there is something in between which I need not read, and the final paragraph says:

"But in view of the doubts"—

and this is the Viceroy who is speaking—

"which have been expressed both in Great Britain and in India regarding the interpretation to be placed on the intentions of the British Government in enacting the Statute of 1919 I am authorised on behalf of His Majesty's Government to state clearly that in their judgment it is implicit in the declaration of 1917 that the only issue of India's constitutional progress as there contemplated is the attainment of Dominion status."

In 1930 the Prime Minister, speaking at the Guildhall Banquet on 9th November, said:

"We shall be in conference with men and women who are representative of a people with whom we have been thrown into contact, and the closest contact, for centuries, whose history we have moulded, the ways of whose destiny we have changed, whose minds we have influenced, and with their representatives and with their Princes we shall be engaged in the same task of broadening liberty so that we may live with them under the same Crown, they enjoying Dominion self-government which is essential for national self-respect and contentment."

The people of India have a right to know implicitly and definitely whether that is still the policy of the Government. I hope the Lord President will tell us. I asked him this in the last Debate on India in which I took part, in April, 1933, I think. I want to recall to the House what Dominion status really means. Dominion status was defined by the Imperial Relations Committee of the Imperial Conference of 1926. They said that the members of the British Commonwealth are

"autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations."

I want to know whether the Government accept the position that India is entitled to come into the British Commonwealth of Nations and become a partner, with the status laid down in that statement? Thirdly, I want to ask whether the Government accept the statement made by the late Mr. Bonar Law who, speaking on Dominion home rule which, I submit, means the same thing, said:

"If the self-governing Dominion of Australia or Canada chooses to-morrow to say, 'We will no longer make a part of the British Empire,' we"—

that is Great Britain—

"would not try to force them. Dominion Home Rule means the right to decide for themselves."

I have always held that that was the policy of the late Labour Government of which the right hon. Gentleman was Prime Minister. Whenever I was charged with being a member of a Government that had put 60,000 people in prison, I pointed out that the late Lord Irwin and Mr. Wedgwood Benn were doing their best in very difficult circumstances to bring about co-operation between those whom we were imprisoning at the time and others in India, and ourselves, in order that the people of India might attain this status. When the Round Table Conference was on, the GoGvernment of which I was a member took their stand on the declaration made by the Labour party conference in 1927, before any of these events, in which it was explicitly laid down that the Indian people had the right to self-determination, not as a privilege but as a right, and to self-government, and that we would pursue that policy by co-operation between the Indians and ourselves. The Labour party stand by that policy, and the Government have not implemented it and have not even repeated what the Indians who came here asked them to repeat, namely, the pledge that the policy which the Government had adopted was to lead on to Dominion status. When the Foreign Secretary answered us, he passed on to the statement made by my hon. Friend, the minority of the Joint Select Committee, and asked, "How can

[Mr. Lansbury.]

you say 10 years? Or how can you say any period?" Suppose that you do not say any period, but say what you really mean, just to clear this up. Whether it is 10 years or 1,000 years, let us know exactly what the Government mean, because the matter should be cleared up.

A great deal has been said about the lack of education and so on of the Indian people, and some people have said something about the ability of the Indian people to fight. Everyone knows that I am not much of a person at that, but I was told during the War by one gentleman, whom I went to see and whom I wanted to enlist in the Home Rule for India campaign: "Let the Indians come and fight in this War and then they will be considered in the day of peace." Now let us see. Lord Birkenhead's memoirs have just been published, and in the "Daily Telegraph" of 9th November there was this:

"F. E. Smith served with the Indian Corps from October, 1914, until the late spring of 1915 . . . . He could never forget the poignant tragedy of the Indian Army Corps"—

I would call the attention of every Member of the House to these words—

"which, as surely as the Expeditionary Force and with as terrible a toll of life, saved the British Empire by blocking the first terrific German assault in the late autumn of 1914. Perhaps more was demanded of the Indian Corps than of any other troops in the War. The circumstances of their use were terrible and pathetic. So in a sense were the troops themselves. They were brought from their sunny homes in India; they took ship and sailed across a strange ocean which many of them imagined to be peopled with malignant gods . . . . They were wanting in the revengeful fury of those who were to see their country desolated by artillery, their cathedrals razed to the ground, and their civilians shot. Many of them were, indeed, ignorant of whom they were to fight; some thought it was the Russians. Without the slightest experience of modern warfare they were projected suddenly into the ghastly slaughter of Ypres."

I would also point out that these men were brought to fight for freedom, for the right of small nationalities to self-government. Probably they went back to their homes having heard this from Belgians, Frenchmen and Englishmen. And people sneer and jeer at them to-day as if they were incapable of managing their own affairs. [HON. MEMBERS: "No!"] I have heard some statements in this House about the corruption of Indians, the bribery of Indians, about what will happen when the jobs are going, how they will be after them, and so on. I do not believe it. I believe that the Indian people are as capable and as cultured as any nation in the world. They have behind them a great tradition. Finally, I would remind the House of something that was said by Mr. Sheil, the great Irish orator, in defence of Irishmen, when in rather similar circumstances his people were demanding rights which were denied them in this House. He said this—and I am going to put in India as well as the other nations, because I want to apply what he said to the Indian troops who fought in Flanders and elsewhere:

"The blood of England, Ireland, Scotland and India flowed in the same stream. On the same field their dead lay cold and stark together. In the same deep pit their bodies were deposited, partakers in every peril; in the glory shall they not be permitted to participate, and shall they be told as a requital that they are estranged from the noble country in whose defence their life's blood was poured out?"

I challenge this House in regard to India. You have sent Viceroys, you have sent Princes—you sent the Duke of Connaught—and carried a message to them that they would be given Home Rule. You have told them that this country would not concede, but give them freely, the right to manage their own affairs. These proposals are not proposals which mean that. They do not give power to the common people. They do not give the right to Indians to manage and control their own affairs. They were good enough to fight for us. Surely to goodness even now you will take this Measure back and bring forward one which will make them equal partners with the rest of the British Dominions.

10.26 p.m.

The LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Mr. Baldwin): We have just got to the end of one of the most interesting and certainly one of the most important Debates that have taken place in the House since I have been a Member of it. I should like to express the feeling which I have, and which I think is common to all Members of the House, that I remember no Debate where the speeches have been more worthy of the greatness of the occasion and where almost without exception they have been

argued with conviction, with sincerity, and with moderation. In regard to the question that the right hon. Gentleman put to me, the Government stand by all the pledges that have been given. They make no distinction between pledges. What this House has to do to-night is to decide whether it agrees with the Government that a Bill shall be framed on the report of the Joint Select Committee, which is clearly and distinctly the step which it recommends the House to take at this time, a step not so long as the right hon. Gentleman desires but longer than is desired by some of my hon. Friends.

The real opposition to this recommendation comes from a number of my own supporters. [HON. MEMBERS: "No!"] I am going to address myself mainly to them to-night—we shall have an opportunity of discussing our differences when we have the Bill before us—but there are some things that I feel I must say to the House to-night. It is always a serious matter to any leader of a party when a number of his followers decline for the time to follow him. It must be. It must make him put questions to himself as to whether there is anything in his leadership that is wrong, whether he is wrong himself, and generally what the fault is. But I feel this very strongly, that in a matter of such importance as this, and in a party like ours—again, I apologise to the House for mentioning our party, but it is by far the largest party in the House at present——

Mr. LANSBURY: On a point of Order. This is not a Tory caucus meeting. Have we not a right to ask the right hon. Gentleman to reply to our Amendment?

Mr. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman must make his speech in his own way.

Mr. LANSBURY: The House of Commons has some rights left. If the right hon. Gentleman desires to meet his supporters, let him meet them outside.

Sir A. CHAMBERLAIN: Is there not included in the rights common to all Members of the House the right of the Leader of the House to the same courteous hearing that we gave to the right hon. Gentleman?

Mr. LANSBURY: I do not intend to allow the right hon. Gentleman to lecture me. I should not have risen if the Lord President of the Council had not said that he was not going to speak to us but was going to speak to his own supporters.

10.30 p.m.

Mr. BALDWIN: I can assure hon. Members opposite, who generally give a courteous hearing to me, that I shall say nothing which will justify my being shouted down from those benches. I have listened to this Debate, and I think that the ruling was given on this Amendment that the discussion might continue being general, and I must claim the right of taking my own method of defending my own case, my object being to get to-night the best majority I can for the cause I am supporting, because I believe that it will be of great importance both to India and to this country. I have not the least objection to addressing my general remarks to the House. I have not very long, and I do not wish to say anything which will lead to interruption in any quarter of the House and thereby curtail what I have to say. Just as my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Sir A. Chamberlain) gave the reasons for what my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) called his conversion, I should like to give reasons to the House which make me take the view I do and recommend it so strongly to my party, many of whom take an opposite view. I do not expect to convert them to-night any more than I expect to convert hon. Members opposite, but I want to put to the House as clearly as I can the reasons why I support the course recommended by the Joint Select Committee.

First of all, I start from the Declaration of 1917 which hon. Members will remember was quoted in the introduction of the report of the Statutory Commission, and they took that as their instruction. That is, to make a step towards responsible Government. That was in the Preamble of the Bill. I recognise at once that there was an equal right of anyone to investigate the matter, to stand still, to go back, or to go forward. The Statutory Commission recommended a long step forward, and much stress has been laid in the course of the discussion upon the immediate reception in India of the first accounts of the

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contents of the report—the first reactions. There is one thing of importance for us to remember here. First of all, I yield place to none in my recognition of what this country has done in India, and had it not been for what we have done you would not have the demand from India which is causing us all this difficulty, the demand which some hon. Members are prepared to meet much more quickly than hon. Members in other parts of the House, and the demand which some hon. Members of the House are hardly prepared to meet at this moment at all. It is we, after all, that gave India, for the first time in her history, or at any rate for the first time in the century, that sense of unity which is now being so strongly echoed from one end of India to the other. It is our rule that gave her these. It is our rule that gave her law and order and justice, and it is our rule that has filled her with admiration for it, so that she wants to take her part more and more in it, until such time as she is competent to rule herself. That is, in effect, a great tribute to us.

I am neither surprised nor am I perturbed by reports that reach this country of some of the first reactions in that country, but it is a great mistake to say that no one in India wants the White Paper. That is an effective phrase, but I believe that it creates a wholly false impression. It is true that there has been a good deal of wordy denunciation from members of Congress, and it is a fact that other political parties have criticised it but this does not mean that there will not be responsibly-minded Indians ready to play their part in the new Constitution by the time that the Constitution is law. We have, as a mater of fact, made inquiries during the last few days and received assurances both from the Government of India and from all the Provincial Governments on two points: first, that in their view the proposals are workable and, secondly, that in their view there will be people to work those proposals. That is as far as we can go at present. The first reaction is a very different thing from the considered reaction that may come in India by the time they have had an opportunity of studying the report and also when they have studied the Bill which will be founded on that report.

I believe the implication of the phrase that no one wants the White Paper, is misleading. It is misleading because if you think from that that they are satisfied with things as they are, you will make a mistake fraught with danger if you allow your impression to lead you into action. It is quite true that a great many members of the Congress Party, although their precise programme at the moment is obscure, desire to get the immediate grant of full Dominion status and all that it implies. The moderates and the extremists ask not only for the fresh responsibilities that we propose to confer upon them but they would undoubtedly like more. They want more responsibility than we can give, and when the Bill comes forward we shall be prepared to argue that we are recommending what in our opinion is the furthest step that can be taken with safety to the prospects of democracy, which is the thing we are most anxious about in India. It goes further than many of my hon. Friends wish to go, but less far than hon. Members opposite would go.

We may take it for certain that the whole of India is desirous for a real political advance, and that real political advance is what we are prepared to recommend. I wish my hon. Friends particularly, because they are the only section to take that view, to realise that, although what you may call vocal political India is not large numerically, having regard to the population of India, yet the Indian, wherever he may be, looks for advice rather to the men of his own blood, of his own religion, of his own language than he does to the best of our own race. That you cannot help. That is a hard, stubborn fact that you have to realise. When you get this large element, an educated element, a political element, a vocal element, that element will always have more influence with the ordinary people in their own country than we can hope to have. That is a fact that we must recognise.

I must apologise for hurrying, but I have not very long to speak. I want to say a word on one subject, and I hope that I shall not have to allude to it again, which very vitally touches a great many of us. I want to say a word on the Irish analogy. The real analogy is not that of 1921 but an analogy of 50 or 100 years ago. One of my main reasons for advo-

cating a forward policy at this time is to avoid a repetition of 1921 in this Parliament, and without saying anything more about it I will just say this, that there can be no greater proof of the bankruptcy of statesmanship than what happened in 1921. The causes may be obscure, but there is no doubt that at some time and in some way the statesmen of this country missed their chance. You cannot afford to miss it in what is a much graver and much more serious question.

Apropos of that, I should like to utter one word of protest about the way in which many of my friends listen to all kinds of rumours which are running about now with regard to the Princes of India. They cannot do any good in the controversy, and they may do a great deal of harm. The hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) mentioned last night a story he had heard about the number of gun salutes allotted to certain Princes in order to elicit their support. When contradicted he most frankly withdrew what he had said. I am glad he did. I often think that in our criticisms—and we are apt to criticise sharply when our feelings are deep—of what may go on in India that we are sometimes apt to make charges lightly, and charges that might have been made in this country against our own people not so very long ago. When I heard the story about gun salutes being offered to the Princes, I wondered what happened at the passing of the Act of Union with Scotland. Was anything offered on that occasion? The less we try to attribute motives in these things the better.

While I am on that subject I want to refer to the speech which I did not hear but which I have read very carefully, made by the hon. and gallant Member for Chichester (Major Courtauld). I regret that speech profoundly and I am sure that on reflection the hon. and gallant Member will regret it also. It has been common I know in journals which have been published, and in diaries, to give private conversations, but it has not been done in this House since I can remember. I should not allude to it now but for this one reason. I am an old and intimate friend of Lord Willingdon who is not here to speak for himself and who has sent, unsolicited and spontaneously, a cable which in fairness to Lord Willingdon I must read. I am sure that the hon. and gallant Member when he reads this telegram and reflects on it will feel that he took a course which was not wise, and will be quite prepared to offer Lord Willingdon an apology, which I think is his due. Lord Willingdon sent the following cable this morning:

"I have just seen Reuters account of Courtauld's speech in the House of Commons referring to a private conversation I had with him and Lymington regarding the Princes and Federation. In the first place, I resent very much that use should have been made of a purely private conversation between gentlemen in a Debate in the House of Commons. But further than that I deny absolutely using the words that he puts into my mouth."

Then Lord Willingdon quotes from Reuter a sentence beginning, "You fellows coming out here"—which I have verified as being in the OFFICIAL REPORT—and then continues:

"These words are a complete travesty of the truth. My attitude towards all the Princes has been all through, and will continue to be, that my advice to them is that it is to their own advantage to enter Federation, providing that they are satisfied that the Bill protects their interests but any suggestion of bribes or coercion on my part is without any foundation whatsoever, and this would I believe be endorsed by every Prince."

Finally, Courtauld is reported to have said that it is clear that a substantial body of Princes, led by men of prestige and importance, do not accept the report. I do not know what is his authority for such a statement, since no Prince to my knowledge, either speaking himself or through his Ministers, has declared himself in any way whatsoever about the report, which incidentally goes a long way further to meet their demands than the White Paper."

I apologise for having read that cable, but Lord Willingdon is a very old friend and there is no more honourable man existing, and I felt it only due to him to give his message when he has no chance of defending himself.

There is one more false analogy between Ireland and India. My right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham and my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping said, and I agreed with them entirely, that we have been most disappointed with recent events in Ireland. I hope, with my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham, that time yet may heal these old wounds; but it has been a great disappointment to us who took part in the events of 1921. We

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have to remember this: There is an unhappy legacy in Ireland. There have been events between the two races that will take a lot of forgetting. Those things do not exist in India. There is no racial hatred in India. We have always had many friends in India. At the time of the Mutiny we had more friends than enemies in India. If that had not been the case there would be no British India to-day. Therefore, there is not that background in India where you might look for some unhappy memories of old times dominating the political present, as unfortunately they sometimes do to-day in Ireland.

I think that that analogy is quite wrong. I may reassure my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping that what happened in Ireland, so far as I am concerned, had nothing to do with what happened at the Carlton Club. I only mention that now in order to say what I have never said in public, and to say it in the presence of my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham. At that time, which in many ways was a most fateful and difficult time for me, I like to think that from the moment of that meeting my right hon. Friend never imputed to me any motive but an honourable one. He recognised my action. It merely added in my case to the pleasure that I felt for five years in giving him all the support that a Prime Minister could give to a Foreign Secretary who was doing a great work in Europe.

I will pack as much as I can in the last 10 minutes that remain to me. I want to say a word or two on the statement that is often made, that democracy is on its last legs in Europe, and that we are trying to impose on India a system that is already passing away. It is quite true that in other countries in Europe democracy has passed away, but in no country where it has had roots. And it has roots here. The bad workman complains of his tools. Perhaps many of us might conceive an environment in which we might work with more success or better, but it is difficult to conceive it. I do not believe there is anyone in the House who, if he could, would, after consideration, put a different kind of Constitution into this country. The Constitution may, as years go by, be modified, as it has been modified, but it is a natural and native growth. It is a system that we have taught India for a century to respect and revere. It has been her model. We cannot turn back now. We are here introducing her to democratic methods of the sort we believe to be the best form of government still in the world. A Government like ours is as clean as any Government there is in the world to-day.

People have expressed fears of corruption. In so far as these things are true, the only cure is a democratic system like our own. Our own system has been corrupt in time past, but to-day, with a free Press, a free Opposition and free Debate, and the knowledge in the world of what all of us are doing, you cannot be corrupt if you want to. I have had intimate knowledge of government in this country for many years, and I believe that with our politicians generally, though they have many faults, corruption is not one of them. Our Civil Service is incorruptible. We hand that tradition with its lesson to India. I have faith that when she has had a tithe of our experience she will learn to work it as we have learnt.

There is one other thing that has been principally dwelt upon by many of my hon. Friends, and that is the welfare of the Indian masses. I am just as anxious for that as any of them. If it is not secured by the proposals of the Joint Select Committee, it is no more secured by any of the alternative plans put forward. To-day, in the main part, the masses of India depend on services of their own country people. I put this to Members of the House: They know how few of our fellow-countrymen are in the Services of India; they know what the population of India is. I think there is room for a great deal now to be done by Indians themselves, men who are ready for this. The vote cannot make itself felt at once. Very likely at first it will be used foolishly or unwisely, but, after all, the Provincial franchise is to the extent of 14 per cent. of the total population, and it will not be long before that fact will make itself felt. Let us recognise that there are problems in India which we have never tackled. There are many social problems, and there is much to be said for the reluctance we have shown in dealing with them, but the fact remains that we have not dealt with them. There is growing up in India, as

everyone of experience there will tell you, a public conscience. I believe that in many of these matters progress and improvement will be made when the whole of the work is not our responsibility.

There is one more thing and that is the provision with regard to the position of women in India. The most remarkable development in the East has been the emergence of women. To anyone with the least spark of imagination the scope opened for women in political and social work in India is staggering. The Simon Commission said:

"It is not idle to think that the great influence of Indian women will be brought to bear on problems that have been and must be under the control of our own policy and administration."

I apologise to the House for having had to compress so much of what I had to say, but the Debate has run a little longer than I expected. I will only say this, and I am sure that my hon. Friends opposite will allow me to say it, I recognise and have recognised the sincere convictions of those who are opposing me. I am not trying to convert them, and I know that no words of mine would do so, but to some of the older ones I would say this: We have fought in many great battles together in the past, and I hope we may be spared to fight in one or two more. I shall bear no malice to anyone who votes against me to-night. I shall refrain, so far as I can, from hard words or from anything which would make more difficult the reunion of that party which I believe still has a great part to play in this country, and whose preservation and unity I believe to be essential to the prosperity of the country. We have to take our vote now in a few minutes. I commend the Resolution of the Government to the House. I commend it in all sincerity with a full consciousness of the risks, with a full recognition of the gravity of the objections raised against it, but yet with the conviction that in the circumstances and having regard to the time it is the right thing to do and that there is nothing for this House to do but go forward with courage and lend itself, all together as far as we can, to welding this report into the best instrument for the well-being of India that we can devise.

Mr. ANEURIN BEVAN *rose*——

HON. MEMBERS: Divide!

Mr. BALDWIN: I am sorry that I have forgotten one question. I would say, in the first place, that it is entirely a matter for the British Broadcasting Corporation, but in any case I could not be expected now to reply to a question of such gravity and such far-reaching implication which was put to me just before I rose. I apologise for having omitted to mention it, but I was pressed for time.

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided: Ayes, 491; Noes, 49.

Division No. 20.] **AYES.** **[11.0 p.m.**

Acland, Rt. Hon. Sir Francis Dyke
Acland-Troyte, Lieut.-Colonel
Adams, Samuel Vyvyan T. (Leeds, W.)
Agnew, Lieut.-Com. P. G.
Ainsworth, Lieut.-Colonel Charles
Albery, Irving James
Alexander, Sir William
Allen, Sir J. Sandeman (Liverp'l, W.)
Allen, Lt.-Col. J. Sandeman (B'k'nh'd)
Allen, William (Stoke-on-Trent)
Allen, Lt.-Col. Sir William (Armagh)
Amery, Rt. Hon. Leopold C. M. S.
Applin, Lieut.-Col. Reginald V. K.
Apsley, Lord
Aske, Sir Robert William
Assheton, Ralph
Astbury, Lieut.-Com. Frederick Wolfe
Astor, Maj. Hn. John J. (Kent, Dover)
Astor, Viscountess (Plymouth, Sutton)
Atholl, Duchess of
Bailey, Eric Alfred George
Baillie, Sir Adrian W. M.
Baldwin, Rt. Hon. Stanley
Baldwin-Webb, Colonel J.
Balniel, Lord
Barclay-Harvey, C. M.
Barrie, Sir Charles Coupar
Barton, Capt. Basil Kelsey
Beauchamp, Sir Brograve Campbell
Beaumont, M. W. (Bucks., Aylesbury)
Beaumont, Hon. R.E.B. (Portsm'th, C.)
Belt, Sir Alfred L.
Benn, Sir Arthur Shirley
Bennett, Capt. Sir Ernest Nathaniel
Bernays, Robert
Bevan, Stuart James (Holborn)
Birchall, Major Sir John Dearman
Bird, Sir Robert B. (Wolverh'pton W.)
Blaker, Sir Reginald
Borodale, Viscount
Bossom, A. C.
Boulton, W. W.
Bowater, Col. Sir T. Vansittart
Bower, Commander Robert Tatton
Bowyer, Capt. Sir George E. W.
Boyce, H. Leslie
Boyd-Carpenter, Sir Archibald
Bracken, Brendan
Braithwaite, Maj. A. N. (Yorks, E. R.)
Braithwaite, J. G. (Hillsborough)
Brass, Captain Sir William
Briscoe, Capt. Richard George
Broadbent, Colonel John
Brocklebank, C. E. R.
Brown, Col. D. C. (N'th'l'd., Hexham)
Brown, Ernest (Leith)
Brown, Brig.-Gen. H. C. (Berks., Newb'y)
Browne, Captain A. C.
Buchan-Hepburn, P. G. T.
Bullock, Captain Malcolm
Burghley, Lord
Burgin, Dr. Edward Leslie
Burnett, John George
Burton, Colonel Henry Walter
Butler, Richard Austen
Butt, Sir Alfred
Cadogan, Hon. Edward
Caine, G. R. Hall-
Campbell, Sir Edward Taswell (Brmly)
Campbell, Vice-Admiral G. (Burnley)
Campbell-Johnston, Malcolm
Caporn, Arthur Cecil
Carver, Major William H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cautley, Sir Henry S.
Cayzer, Sir Charles (Chester, City)
Cayzer, Maj. Sir H. R. (Prtsmth., S.)
Cazalet, Thelma (Islington, E.)
Cazalet, Capt. V. A. (Chippenham)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. Sir J. A. (Birm., W)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. N. (Edgbaston)

Astor, Maj. Hn. John J. (Kent, Dover)
Astor, Viscountess (Plymouth, Sutton)
Baillie, Sir Adrian W. M.
Baldwin, Rt. Hon. Stanley
Baldwin-Webb, Colonel J.
Balniel, Lord
Barclay-Harvey, C. M.
Barrie, Sir Charles Coupar
Barton, Capt. Basil Kelsey
Beauchamp, Sir Brograve Campbell
Beaumont, Hon. R.E.B. (Portsm'th,C.)
Belt, Sir Alfred L.
Benn, Sir Arthur Shirley
Bennett, Capt. Sir Ernest Nathaniel
Bernays, Robert
Bevan, Stuart James (Holborn)
Birchall, Major Sir John Dearman
Bird, Sir Robert B. (Wolverh'pton W.)
Borodale, Viscount
Bossom, A. C.
Boulton, W. W.
Bower, Commander Robert Tatton
Bowyer, Capt. Sir George E. W.
Boyce, H. Leslie
Braithwaite, J. G. (Hillsborough)
Brass, Captain Sir William
Briscoe, Capt. Richard George
Brocklebank, C. E. R.
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Bullock, Captain Malcolm
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Burgin, Dr. Edward Leslie
Butler, Richard Austen
Butt, Sir Alfred
Cadogan, Hon. Edward
Campbell, Sir Edward Taswell (Brmly)
Campbell, Vice-Admiral G. (Burnley)
Campbell-Johnston, Malcolm
Caporn, Arthur Cecil
Cautley, Sir Henry S.
Cayzer, Sir Charles (Chester, City)
Cayzer, Maj. Sir H. R. (Prtsmth., S.)
Cazalet, Thelma (Islington, E.)
Cazalet, Capt. V. A. (Chippenham)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. Sir J. A. (Birm., W.)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. N. (Edgbaston)
Chapman, Col. R. (Houghton-le-Spring)
Chapman, Sir Samuel (Edinburgh, S.)
Charlton, Alan Ernest Leofric
Christie, James Archibald
Clarke, Frank
Clarry, Reginald George
Clayton, Sir Christopher
Cochrane, Commander Hon. A. D.
Colfox, Major William Philip
Collins, Rt. Hon. Sir Godfrey
Colman, N. C. D.
Colville, Lieut.-Colonel J.
Conant, R. J. E.
Cook, Thomas A.
Cooke, Douglas
Cooper, A. Duff
Copeland, Ida
Courthope, Colonel Sir George L.
Crooke, J. Smedley
Crookshank, Col. C. de Windt (Bootle)
Crookshank, Capt. H. C. (Gainsb'ro)
Croom-Johnson, R. P.
Cross, R. H.
Crossley, A. C.
Cruddas, Lieut.-Colonel Bernard
Culverwell, Cyril Tom
Curry, A. C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davidson, Rt. Hon. J. C. C.
Davies, Edward C. (Montgomery)
Davies, Maj. Geo. F. (Somerset, Yeovil)
Denman, Hon. R. D.
Despencer-Robertson, Major J. A. F.
Dickie, John P.
Doran, Edward
Dower, Captain A. V. G.
Drewe, Cedric
Duckworth, George A. V.
Dugdale, Captain Thomas Lionel
Duggan, Hubert John
Duncan, James A. L. (Kensington, N.)
Dunglass, Lord
Eastwood, John Francis
Eden, Rt. Hon. Anthony
Edmondson, Major Sir James
Elliot, Rt. Hon. Walter
Ellis, Sir R. Geoffrey
Elliston, Captain George Sampson
Elmley, Viscount
Emrys-Evans, P. V.
Entwistle, Cyril Fullard
Essenhigh, Reginald Clare
Evans, Capt. Arthur (Cardiff, S.)
Evans, David Owen (Cardigan)
Evans, R. T. (Carmarthen)
Fermoy, Lord
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Flint, Abraham John
Foot, Dingle (Dundee)
Foot, Isaac (Cornwall, Bodmin)
Fox, Sir Gifford
Fremantle, Sir Francis
Galbraith, James Francis Wallace
Ganzoni, Sir John
Gibson, Charles Granville
Gillett, Sir George Masterman
Gilmour, Lt.-Col. Rt. Hon. Sir John
Glossop, C. W. H.
Gluckstein, Louis Halle
Glyn, Major Sir Ralph G. C.
Goff, Sir Park
Goldie, Noel B.
Gower, Sir Robert
Graham, Sir F. Fergus (C'mb'rl'd. N.)
Granville, Edgar
Grattan-Doyle, Sir Nicholas
Graves, Marjorie
Greaves-Lord, Sir Walter
Grenfell, E. C. (City of London)
Griffith, F. Kingsley (Middlesbro', W.)
Grigg, Sir Edward
Grimston, R. V.
Guinness, Thomas L. E. B.
Gunston, Captain D. W.
Guy, J. C. Morrison
Hacking, Rt. Hon. Douglas H.
Hall, Capt. W. D'Arcy (Brecon)
Hamilton, Sir George (Ilford)
Hamilton, Sir R. W. (Orkney & Zetl'nd)
Hammersley, Samuel S.
Hanbury, Cecil
Hanley, Dennis A.
Hannon, Patrick Joseph Henry
Harbord, Arthur
Harris, Sir Percy
Harvey, George (Lambeth, Kenningt'n)
Harvey, Major S. E. (Devon, Totnes)
Haslam, Henry (Horncastle)
Haslam, Sir John (Bolton)
Headlam, Lieut.-Col. Cuthbert M.
Heilgers, Captain F. F. A.
Henderson, Sir Vivian L. (Chelmsford)
Heneage, Lieut.-Colonel Arthur F.
Hepworth, Joseph
Herbert, Major J. A. (Monmouth)
Herbert, Capt. S. (Abbey Division)
Hills, Major Rt. Hon. John Waller
Hoare, Lt.-Col. Rt. Hon. Sir S. J. G.
Holdsworth, Herbert
Hope, Capt. Hon. A. O. J. (Aston)
Hore-Belisha, Leslie
Hornby, Frank
Horne, Rt. Hon. Sir Robert S.
Horobin, Ian M.
Horsbrugh, Florence
Howard, Tom Forrest
Howitt, Dr. Alfred B.
Hudson, Capt. A. U. M. (Hackney, N.)
Hudson, Robert Spear (Southport)
Hume, Sir George Hopwood
Hunter, Dr. Joseph (Dumfries)
Hunter-Weston, Lt.-Gen. Sir Aylmer
Hurd, Sir Percy
Hurst, Sir Gerald B.
Hutchison, W. D. (Essex, Romf'd)
Inskip, Rt. Hon. Sir Thomas W. H.
Iveagh, Countess of
Jackson, Sir Henry (Wandsworth, C.)
Jackson, J. C. (Heywood & Radcliffe)
James, Wing-Com. A. W. H.
Jamieson, Douglas
Janner, Barnett
Jennings, Roland
Jesson, Major Thomas E.
Joel, Dudley J. Barnato
Johnston, J. W. (Clackmannan)
Johnstone, Harcourt (S. Shields)
Jones, Henry Haydn (Merioneth)
Jones, Lewis (Swansea, West)
Ker, J. Campbell
Kerr, Lieut.-Col. Charles (Montrose)
Kerr, Hamilton W.
Kirkpatrick, William M.
Knight, Holford
Lamb, Sir Joseph Quinton
Latham, Sir Herbert Paul
Law, Sir Alfred
Law, Richard K. (Hull, S.W.)
Leckie, J. A.
Leech, Dr. J. W.
Lees-Jones, John
Leighton, Major B. E. P.
Lewis, Oswald
Liddall, Walter S.
Lindsay, Kenneth (Kilmarnock)
Lindsay, Noel Ker
Lister, Rt. Hon. Sir Philip Cunliffe-
Little, Graham-, Sir Ernest
Llewellin, Major John J.
Llewellyn-Jones, Frederick
Lloyd, Geoffrey
Locker-Lampson, Rt. Hn. G. (Wd.Gr'n)
Lockwood, John C. (Hackney, C.)
Loder, Captain J. de Vere
Loftus, Pierce C.
Lovat-Fraser, James Alexander
Lumley, Captain Lawrence R.
Lyons, Abraham Montagu
Mabane, William
MacAndrew, Lieut.-Col. C. G. (Partick)
MacAndrew, Capt. J. O. (Ayr)
McCorquodale, M. S.
MacDonald, Rt. Hon. J. R. (Seaham)
Macdonald, Sir Murdoch (Inverness)
Macdonald, Capt. P. D. (I. of W.)
McEwen, Captain J. H. F.
McKeag, William
McKie, John Hamilton
Maclay, Hon. Joseph Paton
McLean, Major Sir Alan
McLean, Dr. W. H. (Tr.
Macpherson, Rt. Hon. Sir
Magnay, Thomas
Makins, Brigadier-General Ernest
Mallalieu, Edward Lancelot
Mander, Geoffrey le M.
Manningham-Buller, Lt.-Col. Sir M.
Martin, Thomas B.
Mason, David M. (Edinburgh, E.)
Mason, Col. Glyn K. (Croydon, N.)
Mayhew, Lieut.-Colonel John
Meller, Sir Richard James
Mills, Sir Frederick (Leyton, E.)
Mills, Major J. D. (New Forest)
Milne, Charles
Mitchell, Sir W. Lane (Streatham)
Mitcheson, G. G.
Molson, A. Hugh Elsdale
Monsell, Rt. Hon. Sir B. Eyres
Moore, Lt.-Col. Thomas C. R. (Ayr)
Moreing, Adrian C.
Morgan, Robert H.
Morris, John Patrick (Salford, N.)
Morris, Owen Temple (Cardiff, E.)
Morris-Jones, Dr. J. H. (Denbigh)
Morrison, G. A. (Scottish Universities)
Morrison, William Shepherd

Moss, Captain H. J.
Muirhead, Lieut.-Colonel A. J.
Munro, Patrick
Nation, Brigadier-General J. J. H.
Normand, Rt. Hon. Wilfrid
North, Edward T.
O'Connor, Terence James
O'Donovan, Dr. William James
O'Neill, Rt. Hon. Sir Hugh
Ormiston, Thomas
Ormsby-Gore, Rt. Hon. William G. A.
Orr Ewing, I. L.
Palmer, Francis Noel
Patrick, Colin M.
Peake, Osbert
Pearson, William G.
Penny, Sir George
Percy, Lord Eustace
Perkins, Walter R. D.
Peters, Dr. Sidney John
Petherick, M.
Peto, Geoffrey K. (W'verh'pt'n, Bilst'n)
Potter, John
Powell, Lieut.-Col. Evelyn G. H.
Power, Sir John Cecil
Pownall, Sir Assheton
Procter, Major Henry Adam
Pybus, Sir John
Radford, E. A.
Ramsay, Alexander (W. Bromwich)
Ramsay, Capt. A. H. M. (Midlothian)
Ramsay T. B. W. (Western Isles)
Ramsbotham, Herwald
Ramsden, Sir Eugene
Rankin, Robert
Ratcliffe, Arthur
Rathbone, Eleanor
Rea, Walter Russell
Reed, Arthur C. (Exeter)
Reid, James S. C. (Stirling)
Reid, William Allan (Derby)
Renwick, Major Gustav A.
Rhys, Hon. Charles Arthur U.
Rickards, George William
Roberts, Aled (Wrexham)
Roberts, Sir Samuel (Ecclesall)
Robinson, John Roland
Ropner, Colonel L.
Rosbotham, Sir Thomas
Ross Taylor, Walter (Woodbridge)
Rothschild, James A. de
Ruggles-Brise, Colonel E. A.
Runciman, Rt. Hon. Walter
Runge, Norah Cecil
Russell, Albert (Kirkcaldy)
Russell, Alexander West (Tynemouth)
Russell, R. J. (Eddisbury)
Rutherford, John (Edmonton)
Rutherford, Sir John Hugo (Liverp'l)
Salmon, Sir Isidore
Salt, Edward W.
Samuel, M. R. A. (W'ds'wth, Putney).
Samuel, Sir Arthur Michael (F'nham)
Samuel, Rt. Hon. Sir H. (Darwen)
Sassoon, Rt. Hon. Sir Philip A. G. D.
Savery, Samuel Servington
Selley, Harry R.
Shakespeare, Geoffrey H.
Shaw, Helen B. (Lanark, Bothwell)
Shaw, Captain William T. (Forfar)
Shepperson, Sir Ernest W.
Shute, Colonel J. J.
Simmonds, Oliver Edwin
Simon, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Sinclair, Maj. Rt. Hn. Sir A. (C'thness)
Skelton, Archibald Noel
Smith, Bracewell (Dulwich)
Smith, Sir J. Walker- (Barrow-in-F.)
Smith, Louis W. (Sheffield, Hallam)
Smith, Sir Robert (Ab'd'n & K'dine, C.)
Smithers, Sir Waldron
Somervell, Sir Donald
Somerville, D. G. (Willesden, East)
Soper, Richard
Sotheron-Estcourt, Captain T. E.
Southby, Commander Archibald R. J.
Spears, Brigadier-General Edward L.
Spencer, Captain Richard A.
Spender-Clay, Rt. Hon. Herbert H.
Spens, William Patrick
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Fylde)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Oliver (W'morland)
Stevenson, James
Stewart, J. Henderson (Fife, E.)
Stones, James
Storey, Samuel
Stourton, Hon. John J.
Strauss, Edward A.
Strickland, Captain W. F.
Stuart, Lord C. Crichton-
Sueter, Rear-Admiral Sir Murray F.
Sugden, Sir Wilfrid Hart
Summersby, Charles H.
Sutcliffe, Harold
Tate, Mavis Constance
Thomas, Rt. Hon. J. H. (Derby)
Thomas, James P. L. (Hereford)
Thomas, Major L. B. (King's Norton)
Thompson, Sir Luke
Thomson, Sir Frederick Charles
Titchfield, Major the Marquess of
Todd, A. L. S. (Kingswinford)
Train, John
Tree, Ronald
Tryon, Rt. Hon. George Clement
Tufnell, Lieut.-Commander R. L.
Turton, Robert Hugh
Wallace, Captain D. E. (Hornsey)
Wallace, John (Dunfermline)
Ward, Lt.-Col. Sir A. L. (Hull)
Ward, Irene Mary Bewick (Wallsend)
Ward, Sarah Adelaide (Cannock)
Wardlaw-Milne, Sir John S.
Warrender, Sir Victor A. G.
Waterhouse, Captain Charles
Watt, Captain George Steven H.
Wedderburn, Henry James Scrymgeour.
Weymouth, Viscount
White, Henry Graham
Whiteside, Borras Noel H.
Whyte, Jardine Bell
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wills, Wilfrid D.
Wilson, Lt.-Col. Sir Arnold (Hertf'd)
Wilson, Clyde T. (West Toxteth)
Wilson, G. H. A. (Cambridge U.)
Windsor-Clive, Lieut.-Colonel George
Winterton, Rt. Hon. Earl
Womersley, Sir Walter
Wood, Rt. Hon. Sir H. Kingsley
Wood, Sir Murdoch McKenzie (Banff)
Worthington, Dr. John V.
Young, Rt. Hon. Sir Hilton (S'v'oaks)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—Captain Margesson and Mr. Blindell.

NOES.

Acland-Troyte, Lieut.-Colonel
Adams, D. M. (Poplar, South)
Addison, Rt. Hon. Dr. Christopher
Alexander, Sir William
Allen, Lt.-Col. Sir William (Armagh)
Applin, Lieut.-Col. Reginald V. K.
Astbury, Lieut.-Com. Frederick Wolfe
Atholl, Duchess of
Attlee, Clement Richard
Bailey, Eric Alfred George
Banfield, John William
Batey, Joseph
Beaumont, M. W. (Bucks., Aylesbury)
Bevan, Aneurin (Ebbw Vale)
Blaker, Sir Reginald
Boyd-Carpenter, Sir Archibald
Bracken, Brendan
Braithwaite, Maj. A. N. (Yorks, E. R.)
Broadbent, Colonel John
Brown, C. W. E. (Notts., Mansfield)
Brown, Brig.-Gen. H. C. (Berks., Newb'y)
Browne, Captain A. C.
Buchanan, George
Burnett, John George
Burton, Colonel Henry Walter
Caine, G. R. Hall-
Cape, Thomas
Carver, Major William H.
Cecil, Rt. Hon. Lord Hugh
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston Spencer
Cobb, Sir Cyril
Cocks, Frederick Seymour
Courtauld, Major John Sewell
Craddock, Sir Reginald Henry
Craven-Ellis, William
Cripps, Sir Stafford
Critchley, Brig.-General A. C.
Croft, Brigadier-General Sir H.
Daggar, George
Davies, David L. (Pontypridd)
Davies, Rhys John (Westhoughton)
Davies, Stephen Owen
Davison, Sir William Henry
Dawson, Sir Philip
Dixey, Arthur C. N.
Dobbie, William
Donner, P. W.
Edwards, Charles
Emmott, Charles E. G. C.
Erskine-Bolst, Capt. C. C. (Blk'pool)
Everard, W. Lindsay
Fuller, Captain A. G.
Gardner, Benjamin Walter
Goodman, Colonel Albert W.
Graham, D. M. (Lanark, Hamilton)
Greene, William P. C.
Greenwood, Rt. Hon. Arthur
Gretton, Colonel Rt. Hon. John
Griffiths, George A. (Yorks, W. Riding)
Griffiths, T. (Monmouth, Pontypool)
Gritten, W. G. Howard
Groves, Thomas E.
Grundy, Thomas W.
Hall, George H. (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hartington, Marquess of
Hicks, Ernest George
Hunter, Capt. M. J. (Brigg)
Jones, Sir G. W. H. (Stoke New'gton)
Jones, Morgan (Caerphilly)
Keyes, Admiral Sir Roger
Kimball, Lawrence
Lansbury, Rt. Hon. George
Lawson, John James
Lennox-Boyd, A. T.
Levy, Thomas
Lockwood, Capt. J. H. (Shipley)
Logan, David Gilbert
Lunn, William
McConnell, Sir Joseph
Macdonald, Gordon (Ince)
McEntee, Valentine L.
McGovern, John
Maclean, Neil (Glasgow, Govan)
Mainwaring, William Henry
Maitland, Adam
Marsden, Commander Arthur
Maxton, James
Milner, Major James
Nall, Sir Joseph
Nathan, Major H. L.
Nicholson, Rt. Hn. W. G. (Petersf'ld)
Nunn, William
Oman, Sir Charles William C.
Peto, Sir Basil E. (Devon, Barnstaple)
Purbrick, R.
Raikes, Henry V. A. M.
Rawson, Sir Cooper
Ray, Sir William
Reid, David D. (County Down)

Remer, John R.
Salter, Dr. Alfred
Sandeman, Sir A. N. Stewart
Sanderson, Sir Frank Barnard
Sinclair, Col. T. (Queen's Univ., Belfast)
Slater, John
Smith, Tom (Normanton)
Somerville, Annesley A. (Windsor)
Strauss, G. R. (Lambeth, North)
Taylor, Vice-Admiral E.A. (P'dd'g't'n, S.)
Templeton, William P.
Thorne, William James
Thorp, Linton Theodore
Tinker, John Joseph
Todd, Lt.-Col. A. J. K. (B'wick-on-T.)
Touche, Gordon Cosmo
Wayland, Sir William A.
Wedgwood, Rt. Hon. Josiah
Wells, Sidney Richard
West, F. R.
Williams, David (Swansea, East)
Williams, Edward John (Ogmore)
Williams, Herbert G. (Croydon, S.)
Williams, Dr. John H. (Llanelly)
Wilmot, John
Wise, Alfred R.
Wolmer, Rt. Hon. Viscount

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Mr. John and Mr. Paling.

Resolved,

"That this House accepts the recommendations of the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform as the basis for the revision of the Indian Constitution and considers it expedient that a Bill should be introduced on the general lines of the report."

ESTIMATES.

Ordered,

"That a Select Committee be appointed to examine such of the Estimates presented to this House as may seem fit to the Committee and to suggest the form in which the Estimates shall be presented for examination, and to report what, if any, economies consistent with the policy implied in those Estimates may be effected therein."

Ordered,

"That the Committee do consist of Twenty-eight Members:

"Sir Charles Barrie, Mr. Brocklebank, Sir Herbert Cayzer, Commander Cochrane, Mr. Cocks, Mr. Daggar, Mr. James Duncan, Mr. R. T. Evans, Sir Fergus Graham, Mr. Hanbury, Mr. Hannon, Sir Vivian Henderson, Lieut.-Colonel Heneage, Mr. Campbell Ker, Mr. Kenneth Lindsay, Mr. Noel Lindsay, Captain Loder, Captain Peter Macdonald, Mr. McEntee, Mr. Maclay, Sir Alan McLean, Mr. Munro, Mr. Nunn, Mr. Peat, Mr. Ross Taylor, Sir Isidore Salmon, Mr. Edward Strauss, and Mr. Edward Williams nominated Members of the Committee."

Ordered,

"That Seven be the quorum."

Ordered,

"That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records, and to sit notwithstanding any adjournment of the House."

Ordered,

"That the Committee have power, if they so determine, to appoint one or more Sub-Committees, and in that event to apportion the subjects referred to the Committee between the Sub-Committees, any of which shall have the full powers of the undivided Committee; and that Four shall be the quorum of any of the Sub-Committees."

Ordered,

"That the Committee do report any evidence taken by the Committee or by any of the Sub-Committees to the House."

Ordered,

"That the Committee have power to report from time to time."—[*Sir F. Thomson.*]

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.

Ordered,

"That Mr. Albery, Mr. William Allen, Mr. Duff Cooper, Mr. Culverwell, Sir George Gillett, Sir Vivian Henderson, Mr. Morgan Jones, Mr. Peat, Sir Assheton Pownall, Sir Eugene Ramsden, Sir Isidore Salmon, Sir Arthur Michael Samuel, Sir Robert Smith, Mr. John Wilmot, and Mr. Ernest Young, be nominated Members of the Committee of Public Accounts."—[*Sir F. Thomson.*]

The remaining Orders were read, and postponed.

It being after Half-past Eleven of the Clock, Mr. SPEAKER *adjourned the House, without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.*

Adjourned at Twenty-eight Minutes before Twelve o'Clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, 12th December, 1934.

The House met at three of the clock, The LORD CHANCELLOR on the Woolsack.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

THE MARQUESS OF READING: My Lords, before your Lordships commence the business which appears on the Order Paper for to-day, may I ask the noble Viscount the Leader of the House when he proposes that the House should resume the debate on the Supreme Court of Judicature (Amendment) Bill which was adjourned last night? May I tell your Lordships my reason for pressing the noble Viscount? I know that there are difficulties in the way, but I do venture to urge upon my noble friend and upon your Lordships that it is essential that we should resume that debate as quickly as possible, and before your Lordships' House adjourns for the Recess. I do not know whether my noble friend would wish to have any assistance in the matter, but if I might make a suggestion for him to consider, it would be that in the circumstances in which we are placed, owing to pressure of time, if the House could sit on Friday of this week, however inconvenient it may be, it would be better than allowing this matter to stand as it does at present, adjourned over a period of, perhaps, two months.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (VISCOUNT HAILSHAM): My Lords, I am very much obliged to the noble Marquess for asking me the question. The matter has naturally engaged my attention and that of my noble and learned friend on the Woolsack since the adjournment yesterday evening. As the noble Marquess has pointed out, exigencies of time render it impossible for the debate to be resumed on any of the ordinary days for the sitting of the House between now and the adjournment for the Christmas Recess. Every day is already fully mortgaged by necessary business. The conclusion I had reached is the same as that which I think the noble Marquess has reached—namely, that if we are to discuss the matter at all before Christmas we must have a meeting of this House on Friday next.

I was very unwilling to suggest that course, because I realise that it is very short notice and that it is always inconvenient for your Lordships to meet on a Friday, especially at this season of the year; but I do feel, as my noble friend feels, that it is very undesirable that the statements which were made yesterday should remain undealt with on behalf of the Government for so long a period as must necessarily elapse if we are to wait until after the Christmas Recess, that is to say, at any rate for nearly two months. Accordingly I was proposing to ask your Lordships to be good enough to meet at the usual time of a quarter past four on Friday of this week; and I do that with the more confidence because I see that there is no Motion down for the rejection of the Bill on Second Reading, and I therefore do not anticipate that there will be a Division on Second Reading. I have no certain information, but I should think that very improbable; and what is most desired is that an opportunity should be given for a statement to be made by my noble and learned friend on the Woolsack in reply to the arguments and the allegations brought forward yesterday by the Lord Chief Justice. I think that the most convenient course, therefore, will probably be to ask your Lordships to meet at a quarter past four on Friday, in order to resume the debate, and I hope that the House will then be able to complete the Second Reading stage. If that be done, the subsequent Committee stage can, I think, quite conveniently, and must of necessity, stand over until after we resume in January or February.

THE MARQUESS OF READING: I presume that my noble friend has considered meeting earlier than a quarter past four on Friday and has found that it is not possible to do so?

VISCOUNT HAILSHAM: Unfortunately judicial business will be going on.

THE MARQUESS OF READING: I am very much obliged for what my noble friend has said.

INDIAN CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (VISCOUNT HALIFAX) rose to move to resolve, That this House accepts the recommendations of the Joint

Select Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform as the basis for the revision of the Indian Constitution and considers it expedient that a Bill should be introduced on the general lines of the Report. The noble Viscount said: My Lords, I rise to move the Motion that appears in my name on the Paper, and in doing so I should hope not to make any undue draft upon your Lordships' patience, having regard to the fact that I know that a great many of your Lordships desire to participate in the debate, and also having regard to the fact that the subject matter of the debate is by this time, I suppose, tolerably familiar to all your Lordships. The last general debate that we had in this House was, I think, in April, 1933, somewhat more than eighteen months ago, on the Motion to set up the Joint Select Committee, and since that time, up to rather less than a month ago, that Committee has been at work.

Inasmuch as it falls to me to be the first speaker in this debate, and inasmuch as I was also a member of that Committee, I am quite sure that the Lord Chairman of that Committee, the noble Marquess behind me, Lord Linlithgow, would allow me to express a feeling that was prominent in the Committee of the great loss that they suffered by the untimely death of two of the members—namely, Lord Burnham, who was a member of this House, and Miss Pickford, a member of another place. Each of them was possessed of first-hand knowledge of India, and in the time that we sat together we all, I think, realised that each of them had a particular contribution to make to our work. Although I was, as I have said, a member of the Committee, your Lordships will perhaps allow me to pay an impersonal tribute to the manner in which the Committee discharged the task that Parliament had laid upon it. I do not suppose that any Committee has ever conducted an examination more exhaustive, or conducted it with a greater sense of the unique responsibility that both the subject matter and the circumstances imposed upon every member of the body. In particular, I think that we all left the Committee with a great sense of the debt that the Committee owed to its Chairman, to his untiring industry, wise counsel and apparently quite inexhaustible patience.

I think, if I may also be permitted to say this, that we also owed a great debt to my right honourable friend the Secretary of State for India, who in the course of answering, as stated in the Report, some six thousand questions, addressed to him by enquirers, both English and Indian, was able to reveal profound and detailed knowledge of his subject. I think all members of the Committee, including both the noble Lord opposite, Lord Snell, who will, I understand, speak in this debate, and the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, who will, I believe, follow me, would agree that there was in all quarters of the Committee the fullest desire to hear all that could contribute, and to be informed of all points of view. Last, but by no means least, I think my fellow members would wish me to bear testimony to the debt that we owed to our Indian friends, who, while actually unable to share the constitutional responsibility laid upon us of reporting to Parliament, did share with us fully in our examination of witnesses and in our deliberations, and whose assistance was of the greatest possible value to us all.

The result of that long process has been conclusions that have been reached with large, and perhaps some would say an astonishing, degree of unanimity. All members of the Committee were agreed upon the principal purpose of all our endeavour—namely, the retention of a strong, prosperous and contented India within the British Empire. All members came to agree, whether or not they agreed at the outset, that there was a real problem to be solved if we were, in fact, to achieve that principal aim. Except for one matter of importance there was general agreement as to the treatment of the provincial side of the case, and as regards the Central Government it is not, I think, unfair to say that the differences upon the Committee were that the majority was held by the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, and those associated with him, to be moving too far and too fast, and by the noble Lord opposite, Lord Snell, and those associated with him, to be moving not far and not fast enough. It was between those two extremes that what I may term the middle opinion of the Committee gradually came to crystallise.

May I remind your Lordships in a few sentences of what the Committee in the

broadest outline have recommended? They have recommended the establishment of full responsible government in the Provinces, subject to the endowment of the Governors with, and if necessary the exercise by Governors of, certain emergency powers for what I may term broad Parliamentary purposes. They have further recommended the establishment by the same Bill, as soon as certain conditions have been fulfilled, of a Federation for All-India, based upon the principle of responsibility, and subject again to emergency powers and to certain reservations of power to the Governor-General, of which the most important are defence and what we should roughly understand by foreign affairs. Those are the main lines of the Report which my Motion invites this House to accept and to regard as expedient as a basis for a Bill.

I notice that the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, has an Amendment on the Paper of which the gist is to invite your Lordships to profess your inability to give any such general approval until you have before you precise recommendations in the shape of a Bill. Well, he will not, I fancy, greatly object if I say that I think his Amendment falls within the category of what are generally understood as dilatory Amendments in the sense that it postpones the necessity of recording definite judgment on the general lines on which I invite judgment to be recorded. And, in passing, I may be permitted perhaps to observe that it is to me a somewhat curious request emanating from the noble Marquess, inasmuch as for the last few months, if not more, the most common complaint of those persons with whom he is in this matter politically associated has been the very complaint that they have been constantly denied the opportunity of recording a definite vote, yes or no, for the proposals that from time to time have been placed before them; and while, of course, I should agree with the noble Marquess, in feeling, as every one of your Lordships would, that it was no doubt necessary to scrutinise particular provisions of any Bill that might be introduced into Parliament, I none the less think that His Majesty's Government are entitled to know the clear view of Parliament at this stage, and I do not think that your Lordships will find any difficulty in saying aye or no to the general lines proposed in the Report. Because, indeed, the noble Marquess has made it plain enough that his objection is to the general proposals that are made, and on those general proposals the points of difference by this time have become very clear.

Now since the proposals similar to those made in the Report were made in the White Paper, anxiety has been expressed on certain quite definite, but quite vital, points. In the provincial field that anxiety has concerned the question of what is known as the transfer of law and order; in the central field that anxiety has concerned the establishment now of an All-India Federation on a responsible basis; and lastly, that anxiety has been concerned generally with the question of whether the emergency powers, to use a colloquial phrase, would in fact work. As to the first, the transfer of law and order, the Committee followed the recommendations of the Statutory Commission, and I think substantially for the same reasons. They said that it was impossible to "conceive a Government to which the quality of responsibility could be attributed if it had no responsibility for public order." And I think they also felt, as was hoped by the Statutory Commission, that it was great folly, if you were transferring all other provincial activities to Ministerial control, by reserving the administration of law and order to concentrate upon that which must always be the most delicate cog in all your administrative machine the whole of popular criticism and attack. I think this also was very present to their minds, and I think it is an argument that your Lordships will allow me to put to you, that nothing could be more unwise or more hostile to the growth of any real sense of responsibility than for Ministers to be placed in the position of laying down lines of policy, and promoting legislation. well knowing all the time that they were constitutionally absolved in advance from all consequent obligation of dealing with any violent reaction or disturbance that their policy or their legislation might arouse. For these reasons the Committee reached the conclusion that they did.

But convinced as they were of the necessity of transferring law and order, the Committee were in no sense blind to the risks of transfer and, as I shall hope to be able to show, set themselves to

meet them. They recognised clearly enough that law and order depend ultimately upon three things—the discipline, the efficiency, and the impartiality of the Police. Accordingly they recommended that the Governor should be assured of receiving adequate knowledge of the state of the Police Force within his Province; and, further to protect the internal discipline and efficiency of the Police, they also recommended that the Police Acts and the rules made under them, which really govern the organisation and the administration of the Police, should not be alterable without the Governor's consent. In regard to terrorism and other subversive activities to which, as your Lordships will agree, the Committee felt it their duty to devote a great deal of anxious thought, there again they were very conscious of the paramount need of ensuring that the machinery for resisting such movements as those should be carefully protected from deterioration. Therefore they made a recommendation that is. I think, of great importance, by which they intended to reproduce in India what is the practice in this country in regard to respecting the secrecy of confidential reports; and they also recommended that the Governor should be endowed with a special right, if necessary, to take over any of the activities of Government in order to deal with such grave threats as terrorism and the like to the good order of his Province. Those, in a few sentences, are the recommendations on that subject.

I do not know whether your Lordships have had the opportunity of informing yourselves of the precise position taken in this regard by the noble Marquess and those with whom he is associated. Some time ago the Government published a White Paper. We were not the only parties to publish a White Paper. The noble Marquess published one about a month ago in which his proposals are set out in some detail. In that white paper he sets out the proposals that he made to the Committee on this subject of law and order, and I invite your Lordships' attention to them. He there proposes that the administration of the Police should be reserved, and here I quote his words:

". . . but that wherever after a reasonable time the Governor may consider that the interests of the public peace no longer require these precautions it shall be lawful for the Secretary of State, by Order in Council, approved by both Houses of Parliament, to transfer the Department to a responsible Minister."

I would ask your Lordships to note the words " wherever after a reasonable time the Governor may consider " that it can safely be done, and so on. The noble Marquess can, I am sure, be under no illusion at all as to the effect that that reservation of responsibility for the Police would have through every Province of India, Hindu and Moslem alike. He probably knows or, if he does not know, I can confidently tell him, that every single Governor of an Indian Province to-day is in favour of the recommendations of the Committee on this question of transfer. But that unanimous opinion of the Governors to-day he would now disregard until he has alienated and embittered all Indian opinion by a delay for " a reasonable time," which the very men on whose judgment after " a reasonable time " he evidently expects the Secretary of State and Parliament to rely, tell him is neither necessary nor desirable. I cannot recognise either the logic or the wisdom of such a course.

Having said that, perhaps I may pass to what is not disconnected with it—namely, the next point on which great anxiety has been felt, the point of an All-India Federation on the basis of responsibility. The dominant consideration with the Committee, as on this matter with their critics, was the necessity of erecting a strong Centre of Indian government, and nothing, I think, was more remarkable in the mental evolution of the corporate mind of the Committee than the way in which as the examination proceeded they became impressed, looking at the present Centre, not with its strength but with its weakness, for reasons on which I need not dilate but which are familiar enough, for indeed they are of the essence of our constitutional history. As I read it, the whole of our British and Imperial experience shouts at us the warning that representative government without responsibility, once political conscientiousness has been aroused, is apt to be a source of great weakness and, not impossibly, great danger. We had not learned that lesson, let me remind the House, in the eighteenth century, and we paid very dearly for it. We learned it some sixty years later

and, by having learnt it, we transformed the face and history of Canada.

Though they are very well known, I would ask your Lordships' leave to remind you of words that ought to be better known that find place in the Report that Lord Durham presented to Parliament in February, 1839. He said:

"I know not how it is possible to secure harmony in any other way than by administering the government on those principles which have been found perfectly efficacious in Great Britain. I would not impair a single Prerogative of the Crown; on the contrary I believe that the interests of the people of these Provinces require the protection of Prerogatives which have not hitherto been exercised. But the Crown must, on the other hand, submit to the necessary consequences of representative institutions; and if it has to carry on the Government in unison with a representative body, it must consent to carry it on by means of those in whom that representative body has confidence."

It is indeed true that if anything like our system is to work—and nobody wishes to reproduce a slavish imitation of it in India—some harmony between the Executive and the Legislature is a pre-requisite. There are only two ways of getting it. One way is to abolish your representative but irresponsible Legislature, and the other is to invest it with some responsibility. I venture to think that the noble Marquess can only reject the latter if he were prepared to accept the first. But to do neither is to forgo, in my judgment, all the advantages and incur all the disadvantages of both.

The Committee were influenced in that general sense by several other converging considerations. They were, as is very plain from their Report, acutely sensible of the difficulty of meeting all that problem with reference to British India alone. They were acutely sensible that the unity of India was perhaps the biggest achievement of our association with India, and they were under some anxiety, unless something were done, that centrifugal and separatist tendencies might develop in autonomous Provinces under, from the Indian point of view, an irresponsible Centre. They were profoundly conscious of the degree to which the interests of British India and the States were inextricably and increasingly interlocked. They naturally were impressed by the fact that the States, and those who had spoken for the States, had always made it abundantly plain that they could enter no Federation of All-India except on a basis of responsibility, and they could not but recognise the fact that if this opportunity were lost Federation, which they along with the Statutory Commission saw to be the only real solution for All-India difficulties, might never recur. It was with these considerations in their mind that they reached the conclusions and made the recommendations that stand in the Report, in which they state:

"We believe that the Central Government which we recommend will be stronger than the existing Government, and we see no other way in which it can be strengthened."

All that argument with which I have ventured to weary your Lordships on the question of the States is admittedly based upon the accession of the States in the proportions as required by the White Paper, which in this respect have been endorsed by the Joint Committee's Report. I have no reason to suppose that a sufficient number of States to fulfil the conditions requisite for Federation will not, in fact, accede. As I see it, all the main considerations on which they made their historic pronouncement at the first Round Table Conference are just as valid to-day as they were on the day they were made, and I have no doubt at all, taking the long view, that Federation on the lines proposed is as much in the interests of the States as it is in the interests of India as a whole. But we must all recognise—I have always recognised—that it is an immense decision for the State to take, and I always told them when I was in India that although I had no doubt in my mind that from their own point of view accession to federation would be right, they were bound to think most carefully before deciding, and that they had every right to see in precise terms the conditions on which their accession would be invited. And that remains the position to-day. I have no doubt, either, that the Princes will inevitably wish to discuss many matters with the Viceroy, and that they will wish to see the general picture substantially complete before taking final decisions. But I can assure your Lordships that my right honourable friend the Secretary of State is confident that the Report of the Committee does, in fact, substantially meet the reasonable appre-

hensions of the Princes as they were explained to the Joint Select Committee.

My noble friend, in the paper to which I have alluded, has a great deal to say of great force, if I may respectfully say so, about the anomalies of federation, and so greatly is he impressed with those anomalies that he would go no further than the establishment of an Advisory Council only for Greater India. I am quite free to admit that many of the anomalies to which he draws your Lordships' attention and to which he drew our attention are quite incontestible. They are there, and so large and so diverse a place is India that to me it would be a cause for overwhelming astonishment if they were not there. I have always taken the view that many of them can only, and will only, be solved in actual working, and that by Indians themselves. But the point I venture to state to your Lordships is not whether or not there are anomalies. About that I suppose we need hardly differ. The point is, are those anomalies to be allowed decisive force, and are they to be allowed decisive force in the sense of saying that so long as those anomalies exist you cannot have federation, because, if so, let us be under no illusions as to what that means? It means goodbye to federation to-day or to-morrow and, as far as we can foresee, for ever.

I venture humbly to suggest to the House that one of the secrets of British genius has been that we never have been unduly afraid of anomalies. It is perhaps the peculiar British genius not to rate logical symmetry higher than realities that are the legacy of history or the creation of hard fact and circumstance. I have heard many people say that your Lordships' House is an anomaly in a democratic State, but that fact has never succeeded in preventing your Lordships' House from doing its work any more than it has ever succeeded in making those who feel it to be an anomaly to agree upon an effective substitute for it. The most reverend Primate will perhaps forgive me if I say that the Church and State are full of anomalies to-day, and the British Empire itself might be prayed in aid in a similar argument. But none of those things, I would suppose, are conclusive, or indeed have ever been held to be conclusive in our history as I have been able to read it.

Viscount Halifax.

I have referred to what seems to me to be the position of the noble Marquess on these several points because I was anxious if I could to leave in your Lordships' mind what is the general picture of the India as he would constitutionally create it. May I pull it together and, I hope, not overdraw the picture in doing so. Leaving entirely aside the effect on Indian opinion of his proposals, he would be prepared to launch on an autonomous career eleven Provinces in which for some time to come Indian Ministers would be free to shape policy and pass laws undeterred by any administrative responsibility for consequences in the field of law and order—eleven Provinces in which the centrifugal tendencies that may develop will be resisted only by a weak Central Government differing in kind from the Provincial Governments, because still irresponsible, and having no effective contact with those Provincial Governments; a Central Government continuing all the weakness of the existing Central Government, and the Federal Constitution surviving only in the Advisory Council by which would be offered to the States the right of discussion only where they are demanding the right of participating in decisions and an Advisory Council which would have no effective power to regulate in the interests of All-India those matters in which All-India is concerned.

I do not think that is a picture that is at all overdrawn. But I must freely admit it is not a picture that is at all attractive to me, and I do not know whether to many of your Lordships, as to me, it has ever seemed strange that there should be so great a measure of anxiety about this question of central responsibility for a Federal India, on the part of persons who are quite ready to accept provincial autonomy. Nearly every argument that is used against federation is equally valid, and even more valid, in the case of autonomy. I am at a complete loss to understand how those who criticise so strongly the proposals for central responsibility can bring themselves to accept the proposals for provincial autonomy. This anxiety is constantly said to be based upon regard for the interests of the Indian masses; yet nine-tenths at least of the matters affecting their daily life fall within the provincial sphere, and to the transfer of all that

range of subjects which I do not particularise no objection at all is raised.

It is in the Provinces and not in the Centre where the great danger lies of majorities that might be expected to make difficulties for stable government. But the Centre by the numerical composition of the Lower House is reasonably secure, some people would say far too secure. I think that anyone who knows anything of the mind of the States would agree with me in saying that, although the States would very often judge many matters differently from us, yet on three vital matters they can securely be relied upon—namely, their interest in order, their interest in defence, and their determination to maintain the Imperial connection. Therefore, my Lords, I cannot but feel that for those reasons the anxiety as between the Provincial and the Central side has constantly been in great danger of losing its perspective.

I will say a word if I may upon safeguards, which was the other point to which I suppose principal anxiety has attached. I do not much like—and the Committee record that they had also the same feeling—the word "safeguards," which I think is open to mis-interpretation both in India and in England. I would have preferred, though it is of course too late to change language, the phrase "Emergency Powers." On that subject His Majesty's Government have always taken the view that there were certain broad Parliamentary purposes, such as the preservation of order, the protection of minorities, the credit of India, fair treatment for British commerce, and the just rights of the Services for which primarily, or, on any long view, definitely in the interests of India herself, provision must be made in any transfer of power. I have constantly been in some doubt as to the view on this point that is actually held by those who have criticised this proposal. We are sometimes told that the safeguards are so real, so all-pervasive, that any responsible Government that survives them must be a hollow sham. At other times, we are told that the safeguards are only paper, and of paper worth, and are quite incapable of effective operation, and that therefore responsible government is only too likely to be a dangerous reality.

Well, I am not so much concerned with the arguments of the critics as with answering to myself and to your Lordships the fundamental question whether or not these emergency powers can reasonably be expected to work. After all, it is not a new system. It is one that is quite familiar to the existing constitutional practice of India. What do you mean when you ask, Will they work? The Committee felt that in most cases there was very good ground for believing that their existence would render it unnecessary to invoke them, and they also thought that, in the special circumstances of India, the measure of responsibility which, for certain purposes, must continue to rest upon this country was complementary to, and not inconsistent with, the responsibility that it was designed to place upon Indian shoulders, but that, even if circumstances arose in which these special powers had to be invoked, they had by their definition of these special powers and by ensuring that Governors and Governors-General would get adequate and timely information, and by their recommendations as to the Services, in fact secured conditions by which these powers could be made effective. That is my own view, and it is a view that I think your Lordships also may reasonably accept.

We shall be told that the Report has been unanimously condemned in India, and proof of that will be found in the recent Central Elections that have been held. I do not think that anyone who knows India expected anything very different. I certainly did not, and I would have supposed that the result of elections held under the present system, in which the Government case has, and can have, no champion and tends always to go by default, might indeed be held by many to be an additional reason for changing the present system. And, my Lords, it is not an unfamiliar phenomenon, after all, in our own political life for the Opposition to expend violent criticism upon measures and proposals in which, under different circumstances, they find quite unexpected virtues. I have known it in my short political life to occur again and again, and I believe that it will not be otherwise in India. Indians will appreciate only in working whatever Constitution is based on these lines, how great an opportunity that Constitution in fact affords them, and I venture to hazard a very confident opinion that, if and when a Constitution on the

lines of the Joint Select Committee's Report is placed upon the Statute Book, Indians will not wish to refrain from working it, and that if they did wish to refrain from working it, history would repeat itself, and the magnetic force of the Constitution would be great enough to make it impossible for them to stand aside. The noble Marquess opposite has personal knowledge of what passed in recent years in that connection, and I should be greatly surprised if he did not feel able to place himself at one with me in that anticipation.

My Lords, if my voice could reach as far as India, I would venture to say to my friends in India this: I suppose that I have been the object of as much criticism as most people for the part that I felt it my duty to play while I was there, and Indians, to whatever political camp they belong, will not, I think, suspect me of being unfaithful to principles and purposes which I have kept constantly before me during recent years which have not been too easy. I find no difficulty at all in understanding that there is much in our Report which must be distasteful to many high-minded men in India, whose love for their country is as deep and as true as that of any of your Lordships for your own country, men who confidently long to see the realisation of their patriotic dreams, and whose very longing makes them perhaps realise too little the dangers by which, from more sides than one, the cause of Indian progress may be threatened. I know, too, very well how hard it is to convince Indians that the language of Statutes or of Reports is not over-cautious or over-restrained, and to make them believe that the single purpose of all our work is to try to lend such help to India as India seems to need. But it is my firm conviction that the spirit inspiring any Constitution is of an importance far greater than the dry bones of Reports or Statutes in which it may be embodied; that any Constitution based upon the principles of this Report does in fact, by its own inherent capacity for natural growth, secure for India a full opportunity for the political self-expression and development that those who love India best desire to see.

No one who has had any responsibility in evolving these proposals could, or would wish to claim perfection for them. Perfection in this matter is not attainable, and all of those who have been immersed in this subject know the difficulties far too well. I do not think that any noble Lord who may speak in this debate can possibly bring forward any difficulty that has not been in the minds of the members of the Joint Select Committee for days and weeks and months. It is not that we ignore the difficulties, but it is that we have not felt able, as I said earlier in my speech, to give them a force that should rightly be decisive. Therefore, recognising all these difficulties, admitting many anomalies, we can, I think, claim the support of those who are in the best position to advise us in the belief that the scheme is workable, that it does face the realities of the problem, and that when, as I hope, it is brought into operation, it may reasonably be relied upon to disappoint at once British misgivings and Indian suspicions which together seem to me to block the path at present to much of that better understanding between Great Britain and India which is the greatest need of both. I beg to move.

Moved to resolve, That this House accepts the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform as the basis for the revision of the Indian Constitution and considers it expedient that a Bill should be introduced on the general lines of the Report.—(*Viscount Halifax.*)

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY had given Notice that he would move, as an Amendment, to leave out all the words after "That" and insert "this House is unwilling to pronounce in advance an acceptance of far-reaching recommendations on Indian Constitutional Reform until it has had the opportunity of considering and approving the particular recommendations of the Joint Select Committee to be adopted by the Government and proposed in the concrete form of the provisions of a Bill."

The noble Marquess said: My Lords, I have to claim, if I may, the indulgence of your Lordships' House because I am going to do a thing which I have never done before and which I hope I shall never do again. I am going to move the Amendment which stands in my name, and yet I am not able, I am sorry to say, to follow out that Motion by attending the full four days' debate which is to

take place in your Lordships' House. I have been strongly advised that I must not delay my holiday any longer; I dare not ignore that advice, and I can only throw myself upon your Lordships' kind consideration if I am not able to remain for the full term of the debate. I confess that I profoundly regret that I am so placed, because it may to some extent militate against the force of what I have to say, but I did think that as it was your Lordships' good pleasure to make me a member of the Joint Select Committee, it was only respectful to your Lordships that I should come to the House to-day and say what I have to say —as it were, to give an account of my stewardship as one of your Lordships' representatives; and I hope your Lordships will allow me to do so forthwith.

I agree entirely with my noble friend who has just sat down in the phrases which he used in praise of the work of the Committee to which we belonged, and especially of the patience and cordial assistance which we all received from the Chairman of the Committee. I join to the full in all that my noble friend has said on that point. But I am afraid that I cannot agree with everything that my noble friend has said in his speech. I have always tried, in dealing with this Indian question, to approach it with every care, every precaution, every effort to be considerate and deliberate. When I was asked to serve on the Joint Committee I did not decline, and my noble friends who sit upon the Government Bench and elsewhere in your Lordships' House who were members of the Committee will bear me out if I say that I attended at least as well as most other members. I want to carry out that attitude of mind to the end. If my words have any weight with your Lordships, I desire that we should approach this subject again on this occasion with the same profound sense of responsibility as that with which I had myself hoped to have studied it in the past. Therefore I deprecate the Motion which my noble friend who has just sat down has made.

I deprecate a Motion which seeks to obtain from your Lordships a sort of sanction in advance without really giving yourselves the time fully to appreciate what you are sanctioning. I suggest on the other hand that the proper course for your Lordships to pursue is not to pronounce an opinion either on my noble friend's side or on mine until you see in concrete form, in the provisions of the clauses of a Bill, what it is really sought to do. That is not an excessive demand. Consider the scope of what we are discussing. Keep in mind, if I may say so, this vast revolution which it is proposed to carry out in India—nay, two revolutions, because you are proposing at once to reorganise completely the Constitution of the Provinces and at the same time, before you have the slightest notion how that will work, to reform the Constitution of the Centre as well. Whatever opinion you have upon the merits of the question, even if you agree with almost every word that my noble friend has said, surely that is a tremendous thing to do, and one to be approached with the greatest care and caution.

My noble friend said that he thinks that everybody must by now have become familiar with the elements of this question. I have a great opinion of the intelligence (if I may use such a phrase) and of the ability of your Lordships, but it took us about eighteen or nineteen months to understand it all, and I think that it is asking a good deal of your Lordships, even with the high intelligence which you possess, to assume that you have realised in the brief space of something under a month even the outline of a great many of the proposals which the Government are making to us. My noble friend said that this is a dilatory Motion. Is it so dilatory? Does he really think that to suggest to your Lordships that before pronouncing an opinion on these proposals you should see them in the form of the clauses of a Bill, is a dilatory Motion? Why, my Lords, it is the ordinary procedure of your Lordships' House. So far from being dilatory, it is what we always do.

I noticed that my noble friend quoted no precedent for what the Government are doing. I do not pretend to be a master of precedent, but I know of no precedent except that I believe there was a Motion in another place about the Irish Church Bill more than half a century ago. That is the nearest that I can get to it. It is a wholly unprecedented thing to come to your Lordships' House and say: "Accept the general recommendations" (for I do not, of course, go into very small detail) "of this Report; do not leave it over

until you see it in the cold and difficult form of a Bill, when you cannot get out of the point. Agree at once in general terms." General terms are so much easier than precise terms. I say that to oppose such an unprecedented procedure is not too dilatory.

My noble friend said that the only difference between himself and those who were responsible for the Minority recommendation is that we think that the Government and their friends are going too far and too fast. He seems to think that it is necessary that we should hereafter proceed finally in the direction which he indicates. I repudiate that phrase. No doubt the Government are going too fast, but I deny that it follows as a matter of course that if the country were well advised enough to delay dealing with the central responsibility, necessarily in the long run they would follow the provisions which are set forth in the Majority Report. I deny that, and I can see many reasons why it should not be so. One of the reasons is that almost every country in Europe is repudiating this system at this moment. My noble friend, possessed of a sort of nineteenth century view of these things, seems to think that it is necessary that you should always have a Central Government and, if you like, a Central Federal Government, conceived upon a Parliamentary basis. Why does he think that? That is an assumption to which a logical mind like my noble friend's ought to have been superior at once. It does not follow in the least. If it be true that this Parliamentary system does not succeed in Italy, does not succeed in Germany, or in France or Spain, and so far as I know does not succeed in the United States of America, it does not follow as a matter of course that that is the end of federal central government, if we are wise enough not to have it too fast at the present moment.

What I want to come back to, if I may, is this. I am not suggesting to your Lordships that upon my Amendment you should pronounce a verdict upon the proposals of the Joint Select Committee. I am not making any such proposal as that. On the contrary, what I am proposing is that you should wait until you are quite sure what the proposals are, which is quite a different thing. I know that a great deal is made in public controversy on this question of the circumstance that so many gentlemen of high authority in Indian affairs are against us—against the Minority recommendation. I know that that is so. Those gentlemen are, many of them, very learned in Indian affairs. Of course there are many others who take precisely the contrary view. A very large number of members of the Services in India have been in communication with myself and others, and they totally disapprove of the White Paper, and no doubt will disapprove of the Majority Report as soon as they have had time to appreciate what it is.

But, even if it were true that the weight of Indian expert opinion was against us, I should not be unduly disturbed. They may understand India, but they do not understand constitutional government. That is where we come in. The experts on constitutional government are not to be found in India, but in the two Houses of Parliament, and in this body of public opinion which has grown up under constitutional conditions, into the very fibre of whose being have entered these constitutional instincts and knowledge, are the experts. I speak with due humility. I do not propose to be a high authority amongst your Lordships, but I do say that we are not to be crushed by any citation of Indian opinion by itself. Of course it is very important, but when you apply to the Indian problem these modern constitutional notions then you must come back to us and ask how have we found it in our experience of Constitutions here and all over the world—have we found these things to succeed or not to succeed? Therefore I take courage to approach the subject without any feeling of dismay.

As I have said, I share with my noble friend the admiration of the conduct of the Committee, but if he will allow me to make a very respectful criticism of the majority of the Committee it would be this: they did not devote their attention to the question whether these proposals were possible, but to the question: How can these proposals be made possible? They assumed the conclusions before they began to discuss the methods for carrying them out, and therefore when they were presented with any difficulty, with any of those anomalies to which my noble friend referred, they did not say that those anomalies ought to make them reconsider their position; what they said was: "We must find a way to evade these anomalies;

a good way if we can find it, but a bad way if we cannot find a good one." They did not face the anomaly. The infinite difficulties which the Indian problem presents were not faced by the Committee in the sense that they set themselves to answer the difficulty. My noble friend admitted it. If you produce profound difficulties, and those who are responsible for Indian policy are not able to answer those difficulties, what would any reasonable man do? He would begin to ask: Am I quite sure I am right in these proposals at all? Is not that the obvious conclusion? I do not ask your Lordships to-night to say that. All I ask you to do is to say that these things being so, these questions having arisen, these difficulties having been presented to us in this form, we would rather see the Bill itself before we commit ourselves. I say that that is the only reasonable course to pursue.

I do not want to detain your Lordships at too great length to-night, but allow me to mention one or two of the fundamental difficulties to which the Government give no reply. There is finance in India. That was described by one of my colleagues on the Committee as a quicksand in India. I do not suppose the Government agree to that description, but for my part the idea of building a Constitution on a quicksand seems repellant to common sense. Of course in finance the members of the Central Legislature will have unequal powers. Some representatives there will have greater authority than others. Can you conceive a system in this country where the representatives of Hertfordshire in the House of Commons had greater authority in matters of finance than the representatives of Buckinghamshire? That is what is proposed by the Government and in the Report. No answer is given to that, and no answer is possible. I say, had you not better see the actual proposals in print before you commit yourselves to such a doctrine as that?

Take another point. Take the communal question. The communal question is profound. It cuts down right to the very heart of the problem, and the Committee were not agreed upon the communal question. I know my noble friend Lord Zetland is going to speak in this debate. I hope he will tell you whether he agrees with the recommendation of the Joint Select Committee on the communal question, and whether he suggests that your Lordships should approve of it. I know that he is a most honest man, and he will say nothing of the kind. You are giving the supreme control at the Centre to a community split from top to bottom in the region of the most profound convictions of mankind, cutting, that is to say, at the heart of religion, which moves men, and has moved men, more deeply than anything else. So much so that you have had to establish a creed register. Let me explain that in a way which I had no opportunity of explaining when I was speaking in public a short time ago because of shortness of time. What does a creed register mean? It means this, that Moslems and practically Hindus will each be registered in *different* registers. They will not vote together when they elect representatives to Parliament. The Moslems will be allowed to vote only for a Moslem candidate, and the Hindus will in practice only vote for a Hindu candidate. There is no central body between the two, as there is in this country. Here you can go down into the country and persuade the electors that, though they have voted Conservative hitherto, they ought, on the present occasion, to vote, shall we say Labour? We cannot do that in India. The Moslem can only vote Moslem. The Hindu will only vote Hindu, and the Moslem representative returned to the Legislature will have no inducement whatever to consider the interests of any of his constituents except those who belong to the religion which he professes.

To an Englishman or a Scotsman such an arrangement is, of course, the grossest absurdity. It is not self-government at all. There is no means of working self-government on those lines. How can you, if, when you think you have got a stronger case than your opponent, you cannot go and persuade the electors to vote your way rather than his? I am only saying what is common ground between the two sections of the Committee. You will find in the Majority Report a long passage in which it is explained that all the middle elements of English public life, the floating body, which really decides our General Elections, do not exist in India at all. That, I may say, is what my noble friend calls one of those rather insignificant anomalies which he thinks might be safely trusted to chance in the future. I shall be very

much surprised if your Lordships take that view.

And there is another point with reference to this communal question. The compromise to which the White Paper, following the Prime Minister, and the Majority Report have come, the Communal Award, is hated in India by all the Hindus. That is an important circumstance for you to consider. Remember that we can ask you to approve of this policy in order to give India what India wants, but if it can be shown that in a vital particular she does not want it, what becomes of the argument? One or two of my friends and myself were responsible in the Committee for putting forward a proposal for an All-India Council, which was of a federal tendency and intended to be of a federal tendency, but not of a wrong federal tendency, which I suggest the Report of the majority has really pursued. What we were told was, "Oh, it is no good you making that proposal. India does not want it." That was supposed to be conclusive. But India does not want the Communal Award; at least, the Hindus do not want it—the Moslems do. And the real honest truth of the matter is, of course—let us speak out—that the Government were anxious to conciliate Moslem opinion. That is the truth. I do not say that was their only reason, but it was an important reason.

I hold no brief either for the Hindus or the Moslems. It is no business of mine to criticise them; that has no connection with the subject which I am upon. But, even if I preferred the Moslems to the Hindus, I say there is no future for a gerrymandering policy. It is *ipso facto* condemned. A scheme drawn up upon the ground that it will please the Moslems rather than the Hindus is founded on a complete constitutional fallacy. You cannot make a policy on those grounds at all—nothing which will stand, even if you were not ashamed to do it. No, this is another reason, and a very strong reason, why we should see these proposals in black and white before we pronounce an acceptance of them. I am not quite sure how far the Government are going to accept the Report of the majority. I do not know how far Lord Zetland and his friends will let them go about the Communal Award and the Poona Pact; and unless he and his friends let them go, they will not be able to go anywhere; they depend entirely upon their support. Therefore, let us see where the Government stands in black and white upon that sort of question.

Let me just touch on one more big point. A good many gentlemen who said at the time the Committee was appointed that they had serious doubts have since said publicly that their doubts have been set at rest, and one of the reasons why their doubts have been set at rest is that the system of direct election, which was proposed in the White Paper, has been eliminated, and a system of indirect election has been put in its place. Well, I think that was right so far, because direct election was impossible. It was shown to be almost ludicrous in its operation. But it does not follow because the Committee thought direct election was impossible that they did not see any difficulties in indirect election. On the contrary, if your Lordships would look at the Proceedings of the Committee as they have been published in the Blue-books laid before you, you will see that the representatives of the Liberal Party in the Committee were resolutely opposed to indirect election. Very able representatives they were too; two of them are sitting before me now, and they were resolutely opposed to it. The arguments they used appeared to be extremely good and I said so at the time.

Let us consider one or two of the arguments about indirect election. In the first place I ought to explain to your Lordships that what is meant by indirect election is that the members of the Lower House, of the Assembly, at the Centre, if the Report is followed, are to be elected by members of the Lower House in each of the Provinces. It is indirect; it does not come from the electors themselves, but indirectly through the members of the Assemblies in the Provinces. The first thing that has to be said is that in these circumstances a dissolution of the Central Legislature will be a very futile operation in almost every case. Just consider. The Central Legislature consists of representatives of the States and representatives of these Provincial Assemblies. The representatives of the States are nominated by the Rulers. Therefore, a dissolution of the Assembly so far as they are concerned will make no difference at all. It is not likely that the Ruler will change his opinion because Parliament is

dissolved. If he did change his opinion it would not be necessary, so far as his representative is concerned, for there to be a dissolution, because you may take it from me that the representative will always do what the Prince tells him. Therefore, as far as the States' representatives are concerned there will be no power of dissolution at all. What will happen in the case of the Provincial representatives? There will not be any change in the electorate. In all probability the local Assemblies, the Provincial Assemblies, will consist of precisely the same men as before and with precisely the same opinions. There will be no change at all. They will all be pledged, and they will all send men of the same point of view again.

But even supposing there had been in the meantime a local provincial election, even so it would be quite certain what the views of the new representatives would be, and instead of the Governor-General being able to go to the electors and convince them that he was right and his Ministers were wrong, that is the sort of issue that would take place. He would come across these pledged-bound representatives in the Assembly whom it would be almost impossible to convince. I do not want to overstate my case. I shall not go so far as to say that the effective power of dissolution would disappear altogether, but I say it would be very gravely hampered. That is a point which is not answered, of course, in the Report of the Majority of the Committee. One of the reasons is that all this happened very late in the Committee. In the early stages of the Committee we were wandering in the desert of direct election. The Government defended direct election. When that was proved to be absurd, after the Committee had been sitting for a year or so, the Government found they had to go in for indirect election; but please do not imagine the matter was fought out. All these difficulties of indirect election were not really weighed.

I must not delay your Lordships, but I have not nearly finished with the difficulties of indirect election. My noble friend the Marquess of Lothian, who is going to take part in this debate, is a great authority on this point. He will be able to tell your Lordships how much easier it is to corrupt indirect electors than it is to corrupt direct electors, because they are far fewer in number. Another difficulty is that as representatives of the Provinces in the Central Assembly they will all be pledge-bound, of course, and therefore a decision of the Central Assembly, so far as it depends upon British Indian representatives at all, will always be a provincial decision. It will not take into account the wishes or the interests of the Centre but of the Provinces. That is a very formidable matter if it is thought out, because it affects finance directly. How are you going to adjust a financial arrangement when the Centre and the Provinces are both called upon to put their hands into the same pocket and the whole influence of the gentlemen who put their hands in is Provincial not Central? None of these things was thought out. All these things were extemporised very late in the Committee.

I cannot go on because it would take too long, but one of the consequences was that in order to find some method of producing an Upper Chamber in the Centre the Committee had to revolutionise the scheme of the White Paper. The scheme of the White Paper had been that the Lower Chambers of the Provinces should elect the Upper Chamber of the Centre, but when the Lower Chambers of the Provinces were pinched—if I may use the word—in order to return the Lower Chamber of the Centre, then the Committee had to find some new method to elect the Council. It was to anybody with any sense of humour almost ludicrous, and I need not say that the result of these efforts was a most absurd form of Central Upper Chamber, because it appeared upon investigation that the proposal was that the Central Upper Chamber should be elected by the combined body of the Upper Chambers of the Provinces just as the combined body of the Lower Chambers elected the Central Lower Chamber.

Unfortunately it turned out that all the Provinces had not Upper Chambers. That was positively the difficulty. If I remember aright, if the proposals of the Committee are adopted, out of eleven Provinces only five are to have Upper Chambers. I concede to my noble friend they are the most important five, or at any rate among the most important; but it was found that six

Provinces had no Upper Chambers, and the Committee had to create *ad hoc* electors, intermediate electors, whose only function would be to elect members of the Central Upper Chamber. What a paradise for the wire-puller! And the wire-puller in India, as indeed the wire-puller in some other places, is not above certain methods which the purist would call corrupt.

Have I not said enough to show your Lordships that you had better see all this in black and white before you vote for it? I have only one more word to say about these indirect electors. You would have thought at any rate that the members of the Provincial Assemblies were trustworthy persons who might be relied upon to act constitutionally. You would have thought that they at any rate would not have to be bound by these religious fetters which I have described in respect to the generality of India. Not at all. The members of these Provincial Assemblies are all to be divided by group registers. Even a Member of Parliament for Bombay as it would be called is not to be allowed if he is a Moslem to vote for a Hindu, or if he is a Hindu to vote for a Moslem in practice. Not at all. He is to be fenced within the narrowest limits of religious intolerance. And this is a matter which your Lordships' House is to accept without seeing it in black and white! Forgive me if I speak too hotly.

I must say one word about the Princes. I do not know which way the Princes are going to decide. I do not believe the Government know. I do not believe they have a glimmer of an idea. I can only judge from what I see in the public Press, and it seems to me that the enthusiasm which we were all told that the Princes possessed in order to rush into federation has cooled down a good deal. I do not know whether it is so. I do not pretend to have that knowledge of the Oriental mind which my noble friend and those who have borne rule in India possess. All I can say is, it seems extremely doubtful. But the real point in connection with the Princes which I would suggest to your Lordships is this—I only put it hypothetically—supposing a sufficient number of the Princes do not come in, what is the policy of the Government? I gathered from my noble friend that they intended to go through with their Bill with its full Central Constitution and leave the question of whether the Princes are to come in or not in the air. That is to say, the Bill will be suspended, or the operation of it will be suspended, until it is known what the Princes are going to do. That appears to me an extremely hazardous measure of legislation. Are you really going to do that? Are you going to pass the Bill in all its details, in every respect, and then say to the Princes: "As soon as you come in then it will become operative"?

Two things of course will happen. First of all, the Princes will evidently have it in their power to make terms. Have you thought of that? There is another consideration. I hope noble Lords opposite will forgive me for what I am about to say; I am not going to say it with any want of respect to them. One of the reasons which has been urged upon Conservatives—if they will permit me these domestic details—to pass the Bill in its true form, with its central responsibility, is that if we do not do it why then these dreadful Labour people will come into Office and they will do something very much worse. Let us conceive the situation which will be presented if the Bill is passed in its full form and is hung up until the Princes have made up their minds. Let us suppose—not at all an impossible supposition—that in the meantime there is a General Election in Great Britain and that the Labour Party succeeded at the polls and became the Government. They will have before them the India Constitution Act in full detail and it will only want the very smallest action of theirs to put it into force, whether the Princes have come in or whether they have not. The whole material will be there. In other words, it would be quite possible in those circumstances, in a short one-clause Bill, for a Labour Government to produce an Indian Federation which has no Princes in it at all, or none to speak of. I believe that is what the Labour Party think ought to be done; I only judge from their public utterances. But how shall we Conservatives be placed in those circumstances? We have given them the whole material for doing this thing, and it is left for them to do it in a moment.

If there is one thing more emphatically said in the Majority Report than another it is that a federation of British India alone is absolutely out of the question.

The Marquess of Salisbury.

The greatest emphasis is laid upon that. The Majority say that that would be absolutely fatal, and yet, if their policy is pursued, they will make it as easy as possible for these gentlemen opposite, if they were in power, to do the very thing which they themselves say would be fatal. I say that on their own showing there can be nothing more reckless than a policy of that kind, and, once more, before your Lordships are asked to accept the recommendation of the Majority, will you not wait until you see these clauses, until you see exactly how far they go, until you see whether the Government have been able to find mitigations of the difficulties which I have put forward, ways out of them? Will you not wait? Are we to be driven headlong into a decision? I cannot believe that that is a policy that anybody will really in his heart approve of.

I do not want to say anything disrespectful of my noble friends who sit upon that Bench representing the present Government, but would it be too much to say that there has been a tendency all through to try and anticipate the decision of Parliament? There was the Prime Minister's statement and the White Paper put forward and submitted to your Lordships' House about two years ago, which dealt with many of these very difficult questions on which you were called upon to give a decision. Then there is the Viceroy who went out of his way to say that he had been a Liberal all his life—that is no recommendation to any of us—and that he hoped before the next time he came to address the audience he would come as a constitutional sovereign, anticipating, of course, in the most barefaced way, the decision which Parliament was called upon to give. Was he reproved by the Secretary of State? I am sure the Secretary of State will not tell me. I hope he was, but I am a little doubtful, because I saw a repetition of something of the same kind by one of the other Governors.

There has been this tendency all through to ignore the immense complexity and deep difficulties of the problem, which was to establish a Constitution to embrace 350,000,000 of human beings, which was to establish Constitutions in every Province and a Constitution at the Centre at the same time, which was to try and overcome the chasm which separates Hindus and Moslems. All these things it was attempted to do. If the Majority of the Joint Select Committee have, as I believe they have, failed really to bridge these difficulties, that is no blame to their intelligence or their ingenuity or their resource. All these were very much in evidence. But however clever you are you cannot do that which is impossible, you cannot do that which is impracticable. It is no good saying that there must be central responsibility in India, and if there are difficulties, well then we must ignore the difficulties. It is no good saying that. As practical men you have to face each difficulty and see how it can be overcome. It is because, very respectfully, I do not want your Lordships to be put in a position of having approved recommendations which you have never really seen, that I ask your support.

I have been engaged in the whole of a long political life in representing principles in the form of provisions of a Bill. It is very difficult, and it is a science of its own. It often turns out that you cannot do it, that the principles are such that they cannot be represented in the form of a Bill. Then you have to change the foundations upon which you are working. To ignore that common experience in the case of this problem, a problem of the most vast importance which concerns the welfare of millions of fellow creatures who have no knowledge of politics whatever, and who look to you and you alone to protect them, I say is recklessness. And I ask you to remember, last of all, that once you have done it there is no retreat, no possibility of saying hereafter "We made a mistake, let us go back." The thing is gone. I ask you to pause, and I ask you to let the Government put in the concrete form of the provisions of a Bill what they propose. Let them bring it before the House of Commons and your Lordships in that form, pursuing the ordinary rule. Let it be submitted for its Second Reading, for its Committee Stage. Then we must all abide by the result. Until then, I would ask you—I would appeal to the Government themselves—not to put the House of Lords, whose reputation and credit is their responsibility, in the position of having expressed an opinion upon something which, with all the ability in this House, they cannot understand. I ask them not

to do that, but to accept this Amendment that I put forward. I am not asking you to follow every word that I have said in my speech. I am asking you to agree to the Amendment. I am asking you at any rate to pause and see exactly what the conditions are before you are asked to pass them into law. I beg to move.

Amendment moved—

Leave out all the words after ("That") and insert ("this House is unwilling to pronounce in advance an acceptance of far-reaching recommendations on Indian Constitutional Reform until it has had the opportunity of considering and approving the particular recommendations of the Joint Select Committee to be adopted by the Government and proposed in the concrete form of the provisions of a Bill.")—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

LORD SNELL: My Lords, I have never attempted to address your Lordships under a sense of greater anxiety and responsibility than on the present occasion. The problem of the future government of India by its complexity, by its magnitude, and by the effect which our words and decisions may have upon the lives of 350,000,000 of our fellow subjects, transcends altogether every question of Party advantage or of individual preconceptions or prejudices. I shall assume in what I have to say to-day that every section of your Lordships' House is as anxious for the progress and peace of India as I am myself, and I venture to hope also that in what I say your Lordships will give me credit for a similar desire. I do not propose to enter into the very interesting family dispute which has been going on between separate sections of the Conservative Party. I can only say that we have some experience of these family political differences. If the Conservative Party want any help in order that these differences may be conducted with amiability and good temper, I shall be able to introduce them to the proper quarters.

I must attempt, in what I have to say, to speak not for myself alone, but as representing one of the great political Parties in the State, and to explain if I can the attitude which we adopt. Like the noble Marquess who has just spoken, I, too, was honoured by being appointed to this Committee, and I owe some kind of explanation of my stewardship to your Lordships. I desire to say, however, at the beginning that whether the Committee have done ill or well the responsibility now passes to Parliament. No one is entitled to assume that in regard to this legislation for India he is engaged in a piece of ordinary legislative routine. He must remember that it is his duty not to be led by prejudice or to act without adequate information. Whether the Committee have done right or wrong, they at least put themselves to the inconvenience of trying to master the subject: We have to remember to-day, now that this matter comes before Parliament, that the decision that Parliament will take will decide in all probability the peace and the orderly development of India, or continued distrust, political disturbance, economic and social misery, religious strife, perhaps revolutionary activity, and almost certainly some demand for clear-cut separation. In these circumstances each must act as he can justify his action to his own conscience.

I admit at the beginning that this does represent a risk. It is a risk either way, whether you give or whether you take or whether you withhold, but the greatest risk of all is to do nothing. To do nothing in this matter is really to do the most revolutionary thing that the British Government have been asked to do. My own decision, for what it is worth, is to take the risk of generous concession, and to try to win India to the position of a proud and contented partner in the Commonwealth of Nations. That risk that I am willing to take arises, as I believe, out of my own political experience and memories. Looking back on the major political events of my time, I think that the sanest, the bravest, the best rewarded of all the acts that I can remember was the spontaneous and undelayed gift of self-government to South Africa. And in passing I pay a salute to the Liberal Benches and to the memory of a great and far-seeing statesman who made that possible. On the other hand, the saddest, the most lamentable thing that I can remember was the introduction of political partisanship into the Irish question, a partisanship which hid the virtues and exaggerated the vices of the Irish people, with the result that there has been produced an unappeasable complex of hatred against our own country; and if any appropriate words could be written over the Dail in Dublin

those words would probably be: "Too late!"

What is it that we want to produce in India? Do we wish to produce another South Africa or another Ireland? We can have either, as I believe. By generous trust all the difficulties of South Africa were healed, and we can heal such differences as there are in India in that way, and in no other. The noble Marquess who has recently spoken revealed the fact that India is split upon many questions. We have not always had complete unity in our own country on political questions, but the way to heal a split, in India or elsewhere, is to get the separate Parties to work on things that affect them both, and by so doing to build up a reservoir of good will (if I am not mixing the metaphor) which will enable them to overcome these other difficulties.

As I understand our business here to-day, it is not to go into the details of the Report. That will rightly come when the Bill is introduced. I quite understand that the noble Marquess, because he has to go away, had to take this opportunity of doing that or not do it at all. And may I say in passing how much his colleagues on the Committee, and indeed the whole House, hope that he will come back completely restored to health? What we are concerned about to-day is to get a generous atmosphere in which the details of this Bill may be considered. If we can we have got to get the soul of India on our side. We want to assure the people of India that we are mindful of their aspirations and that we will endeavour, according as the light is given to us to see, to produce results which will give both spiritual and practical blessings to the whole of the people of India.

Your Lordships may be good enough to allow me to associate myself, before I start upon my differences, with those who have spoken appreciatively of the work of the Chairman of the Committee. I am afraid that my three colleagues and myself gave him endless trouble, which he bore with calmness and patience and unfailing courtesy. I would like also to say that in my own judgment, if I, too, may speak impersonally, the weight of knowledge and the experience of the *personnel* of the Committee were in every way impressive. Every member of it was gravely conscious of his responsibility, and the constancy with which the Committee's work was attended to was, I believe, unprecedented in our legislative experience. I myself think that the Committee, with all its faults as revealed by the noble Marquess, was not unworthy of the great task entrusted to it.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Hear, hear!

LORD SNELL: I think that to have served upon it, to have taken part in its work, to have been defeated by it on many occasions, to have joined in all that it did, is a privilege that none of its members would willingly have missed. I feel, too, that the Indian delegates by their patience, by their courtesy, by their dignity, helped immensely the work of the Joint Select Committee, and if the Report does not give satisfaction in India, it will not be the fault of the distinguished men and women who came over to put India's case before us.

Now the Central Group on the Committee had the best of both worlds. With quite respectable adroitness disagreeing with both the Left (myself and my friends) and the Right led by the noble Marquess, whom we affectionately called "Diehards," the Central Group accepted the help of each against the other with quite an engaging constancy. On odd occasions my little group was permitted to share a fleeting moment of respectability by siding with the Government against the Right; but the Right needed no appeal to support the Government against the Left. They leaped in with an impetuous rapture as though each one of them said in his heart, "For this purpose was I sent upon the earth"; and the Central Group therefore stood to win every time, and did. Whilst my colleagues and myself will always suspect the quality of their insight, we shall never for a moment question their unfailing courtesy or the great attention they gave to what we said.

The members of the Labour section on the Committee were concerned with certain definite principles, and those principles included social and economic as well as political principles. In our judgment there can be no solution of the Indian problem that merely erects a political structure and ignores altogether the economic exploitation which the masses

of India undergo, and it gives Indians who are poor very little comfort if they are economically oppressed by persons of their own nation, rather than by persons from overseas. When I have spoken, as I have for many years, about self-government for India, I have meant self-government for all Indians and not for a small professional or possessing class. Now we were also bound by certain principles in regard to the nature of the self-government that was to be given. When this matter came before your Lordships' House I read out a declaration to you on behalf of the Labour Party, one or two principles of which I will repeat:

"The Labour Party believe that, as stated by the Statutory Commission, the new Constitution should contain within itself provision for its own development. We think that the new Constitution should contain the principle laid down in the Irwin-Gandhi Pact that such safeguards as are necessary should be in the interests of India and agreed on in co-operation with the leaders of Indian opinion. The new Constitution should adopt the principle laid down by the Labour Government at the First Round-Table Conference, and repeated as their policy by the National Government at the Second Round-Table Conference, that the reserved powers should not be such as to prejudice the advance of India through the new Constitution to full responsibility for her own government. The policy of the Labour Party reinforced by these declarations, is therefore clear and unequivocal, and the Party will, in an endeavour to further that policy, nominate its representatives to serve on the Committee."

But, my Lords, that did not mean that we were not free to examine each detail impartially upon its own merits, or that we were asked to ignore difficulties such as might appear in our work. Indeed, in the alternative draft which we submitted for the Committee's acceptance, we said that

"any Constitution must satisfy Indian public opinion. This is not to say that in every detail Indian views of what is desirable must be accepted, for we have to consider not merely the political crux but also those who as yet have little more than a dim conception of democratic government and electoral systems. Nor would it be right for us to subordinate entirely our greater and longer experience of the working of Parliamentary institutions to the views of Indian politicians."

If we approach the Report itself, I say at once that there is much in it that I and my Labour friends accept, and if Parliament sees fit to embody in a new Constitution Act the recommendations that are made, they will constitute a greater gift of self-government to India than anything she has previously had.

The proposals include the establishment in eleven British Indian Provinces of responsible Ministries, all having control over all provincial subjects, including law and order. It contains proposals for an All-Indian Federation, to which the Provinces would be attached, it defines the respective responsibility of the Central and Provincial Legislatures, and it provides for the protection of minorities, and for decisive responsibility at the Centre. It also contains very decisive provisions for special representation of women and labour, and increases the electorate to some 14 per cent. of the Indian population. However you regard that, it is a considerable step forward, but always let us remember that these concessions may be modified by the wide powers conceded to the Governors, who may ignore the advice of their Ministers, and may pass Ordinances without their consent, and so on. Now, whatever else that is, it quite clearly is not full self-government.

If, however, we approved of a good deal in the Report, your Lordships will ask why we felt compelled to vote against its acceptance. It is very difficult to indicate in a few short words the accumulative effect of twenty months of anxious labour, of give-and-take, of argument and so on, and also the routine rejection of our appeals and arguments and proposals. But too often, as it seemed to us, the concessions were given grudgingly and in all cases were surrounded by over-elaborated precautions. The Committee's report seemed to ignore the fundamental rights of the Indian people, and rather to regard India as an estate to be run for the benefit of England, rather than for the good of the Indian people. And almost wholly the political and financial safeguards and the commercial discrimination were for the protection of the position of possessing classes, and so on. There is no attempt made to protect the living standards of the vast masses of the Indian people, the millions of peasants, and the urban wage-earners.

Then we felt that the Committee regarded India as static, as something which went on year after year without change, whereas India is changing quickly, and so quickly that by the time

some of these proposals are made operative they may be already out of date. With regard to women franchise, we regard the proposals as thoroughly unsatisfactory. The future of India, as we look at it, involves the emancipation of women to a larger extent than is proposed. If the customs, habits and so on of India are to be modified at all and reshaped, that will have to a great extent to be done by Indian women. We appealed in vain that application for the franchise should not be required, that a literary qualification should be substituted for the qualification of educational standards, that the wives of officers and soldiers should be enfranchised, and also that the wives of men entitled to vote should possess the vote.

When we come to special representation of labour we think that what is proposed is grotesquely, and perhaps also designedly, inadequate. It seemed to us of supreme importance that the masses of India should be placed in a position to defend themselves, and what is given to them is not sufficient to enable them to protect themselves against the economic encroachments upon their standards of life that are almost certain to be made. The landlords, for whom there was no sort of justification for special representation at all, are given special representation, and in regard to that in our draft alternative we said:

> "If special representation were needed it should be given, not to those who, by reason of their wealth and *status* command influence and power, but to those who, by reason of their poverty and low *status*, are likely to find their claims overlooked. . . . We have to ensure that self-government shall be given to India in such a way as to ensure that the new Constitution shall place in the hands of the mass of rural cultivators and urban wage-earners the possibility of attaining to political power. . . . In handing over power to other hands we must ensure that the interests of the weaker sections of the community are safeguarded."

In regard to Second Chambers, in spite of what was said by the noble Viscount, Lord Halifax, to-day, our consciousness of the blessings of Second Chambers in our own country is not sufficient to justify us in trying to impose them upon the Indian people. The modifications that have been made from the White Paper seem to us constantly and almost entirely in the direction of further restriction, and never in the way of advance. Thus, as it seems to us, the good will of the Indian people was sacrificed to the mummified prejudices of a section of the British Conservative Party. We were disappointed also, to use the words of the Simon Commission, that the proposed Constitution did not "contain within itself provision for its own development," the result of which will be that there will be continued diversion from social and economic issues, which are the real problem of India, to purely political issues.

Then there is the last phase of our objection to this Report. It is the fact that in the Report, in the speech of the Secretary of State in the other House, and in the speech of the noble Viscount who introduced this Motion to-day, the words "Dominion *status*" never occurred. It seems as though they were designedly ignored, and, as we saw it—perhaps we were wrong—we believed that the honour of England was engaged in this matter. Solemn pledges were given which I need not repeat, unless I am challenged to do so, indicating, at least according to the understanding of the Indian people, that they were to receive equal *status* with the rest of His Majesty's Dominions. Those pledges were specific; they were repeated; they were, as I believe, undeniable. Now why were those promises ever made if it was not intended to honour them? And, if it is still intended to honour them, what harm would there be if they were again made on behalf of His Majesty's Government? If it is said that no time was allotted for Dominion *status*, well and good. No time has ever been asked for. The Indian people have never fixed a date to this, but the pledges, as I think, were specifically given in the House of Commons by the Secretary of State in August, 1917—and the date is ominous, though I cannot believe that it was a piece of mere war propaganda, to be forgotten when the need was past. There was the statement also made by Mr. Churchill in a speech which has been quoted, a speech made before the Prime Ministers of the Dominions and representatives from India, so that the occasion when that speech was made was not an irresponsible one—and the right honourable gentleman possesses a capacity for almost immodest lucidity and for a power of presentation which is the envy of all his friends, and

that is everybody who has the privilege of his acquaintance. He falls back now upon such facile casuistry as that "due place" is not the same as "equal place."

I looked up what the word "due" means, and I found it may mean a debt that is owing or payable, a debt to be met according to contract, and I believe that that interpretation would be a right one to apply to this occasion. Then there is the question of *status*. *Status*, it is said, is not the same as function. All that is the prevarication of horse-dealing rather than statesmanship. If Mr. Churchill had offered some inexperienced and needy person, let us say a Christmas present, and that person was expecting it, what would he think if the right honourable gentleman came and told him, as he told the Joint Select Committee on October 23, 1933, that it meant (I am paraphrasing for the moment) a distant, remote Christmas which it is not practicable to take into consideration in any period which human beings need take account of. Well, everybody knows that it would be impossible for him to do such a thing. He would stick to his word, or, if he did not, I would risk everything I had by saying that if his word was varied at all, it would be in the direction of greater, and not less generosity. I do not wish to detain your Lordships longer. I only desire in this matter of Dominion *status* to add this. If the promises were sincerely given, why cannot they now be repeated? Say, if you must, that what you are now able to offer is as far as you can see your way to accept responsibility for, but that the end remains the same. If you did that, the Indian people are a generous people, they understand the difficulty, and they would take you at your word. Their distrust would disappear, and they would give you with both hands all the safeguards that you desire.

Before I close, I should like to say this on another note. What we are doing must, to some extent, be an act of faith. If we hand over government to the Indian people we want to hand over a machine that will work, not one that will not work. On that point which of us can be dogmatic? There was an American engineer who, highly specialised in his profession, built engines that were complicated, and to the building of them he and his staff devoted all the technical knowledge and experience at their disposal and took infinite precautions to see that the thing was one hundred per cent. perfect, and at the end he said to his staff, "Boys, start her up and let us see why she does not go." We always have to have the possibility in our mind that particular proposals "will not go," but if we had the good will of the Indian people behind the proposals then the technical difficulties will be overcome and "she will go."

Just one final word. It may be that because of the attitude that my friends and myself felt it right to take on this question we have earned some right to offer a word of advice to political leaders in India. If I am not trespassing by doing so, I would urge them to have patience and faith in their own future. No British Parliament can prevent the growth of the Indian people in wisdom and insight and administrative power. Therefore I make such appeal as I can that above all things there should be no disorder in India; that is precisely what the critics of India want to see. I ask them also to ignore the wounding accusations of incompetence and worse which have been thrown at them, and I am entitled to do that because we too have been offered these accusations of incompetence and worse from the same sources. We have suffered under the combined misrepresentation of Press and platform and pulpit, been isolated as social lepers because we took a particular attitude. We smiled in defeat and we listened to what was said, and so far as we know we are not a vote the worse off for it. We have gone on from strength to strength, and the Indian people can do the same thing.

But if they insist on our reproducing in India British Parliamentary institutions—and I have always defended their right to do so—let them take care also to reproduce the political temper and method, the ordered discussion, the patient faith, and the spirit by which these institutions have been developed and preserved. It has taken us 700 years in England to develop our representative government, and the politicians in India are not so superior to ourselves in experience that they can ignore our lessons. Suppose they have to wait for Dominion *status* for a period, what then? What are ten or fifty years in the history of India? She was a great

civilisation before our nation began to be. Therefore I conclude with an act of courage in appealing to the political leaders of India, whatever their disappointments may be in regard to the Act which Parliament may pass, to cooperate to the best of their power until they can get more in the future, to win freedom, as we have had to win it, by using every acquired step as a preparation for further development. If that is done the Constitution will work, and it will prove as great a blessing to the Eastern world, the United States of India, as the United States of America has been to the Western world.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN: My Lords, I have read the Resolution which the Government have put down to-day in a somewhat different way to that in which the noble Marquess who has moved the Amendment to it has done. I feel it is but one more stage in that process of infinite inquiry, of mutual consultation, of argument, whereby the new Bill has been prepared before it is submitted to Parliament. So far from asking this House to come to a final judgment about it, the Resolution only asks its authority to accept the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee, which in effect is almost the First Reading of the Bill, as the basis for the revision of the Indian Constitution. It is important, I think, after all these long years that the Government should feel, especially in the light of the discussions that have taken place in the country, that it has the general support of both Houses of Parliament for the main principles that underlie the Joint Select Committee's Report.

I confess that after years of deliberation it is difficult to maintain that attitude of enthusiam or expectation with which many of us entered into consideration of the new Indian Constitution. There have been years of search for agreement: agreement between Parties in this country, agreement between officials in England and officials in India, agreement between Parties and communities in India, agreement between Indians and British on Committee after Committee, at Round-Table Conference after Round-Table Conference, and finally in the Joint Select Committee itself. If ever there was a Bill which has had the great weight of experience and wisdom brought to bear upon it it will be this Bill. I venture to say that no Constitution in human history has ever had so much talent, so much good will, so much anxious thought bestowed upon it as the recommendations contained in the Joint Select Committee's Report. If it is not symmetrical, if it contains the anomalies—and I admit them all—which were laid before your Lordships by the mover of the Amendment, it is simply because of the complexities of the Indian problem itself.

I only want to make two preliminary comments. In the first place I should like to associate myself with all that other speakers have said about the suavity, wisdom, tolerance, and good sense of the Chairman of the Joint Committee; and I should like also to associate myself with what has been said about the immense ability, fortitude, and practical commonsense of the Secretary of State in piloting his proposals through this Committee and pay tribute to the fidelity with which he has stood by those general understandings to which he came early on with the Indian representatives. I should like also to say that I am sure the noble Lord who has just spoken will agree with me that the rather unpleasant treatment which he said at certain times he and his colleagues had received was not received in the Joint Select Committee. We could not have had a body conducted with better temper and more harmonious relations both between the Indian delegates and among the British party delegates themselves.

I would also like to say that I agree entirely with the condemnation made by the noble Marquess of the proposals for indirect election. I do not propose to argue that case to-day, but I hope to be able to move Amendments on that point when the Bill is before us. I will only say this. I think the fundamental objections are twofold; I think they weaken the Government of India by making it far too subordinate to the Provinces. And it will put an intolerable burden of responsibility on the Viceroy in person to resist these fissiparous tendencies in the Provinces. I do not propose to say more now. But I want to make it quite clear that as between the two alternative systems, both of which have very great difficulties, I am an unrepentant believer in the system of direct election rather than the system of indirect election.

I do not propose to go over the merits of the Joint Select Committee's proposals in any detail to-day. I do not think they could have been presented to a House in a more wise and convincing way than they were presented by the noble Viscount who introduced this Resolution to-day. I would rather direct your Lordships' attention to another question, the two broad alternatives which are before us to-day. On the one hand, the proposals are criticised on the ground that the safeguards are too numerous and that they nullify the principle of responsible government. That is a view which is broadly held by noble Lords who sit on the Benches on my left and it is, of course a view strongly held by great sections of opinion in India itself. On the other hand, there is the view which has been expressed by the noble Marquess this afternoon, that we are going too far and too fast, and that we ought to be far more cautious. I want to examine if I may, both those alternatives, for if we find we have to exclude these alternatives this House will be driven back upon the Joint Select Committee's proposals by the same irresistible compulsion of facts as everybody else who has ever studied this question for any length of time has been driven.

Why is it that the members on these three Benches support safeguards having regard to the view they have long held that the only solution where you have the political aspiration for self-government as strong and vigorous, as it certainly is in India to-day, is to place full responsibility on the shoulders of Legislatures as we did in the case of South Africa and the Dominions? The answer is the size and complexity of India itself. There really is no comparison between the conditions with which Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman dealt in 1906 or the conditions of any other Dominions and the conditions of India. In every Dominion you had either a homogeneous community in no case larger than five millions in number, or at most two races, Dutch and English in one case and French and English in another. There is no comparison whatever with an area as large as India containing 350,000,000 people, which even yet has no common language except English, with the communal divisions which have been referred to to-day, with a great degree of illiteracy and with still a very rudimentary experience in the art of self-government. There can be no comparison, it seems to me, between the two cases and the more I have studied this question the more convinced am I that safeguards are in the interests, and absolutely essential in the interests of India itself.

I confess, however, that I was surprised at one phrase which the noble Lord, Lord Snell, used where, in referring to safeguards, he said that the safeguarding like these powers conferred on the Indian Governors enabled them to lessen responsibility almost at their own will. I venture to think the noble Lord has not yet grasped the basic principle embodied in the term "special responsibility," and I think also that a great body of opinion in India has not yet grasped the vital principle on which this Bill rests, a principle, I venture to say, which, while not wholly novel, has never before received anything like the full expression which it receives in this Report. What is the principle on which the Bill rests? It is contained in the words "responsibility with safeguards." Under the proposals of the Report the Indian Legislatures and the Ministries responsible for them will be fully responsible for every aspect of Indian Government except defence and foreign affairs, subject to the special responsibilities of the Governor and Governor-General. These special responsibilities are probably familiar to all noble Lords, and I will repeat only very briefly their essence.

Both the Governor and the Governor-General are empowered and bound to intervene in the event in their opinion of a grave menace to the peace and tranquility of India. The Viceroy, but not the Governors, is bound to intervene if any policy pursued by the Ministry seems to him to endanger the financial stability and credit of India. Both the Governors and the Viceroy are bound to intervene in the event of there being any interference with the statutory rights of the Public Services or menace to the legitimate interests of the Public Services or the legitimate interests of minorities. They will also have to intervene if there is unfair discrimination against British trade, and if there is any attempt to impair the rights of Indian States. If the Legislature and Ministries of India do not create a grave menace to the peace and tranquility of India, do not impair the

financial stability and credit of India, do not interfere with the legitimate interests of the Civil Service or minorities, do not indulge in unfair discrimination against British trade and do not interfere with the rights of Indian States, the whole responsibility for Indian Government other than defence and foreign affairs will rest on Indian shoulders.

To say that the Governor may interfere more or less at his discretion is entirely to misread the basic principle of this Bill. I hope Indian public opinion will realise the immense advance which the principle of special responsibility involves. It does give them full responsibility—provided they do not do things which involve these five or six special responsibilities. I venture to think that if peace and tranquillity is gravely menaced or the financial stability of credit in India is imperilled and so on, the Governor and the Viceroy ought to intervene. It is vital to India that they should intervene. It is vital above all to the working people, the villagers about whom the noble Lord, Lord Snell, so eloquently spoke, that they should intervene, because if there is one section of the community which is going to suffer more than any other from the breakdown of government it will be the poorest classes.

I should have thought that the Labour Party, if it accepts, as it does, the principle of full responsibility subject to safeguards, would have been the first to insist that the safeguards should be effective, so that if events happened in India which did gravely imperil the prosperity and peace and tranquillity of the masses of the people, they and any other British Government could intervene before it was too late to prevent India going into the chaos of China. Therefore I am in every sense a believer in the principle of safeguards, though I much prefer the words used by the noble Viscount who introduced this Motion "Emergency powers," because I think they are essential to the working of a Constitution of a complexity and containing, inevitably, anomalies absolutely unknown in constitutional practice hitherto. That is the first alternative proposal, that we should enact a Constitution either without any real safeguards or with safeguards so whittled down that if it becomes necessary to use them, they will be ineffective for their purpose. I entirely support the principle of the Report—that of full responsibility on Indian shoulders subject to the right of Governors and the Governor-General to intervene if the calamities the possibility of which is envisaged in the Special Responsibility clauses actually arise.

Now may I turn to the other alternative, the alternative put forward in the Minority Report of the noble Marquess who has moved an Amendment to the Motion before the House? I will not repeat his criticisms—they were very brilliantly and clearly enunciated—of the inevitable anomalies in a Constitution in which hereditary Rulers elect to Legislatures alongside democratic Provinces, the in-and-out clause affecting certain elements of British India the Communal Award as it affects the normal working of responsible government, the inevitable inexperience of great elements in India in working a Constitution so vast and so elaborate as this Constitution will necessarily be. In the name of these complex anomalies he has pleaded for caution, for responsibility in the Provinces in the first stage. The noble Viscount who introduced the Motion pointed out the inevitable effect of the first of his proposals that the Governor should be in effect responsible for the Police during a preliminary period. I can imagine no more terrible task for any Governor than to be sent out to India bound by the Constitution to enforce any legislation which may be passed by a Ministry over which he has no control. It seems to me an essential principle of responsibility that the consequences of legislation and administration should rest entirely on the shoulders of those who enact it, and that the Governor should only intervene if he thinks that policy is leading to one of the results mentioned in the Special Responsibility Clauses. That seems to me a fatal element in the first of the proposals made by the noble Marquess.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: May I ask, if that argument is sound, why the noble Marquess and his friends made an exception in the case of Bengal?

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN: I do not think there is any exception. All that was done in the case of Bengal was that in the event of terrorism reaching a cer-

tain point, the Governor should have the right to take over any of the powers of Government which he thought necessary.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I think, if the noble Marquess will refresh his memory, he will find that what the Majority Report suggested was that unless things altered between now and then these powers of taking responsibility from the Ministers to the Governor are to be exercised at once.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN: The essential difference is this. The proposal for Bengal is not that the responsible Ministry should go on legislating and administering and that the Governor should control the Police. The proposal is that, in the event of his feeling that the situation in regard to terrorism is serious, he may take over any powers of Government which he feels necessary to enable him to deal with it. Then there is the second proposal of an irresponsible Centre and an Executive responsible only to the Government here at home. I venture to think that the recent Elections have proved that that system would break down at once. You would have a totally irresponsible Legislature, manned by irresponsible members. Further, the proposal that the Viceroy should be able to take his Ministers from the Legislature is to introduce in its most effective form the very principle of responsible government which has led to complete transfer of powers in every Dominion. I think these proposals are not only unworkable, but extremely dangerous.

Now I come to what, to my mind, are by far the most formidable objections to the policy of provincial automony first and going slow. Is it as safe and as cautious as at first sight it may seem to be? First of all, Parliament took the responsibility of launching India on self-government, wisely or unwisely, in the Act of 1920. That was the responsibility of Parliament. She pledged herself to develop it, and she cannot go back on it. In 1931 the Prime Minister of the day made a speech which admittedly does not bind Parliament but which has had a profound effect on India, and which no Parliament can possibly afford to ignore. These are the words which he uttered, and they were re-affirmed at the outset of the present Parliament by the National Government:

> "The view of His Majesty's Government is that responsibility for the Government of India should be placed on Legislatures, Central and Provincial, with such provisions as may be necessary to guarantee, during a period of transition, the observance of certain obligations and to meet other special circumstances, and also with such guarantees as are required by minorities to protect their liberties and rights."

That was the statement made before this House at the beginning of the National Government, which was made on the authority of the National Government, and while it does not bind Parliament, Parliament cannot afford to ignore the inevitable consequences of that statement on political opinion in India.

Then consider the events that have happened in India since 1920, since Parliament took the responsibility of launching India on the principle of responsible government. There are, I think, ten Legislatures in the Provinces and one in the Centre which contain nearly one thousand legislators, one thousand politicians, though there is, of course, a minority who constitute the official *bloc*. There is this great body of men in India who have served in Legislatures for thirteen or fourteen years. Out of forty-three Ministers and Executive Councillors, thirty-two are Indians derived from the Legislatures. The Viceroy has three Indan members of his Council, though they are not responsible in any way to the Legislature. At the Round Table Conference Indians sat on terms of absolute equality with the representatives of the Parties in this country in drawing up proposals for self-government in India. India has been granted *status* by being given a seat at the Imperial Conference and at the League of Nations. Seven million Indians have exercised the franchise at four elections, and large numbers of them have exercised the franchise in municipal and local government elections. In the Universities and colleges of India to-day there are one hundred thousand students, more than twice as many as there are in all the Universities of Great Britain. They are being indoctrinated, as were their predecessors, by the ideas of liberty and self-government. They are all saturated with Western knowledge and Western idealism. They are being turned out at this rate from the Indian Universities. There are one hundred newspapers in India which are Indian owned, against two or three which are in British hands. Practically

the whole of the Bar is manned by Indians, and very ably and competently manned. If the policy of going slow, if the policy of withdrawing powers from the Central Legislature, as the noble Marquess proposed in certain matters, is adopted, if the pledges made, not by Parliament but by the Government, are ignored, do you think you would have any co-operation from anybody in India? Do you think you would find one representative person to stand for election in one Legislature, after all the political experience and education they have gained?

Why has there been this improvement which has taken place in India in the last three years? Because of the dual policy of, on the one hand, repressing firmly and rightly civil disobedience and attempts to promote constitutional reform by unconstitutional methods, and on the other hand, of standing by the constitutional proposals outlined at the Round Table Conference and in other discussions with Indian delegates based on the four vital principles: federation, provincial autonomy, central responsibility and safeguards. Those are the four basic principles which were laid down at the first Round Table Conference, upon which the first civil disobedience campaign was discontinued, and upon which every Indian from one end of India to the other who is politically-minded expects and believes that the new Constitution is going to rest. The proposal of the noble Marquess is that these principles should be torn up. If they are, you will have no co-operation from anybody in India.

Things will not stop there. It is a perfect illusion to think that the issue before us is between the present proposals and taking a nice little gentle step forward with provincial autonomy and then waiting ten, fifteen or twenty years, and enacting the rest in our own good time. That is not the issue. The issue is going to be between the present proposal and naked repression. If these proposals are rejected the civil disobedience movement will certainly restart, and all those who have been co-operating with us will refuse to co-operate with us. We shall have no support in India. We shall be driven inexorably to exactly the same methods of repression as we have had to adopt in other countries when we have denied national aspirations, and all the more so because we shall have failed to fulfil the expectations which have been encouraged and the promises which have been made. If we are confronted with that situation, what shall we have to do? We cannot possibly leave the vernacular Press day by day preaching sedition, revolution, and the breaking down of laws. We shall have to suppress the Press, inevitably. We cannot allow all these professors and teachers in the schools and colleges to go on talking of the basic principles of British liberty; we shall have to suppress them inevitably. Further, we shall have to create a force similar to that which exists in many countries for dealing with ordinary political opposition. The ordinary police will not be sufficient; we shall have to reinforce our police, we shall have to increase our Army, we shall have to make a sort of political Army in order to prevent youths organising political demonstrations in the way we are now familiar with all over the world. We shall inevitably be driven to repression from top to bottom in India.

Supposing we adopt that policy, how long shall we have to carry it on? Is there any experience in the world to show that repression of one nation by another ends in creating in the repressed nation a willingness to be governed by the other nation? All that it does is to produce a sullenness and bitterness which reappear at every opportunity. It is often said that a period of strong government in Ireland for twenty years would have solved the Irish problem, but after all Ireland was in its most peaceful condition in 1905 after ten years of resolute government. Yet every single constituency in Southern Ireland returned a member demanding self-government. We had not converted Ireland to the Union in the slightest degree. Nor will this policy succeed in converting India to being governed by England against its will. Further, how long will British opinion tolerate a policy of repression? I should have thought that if there were one lesson taught by the last few years it is that the people of Great Britain will not shoot people down merely because they ask for the right to govern themselves. They will not see it through. And even if they did see it through, how are you going to prevent, after five or ten years, the advent of a Liberal or Labour Government which will reverse

that policy? You can only prevent it by introducing a Fascist constitution in this country.

Now that is the policy which the noble Marquess who moved this Amendment is really recommending to this House. It is not "going slow"; it is revolution. It is a policy leading inevitably to repression, revolution, and to Fascism in India and in this country. I do not deny that there is something to be said for the policy. It is not a policy which I or my friends could support. But there might be something to be said for it if you think that the preservation of law and order and of unity in India is so important that everything else should be sacrificed. But do not let anybody think that it is a mild proposal which is being put forward by the noble Marquess—that it is a policy of caution and peace. It is exactly the opposite, and I venture to think that when it comes to the Second Reading debate he ought to come before this House and say that that is what he is asking this House to approve. That is his policy; and certainly the right honourable gentleman who represents Epping ought to say in another place that this is his policy, because that is really what it is. Therefore I venture to submit to this House that the alternatives are not the nice gentle ones which they seem to be. The alternatives are far more dangerous and far more formidable than the well-weighed and well-balanced proposals, the fruit of seven years' sympathetic deliberation by all sections of opinion, which are embodied in the Report of the Joint Select Committee.

It is sometimes said that all our proposals are stultified because of the obvious recovery of Congress in India. I am not so afraid of Congress as some of those at any rate who express their opinions on public platforms. In fact, though I disagree with almost everything that they say in public and most of their political programme, I have a sneaking sympathy with the emotion which lies underneath them. Congress represents the aspiration of young impetuous India anxious to take responsibility on its own shoulders. I once had a conversation with the Congress Leader, Mr. Gandhi—a very intelligent person, though a most terrible difficulty to all people in authority and all politicians. This is what he said: "I agree that Great Britain has done great things for India. It has given us order, it has given us justice, it has given us unity. But you do not realise that you have also done irreparable injury to India. You have taken away our backbone. For fifty years you have done everything for India and you have not put the responsibility for government upon the Indian people. If we have vices to-day, if we have weaknesses to-day, it is because ever since the Mutiny you have done everything for us and you have not evoked any capacity for self-government, or political courage or sagacity in the Indian people, and that is why I oppose you."

That is not an unworthy motive. It is a motive with which every member of this House will sympathise. But the policy to which it led, which I think is the futile policy of civil disobedience, a policy which is bad for those who practise it, bad for government and bad for society, has, I am glad to think, now been ended by Congress as a result of the dual policy of which this Constitution is part. Congress has repudiated civil disobedience, and the Leader of Congress, as I understand, has repudiated it. That is an immense advance, and as I see it the first fruits of the Liberal policy which we are now pursuing towards India.

There is a second reason why I am not afraid of Congress. Because I believe that the one political lesson, which has more often been realised in the British Commonwealth of Nations than anywhere else in the world, is that the one corrective of political extremism is to put responsibility upon the extremists, and by these proposals that is exactly what we are doing. We are not saying to Congress or to any other Party—and Congress is by no means so numerically strong as some people think—"We are going to give you a small instalment of self-government." We are saying to Congress, the Moslems and the other elements in India—and they are many—"You shall take the responsibility for the whole of the Provincial Government; you shall take the responsibility for a large field of Central Government. If things go wrong you will no longer be able to blame Great Britain for it. You will be responsible. If the milk does not arrive in the morning it will be your fault and not the fault of Downing

Street." It is that kind of situation which more rapidly than anything else will convert the irresponsibility and extremism of Congress and other Parties in India to political responsibility, and there is no other way of doing it. The policy of repression, the policy of denying responsibility, has never succeeded, and never will succeed. The only way forward is to place responsibility firmly on their shoulders, still retaining clearly in our hands those safeguarding powers which will enable us to prevent the disasters which might occur through the immensity of the responsibilities which are being thrust on India under this Constitution.

I do not know whether my voice can possibly reach India. Perhaps it may. The last thing I said to Mr. Gandhi before he left this country, before the second period of civil disobedience was launched, was to ask him whether, if we were faithful in this country to the four basic principles contained in the agreement between the noble Viscount, Lord Halifax, and himself—namely, provincial autonomy, federation, central responsibility, and reservations and safeguards in the interests of India—he would go back to his own young men and women and make them see that the way to acquire political capacity and true self-government was by entering through the Legislatures and abandoning the negative damaging policy of civil disobedience. I hope when he has had time to consider the immense opportunity which this Constitution affords he will give that advice to his people, and advise them to return to constitutional methods and to tackle the social problems of their own country in that way.

Therefore, I say that I am going to support the broad proposals of the Joint Select Committee. Many of them I would like to see altered, but they do represent a compromise between people of good will, and in substance they represent an agreement between the better mind of England and the better mind of India. The represent an agreement come to under calm conditions, and not under political pressure, and I believe they will not leave behind them any serious bitterness. I therefore earnestly hope that your Lordships will give a unanimous vote in favour of this Resolution. In conclusion I will read a few wise words said by one of the Indian delegates to our Conferences, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru:

> "Give India a Constitution which will enable her to turn aside from the long struggle between India and England for political reform and to settle down to constructive work."

I believe that is good advice. I believe, too, that this Bill will be accepted, that it will make for reconciliation, and that it will afford Indians immense opportunities for constructive work in India. And I believe finally that if we do not seize this opportunity it is one which will never recur.

LORD PHILLIMORE: My Lords, I rise with great trepidation to address you on such an important subject as this. I realise that I have no special qualifications in regard with India. I have not—unlike, no doubt, many of your Lordships—got that mastery of any of the Indian tongues which will open the lock of any nation's heart and win the understanding of that nation, but I can claim this, that I have behaved with model propriety in this matter, and followed the advice of my leaders in making no decisions, still less giving utterance to any, until this Report was in my hands. While I am on this subject I may say that I think the last speaker was a little hard upon those of us who, after all, are only ordinary members of a Party, when he urged that for seven years this subject had been under our consideration; he forgot that we had been told very specifically that it would be best for us to wait, and not make up our minds until the Report was in our hands.

For my part, not having any special knowledge of India, I have to accept the Report itself and the Report of the Statutory Commission, and the Reports of the Round Table Conferences, as setting out the facts of the position in India as they are to-day, and I do accept them. In particular, also, I accept an assurance which my noble friend Lord Halifax gave on a previous occasion, I think a year and a-half ago, when he told us very specifically that the Indian people had acquired such a measure of political consciousness as to justify their being given a great measure of self-government. I accept that, and with that acceptance I accept also the general proposition of provincial self-government.

Granted that political capacity and that political consciousness, it seems to me that there is no way out—not that I want to find a way—of granting provincial self-government, and it strikes me in reading the Report, and many of you will have noticed it, that the part of the argument which deals with provincial government hangs well together and the conclusions follow closely the premises.

I find no difficulty in accepting the main recommendations of the Committee on this head. My difficulties are not of the kind that have been dealt with so far in the debate. I was afraid that one of the Parties would urge a more generous gesture and leave it at that. I was afraid someone would get up and threaten us with civil disobedience and rebellion. I thought myself that possibly it was a little regrettable that such a consequence to a refusal to grant all that the Indians might ask should be so clearly set out before them. None of these are my difficulties. My difficulty is this, that having accepted these facts, and above all things the political development of the Indian people, I want to see them given a workable series of institutions, within the framework of which they can successfully progress along the paths of self-government. That is what I do not find. To judge from the Report it would appear that Lord Macaulay invented India and the Indian mind. I find nothing but a passing reference to the institution known as the Elders or Village Council. But for that I find no native ground on which to stand until we come to the feudal States, and I do no tunderstand that the Committee intend that the model to be followed in India is the feudal model of the feudal States.

Where is the Indian tradition finding its opportunity for expansion in the framework of the proposals of this Report? Some of your Lordships will remember that there was a Joint Select Committee three years ago, I think on closer union in East Africa. On that Committee I had the good fortune to sit, and I well remember that all three Parties were united on one point, and that was that in this problem of the development of an indigenous population —and of course there is no comparison between the degree of civilisation of the Indians and of the Africans, but still the problem was the same—the one aim we must set before us was to follow methods and forms of organisation which have a traditional appeal to these peoples. Now this Report, so far from finding any ground of tradition, specifically states that we should base our scheme on the Indian Government as it exists to-day, that is to say, on a system of government which, after all, as has been abundantly pointed out, we have ourselves imposed upon the Indian people. I cannot find that the Report anywhere gives sufficient attention to this cardinal factor.

It may be that there exist at the present time in India no traditions which are worth using. Lord Macaulay and the examination paper may have been too potent for the autochthonous growth. But there is one thing which is quite certain. Though you may expel nature with a fork or an examination paper, she will always come back, and that seems to me a cardinal factor in the situation. You are quite deliberately giving Indian nature its head in the Provinces, and it is there, where India is given her head, that she will grow and develop most luxuriantly. Is it likely that if the Indian nature is given its head, she will always develop within the framework of British Parliamentary institutions? I am sure that none of your Lordships could contend that that is the least likely. It is far more likely that she would develop some conceptions alien to us, but native possibly to the Indian mind, and that, being free to go ahead in the Provinces, she will produce a provincial polity which is something quite different from the framework which we have prepared for her.

After all, as the Report so well points out, two-thirds of India is based on the phenomenon of caste, one-third we will say roughly is based on the doctrine of the equality of man. Some of those Provinces will probably be influenced more by one conception of that kind, and some by another. Now, suppose something which is so alien to us as a polity based on the phenomenon of caste gradually develops in the Provinces, what is going to happen when it meets the Central Government? The Central Government is cast by the Report in rigid written form, in the same mould which possibly the Provincial Governments have just broken through. What sort of a clash will there be to concurrent

lists of legislative objects when a Provincial Government such as I have suggested, based on the phenomenon of caste, meets the Central Executive? Surely if you want self-government for the Indian people—and I suppose it is from the point of view of the Indian people that we ought chiefly to look at this Report—to develop happily, you must have elasticity at the Centre. If I am asked how I am going to obtain elasticity at the Centre, I can only say that it is quite clear that one man can move faster, and adapt his methods more quickly than two hundred, that you will always have the Governor-General in Council, and that possibly there is no need to look any further.

To my mind this question of flexibility is absolutely fundamental. You are asking us to build a bridge of steel girders, and you are allowing no room in the joints for expansion or contraction. Read again those admirable paragraphs 13 and 20 in the Report, and you will find set out there under the headings British "Constitutional theory and practice" and "British Conception of Parliamentary government" the most admirable reasons why you should not follow the course which you propose to follow. To my judgment, based on the evidence of the Report itself, whenever the Report is dealing with the responsibility of the Centre, the conclusions fail to harmonise with the premises. And it is hardly to be wondered at, because, after all, having first of all considered that you wanted to obtain certain things, you have set to work to set out various safeguards which you consider necessary as practical statesmen, and in the course of setting out the necessity for those safeguards you argue most potently against the institutions which you are going to recommend. If the gods do like to see a brave man struggling with difficulty, they must indeed have rejoiced at the sight of this Committee trying to reconcile their premises and their conclusions. They have my great sympathy.

The truth of the matter is that the introduction of responsibility at the Centre at this juncture is an unworkable impossibility. I am not alone, after all, in making that suggestion. Neither is the Report the only document which we have before us. The Statutory Commission, which sat, I think, for three years, is more emphatic on the subject of dyarchy than I could possibly find words to be, and dyarchy is, of course, the principle which you are going to adopt at the Centre. Under the heading of "Impossibility of Dyarchy at the Centre" the Commission say:

> "First we lay down without hesitation the proposition that dyarchy at the Centre, or any system of divided responsibility resembling dyarchy, is quite impossible. Unity in the Central Executive must be preserved at all costs."

Then, if I may quote once more:

> "The ultimate creation"—

the *ultimate* creation, for we are looking at the development of native government—

> "The ultimate creation of responsible government at the Centre cannot be reached by constructing a Central Executive one part of which is not responsible for the other."

Could words be more emphatic on the question of dyarchy? I can only beg your Lordships to re-read these passages and also the passage in this Report which deals with dyarchy in the Provinces. There you will find the same arguments set out against making use of dyarchy, and these arguments apply with equal force at the Centre. There is no new factor in the situation which makes these arguments invalid in the case of the Centre.

There is one new factor, of course, in the situation since the Statutory Commission sat, and that is the offer of the Princes. But that offer of the Princes does not bear on this question of dyarchy, neither does it invalidate the conclusions of the Simon Commission on that subject. We are asked to believe, and it has been freely stated, that the offer of the Princes was conditional, amongst other conditions, upon setting up responsible government at the Centre. I dare say I am wrong, but that is not my reading of the offer. I read the offer as containing the condition that there should not be a British India responsible government at the Centre—in other words, if no responsible government were set up at the Centre the condition would no longer apply. I will not keep your Lordships by dwelling on the financial difficulty. I have said enough to show you that in my opinion it is impossible to convince us that responsibility at the Centre is to-day workable, and I have said that on the strength of the internal

evidence of the Report which we have been asked to await and which is the main evidence that we have in front of us.

A general appeal has been made again and again to your Lordships to enact a generous measure of confidence in the peoplt of India. What we are being asked to enact is a rigid Constitution at the Centre within which the self-development of the Indian people will rapidly become impossible. At all events the generosity of the Report is not much appreciated in the country for which it is designed. I venture to say that in this particular the House could not do better than take the advice of the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, and await the introduction of the Bill.

LORD HARDINGE OF PENSHURST: My Lords, the criticisms of the Report of the Joint Select Committee both outside and inside this House have in no sense shaken the confidence that I feel that our Report, if embodied into law, will promote the welfare of the people of India and the closer future co-operation of this country with all that is best in that vast Continent. I have no intention of taking up much of your Lordships' time, but I happen to be one of those who regarded the White Paper with considerable misgivings, and when invited by the noble Viscount the Leader of the House to join the Committee I told him frankly that I disagreed with a good deal of the contents of the White Paper, but on his pressing me I readily joined the Committee. In doing so I determined to regard the whole question afresh and with an open mind.

I do not propose to deal with many of the controversial points raised by my noble friend the Marquess of Salisbury, but I wish to say a few words on the two questions of the transfer of law and order in the Provinces and of responsibility at the Centre, which appear to be the principal line of attack by those Conservatives who are hostile to the Committee's Report. It seems difficult to believe that the opponents of the Report could actually describe as provincial self-government a system in which the control of the Police would be taken out of the hands of the Provincial Government and placed in those of a Minister not responsible to the Legislature. Surely this could not be called self-government? It would be a contradiction in terms and would, I maintain, be quite unworkable. The offer of self-government to the Provinces of India without responsibility for law and order would be wholly unacceptable to all sections of Indian political thought. To deprive the Government of control over its own Police would concentrate the hostility of all Indian politicians against the Provincial Government, while, on the other hand, to make the Government responsible for law and order would give encouragement to the Indians and fill them with a sense of their own duty and responsibility which would have a sobering effect upon their political activities. It would also compel a complete change in the relations of the Government and the Indian public towards the Indian Police, for it cannot be denied that the Police in India are regarded as an alien force and have suffered a good deal of persecution in consequence.

After all, law and order have been successfully administered by Indian Ministers in at least two Provinces, and there is absolutely no reason why this should not be so again. Even the critics of the Report admit that the safeguards have been greatly strengthened by the proposals contained in the Report, and my own feeling is that the Governors will be in a much stronger position than they were before and will be able to cope successfully with any emergency that may arise, even without the intervention of the Viceroy. It was only a few days ago that I read a manifesto published in the Press by some of the opponents of the Report, in which it was stated that the "blunder of dyarchy should not be repeated." Still what blunder could be worse than the dyarchy they propose to create in connection with law and order in a self-governing province? I can hardly imagine any more disastrous mistake, which would imply a complete failure to understand and accept political realities in the India of to-day.

As regards responsibility at the Centre, it is well to remember that ever since the introduction of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms that affected Legislatures in the Provinces, the Provinces have been growing steadily stronger, and the Centre gradually weaker, owing to an irresponsible

Executive at the Centre being confronted by an elected Legislative Assmbly, which encourages irresponsible criticisms, since under no circumstances can that Executive be displaced. Eleven completely self-governing Provinces would make the Central Government even weaker than before, and the Executive would in the end be unable to exercise any control over the Provinces. This would present the grave danger of centrifugal tendencies in powerful and progressive Provinces such as Madras, while the same danger would exist in the Mahomedan Provinces of the North-West Frontier, Baluchistan and Sind, the two former being coterminous with Afghanistan and liable to the waves of fanaticism that spread continually from the borders of that turbulent country. The tendency might then be for India to become gradually disintegrated by centrifugal forces.

The one and only remedy for this situation is federation with the Princes. Federation and responsibility at the Centre are dependent upon each other. Responsibility at the Centre is not feasible without federation, and the Princes refuse to enter federation without responsibility at the Centre. The inclusion of the Princes in a constitutional scheme of federation would be a most valuable asset. They are a very loyal and powerful body and devoted in their allegiance to the Crown. It is much to their advantage to be included in an All-India Federation provided that their rights and privileges and independence are respected, since there are many questions of great importance to them in which they sometimes feel that their interests have not been quite fairly treated by the Government of India.

In the two Chambers of the Federal Legislature based on indirect election they will enjoy a powerful representation which should greatly strengthen the Central Government. This should enable the Government to exercise a binding and controlling influence over the Provinces and thus unite all India in a compact and solid entity. This responsibility at the Centre with federation appears to be the only practical solution, and I firmly believe that no Constitution for India would at this stage be workable for any length of time without it. The critics of the Report of the Select Committee advocate delay in order to see with what success self-government in the Provinces meets. It is quite clear, however, that there must be delay between the inauguration of provincial autonomy and responsibility at the Centre, since there are several conditions to be fulfilled which have been accepted by Indians and which must take time. These are the accession of the Princes to federation—that is a matter of negotiation between the Princes and the Government of India—the establishment of a reserve bank free from political influence and in full operation, the budgetary position of India to be assured, the Provinces to be financially solvent, and, lastly, as already provided in the White Paper, federation is only to be brought into being by Royal Proclamation after both Houses of Parliament have presented an Address to the Crown with a prayer for its promulgation.

Before all these conditions can be fulfilled there must be some reasonable delay between the inauguration of provincial self-government and responsibility at the Centre, though it is very much to be hoped that the delay may not be unduly prolonged. One can only hope that such delay may appear to be all that can be reasonably desired by the critics of the Report, and that they will be satisfied with the condition of its final reference to Parliament before responsibility can be introduced at the Centre. There are risks to be faced in every new Constitution. That fact cannot be denied, but I fell confident that the scheme outlined in the Committee's Report is sound and well adapted to meet the present situation in India, that it is in accord with the historic tradition of this country in promoting principles of self-government amongst the people of its Dependencies, and that it will meet with the general approval of moderate opinion both in this country and in India.

THE EARL OF LUCAN: My Lords, on behalf of the most reverend Primate, I beg to move that the debate be now adjourned.

Moved accordingly and, on Question, Motion agreed to.

DRAFT UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE (DETERMINATION OF NEED AND ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS) REGULATIONS, 1934.

Draft Regulations, dated 11th November, 1934, made by the Minister of Labour under Sections 38 (3) nad 52 (2) of the Unemployment Assistance Act, 1934:

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act) for affirmative resolution and referred to the Special Orders Committee (yesterday).

House adjourned at thirteen minutes before seven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 13th December, 1934.

The House met at a quarter past four of the clock, The LORD CHANCELLOR on the Woolsack.

HAMILTON BURGH ORDER CONFIRMATION BILL.

Considered on Report (according to Order).

INDIAN CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM.

Debate resumed (according to Order) on the Motion of Viscount Halifax to resolve, That this House accepts the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform as the basis for the revision of the Indian Constitution and considers it expedient that a Bill should be introduced on the general lines of the Report, and on the Amendment moved by the Marquess of Salisbury to the foregoing Motion, namely, to leave out all the words after "That" and insert "this House is unwilling to pronounce in advance an acceptance of far-reaching recommendations on Indian Constitutional Reform until it has had the opportunity of considering and approving the particular recommendations of the Joint Select Committee to be adopted by the Government and proposed in the concrete form of the provisions of a Bill."

THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, as I had the honour of being one of the representatives of your Lordships' House on the Joint Select Committee, I ought perhaps to take my share in attempting to justify its Report. I understand there were some who thought that I had no business to meddle with matters of this kind, but I do not think it is consistent with the tradition of the office which I hold either in this House or in the public life of the country, to let it be supposed that it is concerned only with ecclesiastical matters or even with matters of direct religious interest. It seems to me that there was a place on such a Committee for one member who is wholly independent of any political Party. I have some reason to know that many of the Indian delegates appreciated the presence on the Joint Select Committee of a member holding that independent position.

Let me take my share in paying a tribute of gratitude for the help which the Committee received from its noble Chairman, not least from the Secretary of State, from the very able staff which was ready at all times to assist us, and, I would venture to add, from the two faithful shorthand writers to whom those eighteen months of discussion must have seemed interminable loquacity. I cannot refrain from also expressing my gratitude for the help which we received from the noble Marquess who spoke yesterday with such passionate sincerity and with whom we all so deeply sympathise in his uncertain health. I know that my colleagues would testify with me that he always showed, as we would expect of him, both consistency and courtesy. He was always constructive, never obstructive, and he did his best to enable us to realise at every point the great difficulties with which we were faced.

I tried to approach the study of this immense problem with an open mind. I do not deny that there are political instincts which always influence our judgments more than we know, but I did at least try, by very faithful attendance at the Committee during all those long months, involving a most tiresome tax upon my time, to estimate and weigh the whole of the evidence with the utmost possible care. I confess that at first I was not so much impressed as oppressed not only by the magnitude but the difficulties of our task. There were times when it seemed almost fantastic to conceive of inventing a new Constitution for this vast sub-continent, with its nearly 340,000,000 people, divided by race, language and religion, the vast majority totally illiterate, to say nothing of the existence of nearly 600 States of varying degrees of independence; and I still think, if I may say so, that I should be able to deliver a more forcible speech in criticism of the Report than I am likely to be able to make in defence of it.

But at a very early stage I found a great steadying influence in the opinion of the great administrators of India. I think wholly without exception all the Governors of Provinces for the last ten years assured us that the proposals con-

tained in the old White Paper were in their opinion timely and workable. I know that in some quarters it has been insinuated that these extremely able men were not uninfluenced by the thought that promotion might depend upon conformity with what were supposed to be the tendencies of the Government. I would only ask: How is it consistent to speak with one breath, and rightly, of the integrity of the great Indian Civil Service, to contrast with it (sometimes most unfairly) the customs and habits of Indians, and then to imply that those of that great Service who are in its front rank and have seen longest service are capable of any kind of political bias? As would be expected, no such insinuation came from the lips of the noble Marquess, but you will remember that he described them as administrative experts and described us, in language which must have been very flattering to our pride, as constitutional experts. But the last thing we should wish to be would be theorists sitting here to invent a paper Constitution. Our duty is to see what Constitution can be adapted to the actual circumstances and conditions of India, and it is upon such matters that these great administrators have the fullest knowledge and are most entitled to give us advice. Therefore, when at the outset I realised that these men, widest in experience, highest in responsibility, considered that the main proposals with which we are now concerned were both wise and workable, I felt that there was at least no place for fear.

It is not possible for us to fail in understanding the naturalness and reasonableness of the aspirations of the Indians. I confess that it was a surprise to me to realise that in that great population of some 340,000,000, the European population is only 135,000 and, excluding 60,000 British troops, is only 75,000. We know, and no words are needed to emphasise, the splendid record of the great members of the Public Services in India. I believe that they are recognised at heart by the great majority of the Indian people. But once political consciousness has been aroused efficiency is not enough, and good government can never be regarded as a substitute for self-government. Of the rise and spread of that political consciousness there can be no manner of doubt. It is penetrating even to the illiterate masses, and it is we who have given direction to that political consciousness. We have taught these people the English language, we have opened out to them English literature, and from that language and that literature they have absorbed the spirit of our institutions. It may have been a mistake. It may have been that we ought rather to have endeavoured to educate them along the traditions of their own races and peoples, But if it be so, we must arraign the ghost of Thomas Babington Macaulay.

At any rate the direction has been given, and over all regrets must be written the words, "Too late!" Facts are facts, and consequences will be what they will be. And if we have given direction to this political consciousness, we are responsible for having set its goal. That goal has been described in words for which the Imperial Parliament is responsible in the Preamble of the Act of 1919. They are very familiar words, but they are always worth remembering:

> ". . . the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in British India as an integral part of the Empire."

I sometimes think that the great Declaration made in 1917, embodied in that Preamble, was somewhat hastily made. I am surprised, when one considers these seventeen years which have passed, that that Declaration was made with hardly any attention even in Parliament. I suppose it was one of those hasty and generous gestures resulting from the War, but there again the goal has been set and it cannot be withdrawn.

I noticed that the noble Lord opposite, Lord Snell, in his excellent speech yesterday, complained on behalf of his friends that no mention was proposed of what is called Dominion *status*. I think that it is time that we got rid of such a misleading phrase. It has proved capable of infinite misunderstanding, both in this country and in India. No one knows whether it means Constitution or position. If it is to mean Constitution, is it conceivable, considering the circumstances of India and the necessary relations with the Imperial Parliament which these circumstances involve, that, in any time which any of us can contemplate, India should have a Constitution identical with those which have been achieved in countries so entirely different as South Africa, Australia or Canada?

Therefore it is no use thinking there can ever be a Constitution in India identical with the Constitution of those Dominions; but surely an India self governed, especially a great All-India Federation, will always have increasingly within the British Empire a place of honour quite as distinct and recognised as that of any of the Dominions.

When one reviews the long history of the relations between this country and India, so mysterious and so romantic, are we not driven to the conclusion either that that history is a record of one huge and well-meant mistake, or else that the path towards fuller self-government, such as is indicated in this Report, is the path of destiny? At the same time, I think it is pertinent to observe that it does not in the least follow that the development of the Constitution of India will follow exactly the lines of the British Constitution. Indeed, I should be surprised if, as it develops, it does not and ought not to take a character much more consistent with the special history and position of India itself.

But we are told that it is of no use speaking of meeting Indian aspirations, because it is obvious that these proposals satisfy none of those aspirations. We are pointed to the declarations of the Congress Party, and to the Elections which have just taken place to the Legislative Assembly, and we are asked how we can say that our proposals can in any way satisfy those Indian aspirations. My Lords, like the noble Viscount who introduced this Motion, in what I may be permitted to call a most weighty and admirable speech, I agree that these Elections can create no surprise. The Congress Party is the only organised political Party in India. It holds together by its purely negative attitude. If it attempted any constructive policy, it would be at once rent asunder. We can only ask ourselves what sort of language would we expect in this country from any political Party which was in permanent opposition, and had never known the sobering influence of responsibility. The Congress Party has not said it will entirely refuse to work this Constitution, and my belief is that many of its leading members, after the Constitution is given to them, will address themselves to work it as well as they can.

It is more serious, I think, to ask why have none of those to whose support we might have looked, the moderate Liberals of India, lifted their voice in praise of these proposals. I think it is in some way disappointing, but it is not surprising. They have a very difficult position in safeguarding their influence amongst people in India, and they can scarcely be expected to be otherwise than vocally silent until they know what the attitude is to be in this Parliament. I think I know enough of many of them to say with assurance that if the proposals are embodied in a Constitution Act, whatever their disappointment, they will address themselves to the task of working with it and under it for the good of the people of India. At least, whatever Indian politicians may say, or refrain from saying, it belongs to our honour that we shall at least be ready to fulfil the promises for which Parliament has been responsible.

There again it is said: "Yes, some advance must plainly be made, consistently with these promises, but our complaint is that the advance sketched in this Report is much too rapid; it ought to have been much more gradual." We are particularly told that no one denies the necessity of this advance, but the question is the pace at which it is going. I do not think it can be said that the proposals of the noble Marquess and his friends constitute any real advance at all. It is no advance worth speaking of merely to increase the number of transferred subjects in the Provinces, and to deny to them any share in what is called the control of law and order, which is the first function of a government. More than that, the proposals would mean, I am sure, a great weakening of government in India. It is against the provisions as to responsibility at the Centre that most of the criticisms are directed. It is feared that if they were adopted, they would greatly weaken the authority and power of the Central Government. Of that I would say two things. Firstly, nothing impressed me more, coming to a fresh consideration of this great problem, than the fact that the existing Central Government is not strong, but weak. The combination, as has often been pointed out, of an unremovable Executive with an irresponsible Legislature means that the Legislature is repeatedly engaged in

irresponsible criticism of the Executive. The Executive continually suffers rebuffs which greatly affect its authority and its prestige.

If that be so, how will it be with the Central Government confronted by Provincial Governments which have then that measure of power which the noble Marquess and his friends would be willing to give? The question admits of only one answer. Its position would be rendered still weaker than it is. But in the second place, more than that, if the critics of the Report had their way they would deprive the Central Government of a new element of strength which it has not hitherto possessed. If the desire is to secure in India loyalty to the Crown and adequacy of its defence, then certainly there is nothing that would so contribute to that strength like the influence of the Princes in the government of India. We know perfectly well that the Princes will not give their adherence to any form of Central Government which does not contain provision for self-government at the Centre. Thus these proposals would not only weaken the existing Government, but would deprive it of this new and valuable source of strength.

Yet once again it is said: "Well then, let us at least delay bringing in these tremendous changes at the Centre until we have seen how the system of provincial autonomy works." The answer is that the Provinces cannot work satisfactorily, and therefore cannot prove that capacity for working, without a strong and effective policy at the Centre. In matters such as tariffs, taxation, distribution of the available surplus, there must be a strong constitutional relationship between the Government at the Centre and the Government in the Provinces; and, in the second place, in the interval there may be ample time given to the strengthening of centrifugal forces which it might be extraordinarily difficult for any later form of responsible government at the Centre to control or change. And so I am convinced that the policy of giving autonomy to the Provinces without at the same time at least indicating the coming of self-government at the Centre would imperil the true unity of India, and, what is more, would create a disastrous unity—unity of resentment and opposition among all sections and classes of the Indian people. After these long months of study I am convinced that the path of delay is the path, not of safety but of danger.

Now, will your Lordships let me for a short time dwell upon one or two special points? First of all, I feel bound to say something about the problem—I had almost said the nightmare—of those communal divisions about which the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, spoke yesterday with such force. It would not, I think, be easy to exaggerate the difficulty which this special phenomenon of Indian life creates. I can remember—I dare say some of my colleagues can also remember—two evil days in which we heard first the evidence of the Indian Mahasabha and afterwards the evidence of the All-India Moslem League, and I confess that after that experience I was greatly daunted by the prospect of the future. But if there is to be any advance at all we cannot wait until these communal divisions have been healed, and I would remind your Lordships that everything that the noble Marquess said about the evils of this communal division are not less, but more, applicable to any form of self-government in the Provinces than they are to the Centre; for it is in the Provinces that the tension of these communities is most keen, and their influence upon the life of the people most direct. If we were to wait until these communal divisions had been healed, then there is no use making any advance at all. They can only be healed by the Indians themselves, by the growth of tolerance and public spirit.

Meanwhile I think it very likely that new directions of policy and interest may come in which will hinder the divisive effect of these communal divisions. I think there are already signs of new movements appearing which may transcend these divisions. I would mention only one or two. Few things impressed me more in the evidence than the attitude of the Indian women through their leading representatives. It appeared to me infinitely more free from the communal bias than in the case of the men, and I entirely agree with what my noble friend Lord Snell said yesterday, and what was said forcibly in another place by the Lord President of the Council, that there are few influences likely to be more potent in the future development of India than the influence of its women.

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

Then again, may I say a word about this continuing problem of the transfer of law and order? If there is one thing made plain by the evidence more clearly than another it is this, that there is really little hope for India unless and until the Indians themselves are enlisted on the side of the preservation of order. It can no longer be imposed from without: it must be accepted as a necessity of government from within. How can this be done if this is the one subject which you would withdraw from the responsibility of Indian Legislatures? That is simply to continue the old evil policy of making this matter the special butt of criticism and attack, and you would enable these Indian Legislatures to say that this is a subject for which they are entitled to take no sort of direct responsibility.

I turn for a moment to a kindred subject, the position of minorities—of great importance in India. And here I am bound, as your Lordships will understand, to think very specially of the third largest community in India—the Indian Christians, numbering already six millions, and rapidly increasing. We have been told that they are very apprehensive. We have even been told that they think that their whole future would be endangered by these proposals. Well, I have been in constant communication with the Metropolitan of India and with other leaders of the Indian Christian community of various Christian persuasions, and I find no corroboration for those statements. It is true that some of the older Indian Christians who have been specially attached to missionaries from other countries are very doubtful, but it may safely be said that the great mass of the younger Indian Christians are eager for further self-government. Many of them have declared that they would prefer to have no separate electorates—no specially guaranteed places in the Legislatures—and to take their chance with their fellow-Indians in the general electorates.

It is right to say that quite recently some of the Indian Christians represented by the All-India Christian Council began to be apprehensive about their place in the public services, and I think that the noble Lord who, I understand, is following me, and I have done our best on the Committee to allay these apprehensions. I have no time to enter into detail, but if your Lordships study the Report you will see that in many respects certain powers of the Governors have been made more explicit in the control both of legislation and of administration which might prejudice the interests of these minorities and particularly their place in the Public Services. It is, I think, significant that in a recent debate in the Legislative Assembly last autumn, which I read from beginning to end, by a unanimous vote the Legislative Assembly agreed that the Indian Christians should receive fair and equitable treatment in the Public Services. I do not think I can do better that summarise the position in the words of the Metropolitan of India:

> "Give these Indian leaders time to realise the responsibility resting upon them and the necessity of treating all the different communities under their charge with fairness, and I do not think we shall have any grounds for complaint."

There is another minority, very small, but because of its special and difficult position specially entitled both to our sympathy and our gratitude: I mean the Anglo-Indian community; and about its position in the future I think I need not do more than read what that inveterate champion of their interests, Sir Henry Gidney, has written to the members of the Select Committee thanking them for the thorough, sympathetic, and just way in which the claims of this community have been treated:

> "You have by your Report placed us under an eternal debt of gratitude."

So far as possible, I think, the interests of these smaller minorities have been secured.

May I refer next to a matter which does not appear to be directly germane to our discussion but which is of the greatest importance: I mean the amelioration of the social conditions of the masses of Indian people? The noble Lord, Lord Snell, yesterday stated—I do not know whether he complained—that there is only one allusion in this long Report to the condition of the Indian people. That was inevitable. It did not come within the terms of our reference, but I hope it was never absent from our minds. I think that one of our main desires in providing adequate safeguards was that we should do nothing to deprive the masses of the people of their greatest

need: safety and assurance in living their daily lives and securing the fruits of their toil.

But there were times when I tried to withdraw my imagination from these political proposals to the background, which seemed so remote, of the vast multitudes of patient peasants in their poverty, their dependence upon the incidence of flood and famine, their burden of debt, the grip of the money-lenders, sometimes, I fear, the oppressive action of land-holders, and the necessity of scraping a bare subsistence day by day from the soil. I thought of the customs, so strange to us and so repellent, under which they are still labouring, such as child marriage or even suttee, and it was impossible to deny that wonderful as has been the work achieved by British administrators for the good of the village population of India, there is an immense amount of work still to be done. I think we must admit that our Government has not unnaturally hesitated to embark on this field of legislation lest it should provoke religious strife and suspicion, and it is one of the reasons why I would press for further self-government that this task should be entrusted to those alone who can fulfil it—namely, the Indians themselves.

Lastly, I come to the question of the safeguards or, as we should prefer to call them, the emergency powers. Here I would venture, if I thought there was any chance of my words reaching them, to make an appeal to those whom we can best call our friends in India. I know that to them our proposals seem to be merely bristling with safeguards. They seem to take away with one hand what we say we are ready to give with the other. But I would ask this question: What would be the appearance of the British Constitution if we endeavoured to set out in detail all the safeguards which have become habitual in English life and history, in the form of a written Constitution? I venture to say that the catalogue of safeguards, say, as regards the relation of the Executive and the Legislature would utterly dwarf all that multitude of safeguards which appears in this Report. They are not there, because our Constitution has never been written; but they are the result of usages, customs, and conventions which are the growth of centuries and which have never been codified or even written out. But in a written Constitution such as that which we are daring to ask India to accept they must be explicitly stated. It is inherent in the necessity of the case, and I would ask our friends in India to remember that necessity, and that if they are necessarily in the foreground of any written Constitution, they need only be in the background of its practical working. We are all agreed that the success both of Governors and of their Governments will depend upon whether these safeguards are seldom brought into action.

I would go further in my appeal to our friends in India. I would say to them this: "Do you not desire that the first years of your new self-government should be protected from any chance of failure by that promptitude of action which India so specially needs, by that continuity of efficient administration on which, as the Report says, the lives of millions of the population depend, and are there not risks of such failures in the absence of clearly-defined political Parties, in necessarily divided councils, in the absence of all those traditions of public life with which we are so familiar in England?" Are there not dangers that there may occur moments when they themselves are unequal to the task of enforcing that law and order which they would desire? I believe it can be said with sincerity by us that we would ask them to regard these safeguards as intended not in the least to thwart but only to help their own administration.

I venture to go further in what I would say to our friends in India. I would ask them to notice that they have secured the main substance of all that they have desired. Will they not recognise that that substance contains in itself the opportunities of future growth and development and be willing to accept it, and make the most of it, and meet the offer which Parliament would wish to make to them in the spirit in which it is offered and co-operate with Parliament in using these new powers for the good of the country they love and which they desire to serve? But if we ask them to meet us in this spirit we mus make them sure of the spirit in whic we make our offer. We must make plain that it is a spirit, not of fe and mistrust and niggardly concessic

but rather of hopefulness and trust. No better proof of that spirit could be given than that your Lordships should pass this Resolution, if it might be without a Division, or at least by an overwhelming majority.

If the Amendment moved by the noble Marquess were carried, even if it received substantial support, then whatever its verbal limitations may be, that would be regarded in India as a sign that this House was still haunted by fears and mistrust. If, on the other hand, your Lordships with overwhelming strength support this Resolution it will be a sign to them of the reality of our desire to meet them as wholeheartedly as we can. I would say this, since it seems to be inevitable, after the vote in another place of yesterday, and, I think, after the tendencies so far in this debate, that Parliament will make this offer, why should we rob it of the element of grace and good will? Rather, I would say, let us remember and follow the principle of the famous words: "Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom."

LORD RANKEILLOUR: My Lords, to hear the voice of the most reverend Primate recalls to me weeks and days and months, not altogether unhappy, of the most amicable discussion and the most amicable disunion, but I am happy to think, with regard to him, it was not wholly disunion. I recall with gratitude that co-operation which I was enabled to give him in doing our best for the future of the Indian Christians, and as to that I would say that I believe the words now put into the Report should, if faithfully carried out, remove their main anxieties. But I should not like to speak with confidence until we see the provisions in the Bill itself. Now the most reverend Primate is the very last person who would resent a word of criticism on his secular views, and I know he will forgive me when I say that I cannot but think that his attitude towards these proposals has been coloured by a chronic and inveterate Liberalism, which I have diagnosed in him, and that his speech was redolent rather of the aspirations of Lord Macaulay than of the harsh realities of the present day. The most reverend Primate has spoken of the proceedings in Committee, and I should like to echo what he has said, both of the good will which prevailed and, more especially, of the admirable manner, the patience, tact and industry with which the proceedings were conducted by my noble friend and kinsman, Lord Linlithgow. No praise can be too great for that.

But having said that about the Committee, I have exhausted my praise. I have no hesitation in saying that, whatever our individual merits, we were a thoroughly bad Committee for the purpose for which Parliament did appoint, or ought to have appointed, us. If indeed you wished to have a body the majority of which were experts in order to carry out a predetermined policy, then the Committee no doubt was an excellent one. If you wished to focus the controversy in a narrow space, with champions from every point of view, then the Committee may have been a good one, especially from the point of view of those who, when they saw it, knew that it was a mathematical certainly that their views in general would prevail. But if you wanted a great problem attacked by fresh and independent minds, then I say there was not in the Committee that which would give you that requisite. Just consider what the position of the Committee was. The great proportion, I think a majority, were, in popular language, up to the neck in Government policy before they began to enquire. There was little or no hope that on the main issues they would come to any other conclusion, and I suppose that may be suggested of the minority as well. It appears to me that you might just as well have put my noble friend, Lord FitzAlan and my noble friend Lord Gisborough on a Committee to enquire whether the Bishop of Rome or the Patriach of Constantinople was entitled to the Primacy of Great Britain. There is no chance of their agreeing.

There were six members of the Government on the Committee, and of the large jury of thirty-two, six members were both parties and counsel in the case. But here perhaps I must make a qualification. Two of those members of the Government atoned for the invidiousness of their inclusion by the infrequency of their presence. It is known to everybody that the duties of the Lord Chancellor are arduous and multifold, and no one could have expected anything like a regular attendance from him during the 159 days on which we sat. Likewise the Foreign

Secretary. The cares, I may say, of the world are upon him, and no attendance could have been expected from him. Practically none was obtained, but it could not have been expected that he would attend, considering his flights to the Temple of Peace and his wrestling with various types of reluctant dragons upon the Continent. But all this must have been obvious to the Government, and the question arises at once, how was it that these two Ministers were there? The only explanation that I can give is that they fulfilled the same part as you see in the statues of personified virtues by which it is sought to give majesty and dignity to the facade of a device which has neither majesty nor dignity in itself.

I say one word, and I regret I am not in another place to say it, as to the position of the Secretary of State for India. I am not saying for one moment he abused his position. He did not. He was courtesy and patience itself, and I suppose there will be no one who did more to try him than I did. I do not accuse him of abusing his position. My complaint is, he was there to use it. I know there are precedents enough. There is the precedent of Mr. Montagu who was on the 1919 Committee and was a member of the Government. But then there was no bitter controversy at the time, and whatever precedents there may be I believe they are bad ones. I always think, to go a long way back, that the presence of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain on the Jameson Committee was a great mistake. That he should come from some judicial position at the table into the box and go back again, seemed to me to create a most unfortunate impression, which was responsible for a great deal of the malicious and unfounded rumours which pursued him. It is a bad anomaly that the principal protagonist in proposing measures should at the same time be one of the tribunal which is to adjudicate upon them. Well may the Committee for Privileges in another place say that this Committee was not a judicial body. It could not be a judicial body and its conclusions are vitiated thereby. You may say that on their merits they have produced a good or a bad Report, but what you cannot say is that that Report is the judicial finding of unbiased and impartial minds.

I come for a moment to the Report itself, and as regards provincial autonomy it would not be fair for me to say that there are not great changes for the better. I give all credit to those members of the Committee who were enabled to bring that about. I may sum it up by saying that if the Provincial Governors are resolute and able men, if they have first-rate staffs, if they are not hampered by instructions from Delhi or from home, then all may be well, but I think your Lordships will admit that there are several conditions to be fulfilled. I think the most reverend Primate did less than justice to the Minority proposals on the particular point of law and order. Let me put it in this way. The theory of provincial government is that the Governor is the repository of executive power, but that power is qualified by the instruction that he should ordinarily exercise it on the advice of his Ministers. What we of the Minority proposed was this: Accepting that theory of his having executive power, we suggested that he should keep it in his own hands in the first instance, but that he should have the power to delegate it when the affairs of the Province in his judgment and in the judgment of the Governor-General permitted it. We did this, I think, partly because of the feeling that it is much easier and more gracious to grant than to retract. He has the power—nay, he has the duty—in special emergencies of getting back the power in his own hands when his special responsibilities require it, and we think it is a more invidious thing to put him in that position than to allow him to be the dispenser to his Ministers of greater powers.

Before I quit this particular topic I would say a word about this theory itself. Is the theory sound? I hope it will appear from the draft of the Bill that it is, but if your Lordships will study the Report you will see in paragraph 92 that the Governor is enabled to take all powers into his own hand, all the powers of government, for the suppression of terrorism. That, on the construction of the legal principle *inclusio unius est exclusio alterius*, means it is only in that case that he can keep all these powers in his own hands, however great the emergency may be. I think that really the point is of great importance and wants clearing up. We have been told, for instance, a good deal about the officers and the Services fear-

ing that the Provincial Treasury may be exhausted and that their salaries may not be paid. It is assumed that the Governor will have power, if necessary, to borrow and to pay them, but if there is this flaw and doubt then that assurance given to them may be in vain.

In the same way it is assumed that there will be full powers for defence on the North-West Frontier. If the Governor could immediately take all powers into his own hands for that purpose that might be so, but there is a doubt upon that and the Government of India might find themselves in the same position as that in which Lord Milner found himself at the beginning of the South African War, when his attempts to safeguard Cape Colony and the British people were grievously hampered by the local government, although that local government was in no way treacherous but only timid and inert. It is a point that should be thoroughly gone into before the Bill is presented to Parliament. I could say a certain amount about Burma, about the Courts, about the Communal Award and about the Poona Pact, but I am bound to say that although I see difficulties and flaws in the proposals on these points, I should not have voted against the Report either on the Provincial provisions or on the several subjects I have just mentioned.

Now I come to federation. Here, may I say that Indian administrative experience gives us no guide as to the working of federation. It is a matter which may be surmised by Indian officials, but they have had no experience of it, and therefore what the most reverend Primate said about the cumulative weight of Indian administrative experience, applicable as it may be to the Provinces, fails before a totally new scheme. What are we asked to do? We are asked to perform a major constitutional operation which I think is unique in history. We begin with a great process of disruption. The old Indian unitary government is to be destroyed. Then it is to be reassembled and reassembled on lines for which there is no precedent at all. Dominion and American precedents are nothing to the point at all. There there were separate States or Provinces and they were content to surrender on equal terms certain of their rights for the general good of all. But in this case it is nothing of the kind. In the first place the units are not comparable. You have this strange union of democratic Provinces with autocratic States. And then they are to come in on different terms. One State with a Prince at its head will surrender a certain degree of his sovereignty and another will surrender more. That puts the one in a privileged position as against the other, because the one who surrenders less will have his own reserves under his own power, and at the same time will have the right to interfere in the affairs of his neighbour who will have yielded a little more.

What is true of State against State is even more true of all the States against British India. They will have the power to vote on British Indian questions, but the British Indian members will have no power to vote on theirs. It was this very thing which I believe proved fatal to Mr. Gladstone's second Home Rule Bill. When he was challenged upon it, all he could say was that it passed the wit of man to be able to distinguish between domestic and Imperial affairs. What Mr. Gladstone vainly tried for this country years ago you are now asked to impose on India. It is said that this difficulty may be got over by the convention that the representatives of the States will not vote on British Indian questions, but when temptation and opportunity come do you think that that convention will last a week? It is morally certain that, having the chance, they will use it.

And it need not be done openly. You may keep a convention in the letter and break it in the spirit. When something happens in British India in which their communal friends over the border in the States take an interest, they need not go and vote upon it but they can say to the Government: "If you do not oppose this look out for a Vote of Censure next week," and they will vote on the Vote of Censure and turn out the Government. Yet the dominating factor in their minds will not be the issue of the Vote of Censure, but the particular quarrel beforehand upon which they were supposed to abstain, and perhaps did abstain, from voting. Or they may say to the Government: "You must do this or that, you must take this or that line" upon a special question in which they are

indirectly interested, "or you will lose your Military Works Bill which is about to come on." It is not an effort at cynicism to say that that is the inevitable and certain result of giving Parliamentary opportunity and Parliamentary power in a hybrid Constitution of this nature.

Observe the reactions on finance. The Princes have all said that they will not, except to a very small degree and in very particular circumstances, admit direct taxation in the States. On that they are firm and fundamental. The reaction of that will be that the Federal Finance Minister will have to look to indirect taxation when he wants more money for his Budget, because obviously he is not going to tax the subjects of British India by an increase of the Income Tax or some other form of direct taxation when that taxation cannot be levied in the State. Therefore, in forecasting his plans and preparing for his Budget he will certainly be limited to indirect taxation, and upon that I can only ask how long British Indians are likely to stand such an inferior position. But they will have a means of retaliation, and that means of retaliation is singularly dangerous. What they will do, if they are obstructed by the representatives of the States, is to put pressure on the Viceroy to use his powers of paramountcy. Now the powers of paramountcy of the Viceroy are great, but they are undefined and they must be used with the utmost circumspection. Their legitimate use is difficult enough, but their use under Parliamentary pressure might be dangerous in the last degree to the unity of India. It is a point upon which I do not like too greatly to expatiate, but your Lordships will, I think, see how reactions in the lobbies of the Assembly at Delhi may turn to serious differences between the paramount power and (it may be) some of the greatest of the feudal States.

There is a similar danger in the reserved spheres. By "reserved spheres" I mean in India generally, the sphere of defence and the sphere of external affairs. Nominally the Governor-General would have those in his own hands, but the same pressure, I suggest, would most certainly be applied. It is probable—it may be that it is certain—that trouble will arise between the Indian Government and the Governments of some of the Dominions on account of the *status*, the position, and the immigration of Indian subjects in various Dominions. Do you not see the danger of Parliamentary pressure being put upon the Governor-General to act perhaps hastily, perhaps intemperately, perhaps unfairly, under the threat of a crisis in the Assembly? Is it quite certain that every Governor-General would be able to withstand such pressure? Similarly on defence, the Governor-General in that capacity is responsible and has the power of certifying and passing whatever Estimates he thinks necessary for defence; but he may have other objects in view which are under the control of the Assembly. Can you not see how it may be put to him: "You must cut down this item for the Air Force, you must cut down this item for mounting guns on the frontier, or else you will lose the Bill to which you attach so great importance." Is it certain that the Governor-General will be always able to resist a temptation like that?

I know that it is said—it was said by Lord Reading before and I think very likely will be said by Lord Reading again—that similar difficulties exist now. But has he, and have those others who have ruled in India, considered the differences of the new position? First, there is a responsible majority at the Centre; there are eleven Provincial Governors and eleven Provincial Governments. The Governor-General will have all manner of conciliations and arbitrations to effect between the Governors and between the Governments of the Provinces. He has to keep in mind all his special responsibilities, and he will have new and dual and most difficult relations with the States, relations partly under the Constitution and partly under his powers of paramountcy. All these things will add to his burdens with a weight that never pressed upon him before. Let us consider what his position is with all these responsibilities piled up on him. He is the representative of the Emperor of India, the fount of honour, the centre of ceremonial, the dispenser of hospitality. That is one character. He is absolute in external relations theoretically, and theoretically he is absolute, under his powers of paramountcy, towards the States in so far as they have not acceded, and of course towards those States which do not accede at all. Then

he is a constitutional ruler guided by Ministers, but on point after point he has power, if he thinks fit, to override those Ministers.

In one sphere after another he has vast amounts left to his discretion, and the use of his discretion may provoke or avert some deplorable crisis. He has to preserve what I may call diplomatic relations with the Provinces, with ultimate power to interfere. He has power to legislate on his own. And all the time he is amenable to the Secretary of State and to this Parliament. He has absolute control of the Army in theory, and at the same time he may be the sport, and will have to exercise the art of the lobbying politician. I suggest to you, my Lords, that for a man to fulfil all these functions he requires the dignity of Lord Curzon, the versatility of Mr. Lloyd George, the firmness of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, and the Parliamentary adroitness of the late Lord Elibank.

I will not trouble your Lordships much further, but I will say this. The promise of the 1919 Act has been fully and amply redeemed. The Preamble of that Act binds us, but nothing else. No statement by a Viceroy, no statement by any representative of the Sovereign, no statement by the Prime Minister, indeed no statement by the Sovereign himself, can bind Parliament against its judgment. The advance which we have made means great risks, and the setting up of these Provinces means perturbation and disturbance of the whole fabric of Indian Government and perhaps to some extent of Indian society. Is it not wise to wait and get experience before we go further? I know it is said that we must have a strong Government at the Centre, but under these proposals you will not have a strong Government at the Centre. In paragraph 220 of the Report you will see that it is acknowledged that in many respects the Central Government cannot enforce its will on the Provinces against their determination, but the very thing that you deplore you will have to endure for a long time. It will be years before the Central Government can be put into being, and during that time you will have the very thing that you wish to avoid—namely, the Provinces starting with a great burst of energy and strength and the existing Government at the Centre. As you have to go through that, why should you tie yourselves up with provisions which you will find to be useless and cumbrous?

It seems to me that the whole case for legislating immediately rests on assumption, the assumption that the Princes will come in later. It is suggested that they will hold aloof from British Indian controversies. I submit that it is equally likely that their communal and other friendships will bring them into these controversies. It is said that indirect election will defeat the caucus. It might equally be assumed that it will focus and intensify intrigues at the Centre. It is said that there is good reason to assume that this scheme will work with all the anomalies that it displays. I have an equal right to assume that it will not work, and if it does not work, it will add to the dangers. The Lord President said yesterday that the anomalies were of little account. It is quite true that anomalies of long standing, which in the course of time have lost part of their evil, may not be of great account, but these are anomalies of your own creation and they are accumulated anomalies, and accumulated anomalies, in my judgment, will so work that they will render your Government under this scheme an impossibility. I am sorry that the President of the Board of Education is not here. No one admires more than I do his high standard in public affairs, and his courage and tenacity, but when I hear that complacent optimism coming from his lips, I cannot but think of the words used by Cromwell to a deputation of independent clergy, conscientious men though of another school:

"I entreat you, in the bowels of the Lord, conceive it possible you may be wrong."

I heard last week a speech of the Lord President when he told his followers that, in his belief, it was essential for the retention of India that these proposals should be passed. If he meant no more than that it was essential some advance should be made, he may be right. A great advance is being made, but if meant that here and now we should pass this indigestible hotch-potch of anomalies and contradictions, he is placing a strain, not so much upon my loyalty as upon my credulity. The future is very obscure, and past experience is hardly any guide. I would not like to prophecy. Because it

is obscure I do beg that, having taken one step, a pause should be made before we take another. You may make mistakes in two ways, by excess or by defect. If you make a mistake by defect, it can be remedied, but if you make a mistake by excess, it is irrevocable, and may cause a cataclysm worse than of 1857. I recall to mind words written years back in description of a certain type of British administrator in India. It was said that:

"He was engaged with meticulous diligence in pulling down, stone by stone, the edifice designed by the brains of Lawrences and cemented by the blood of Nicholsons."

I pray that this may not be the judgment passed by history upon the action of the present Parliament.

LORD STRABOLGI: My Lords, the noble Lord who has just addressed your Lordships' House, has made, if I may be allowed to say so, a number of very important Committee points which I hope, personally, he will repeat when the Bill itself comes before this House, and speaking for myself, I feel very much inclined to support him if he moves Amendments in one or two of the directions mentioned. He will forgive me, however, if I explain the reasons why my noble friends on this side of the House, as at present advised—we have of course not heard the final speech to be given by the Secretary of State for War and he may manage to change our opinions one way or another—do not propose either to support the Government or to support the Amendment moved by the noble Marquess, who led for the Conservative opposition, if I may so call it. I propose with your Lordships' leave to give as briefly as possible the reasons why we can support neither the Motion nor the Amendment.

I am very sorry that the President of the Board of Education has had to be away for reasons that are quite unavoidable, but I am even more sorry that the most reverend Primate has left the House. Lord Rankeillour made so bold as to question one or two of the observations of the most reverend Primate, and I propose, with great respect, to do the same. The most reverend Primate made certain observations with regard to Dominion *status*, and its impossibility, that will be used throughout India to our detriment and to the detriment of this House and of the British Government, and, I am sorry to say, to the detriment of the British people. The most reverend Primate told us that Dominion *status* was a phrase which had no meaning, and if I am not misquoting him he said that within measurable time there would not be anything in the nature of Dominion Government. Sitting behind the most reverend Primate as he spoke was the President of the Board of Education before he was called away.

I am going to quote the words of the President of the Board of Education and I may draw the particular attention of the Secretary of State for War to the words. In the memorandum which was reproduced as a draft report drawn up by my noble friends on the Joint Committee and put forward in the name of Major Attlee, a very able document if my noble friend Lord Snell, one of its authors, will allow me to say so, these words of Lord Halifax, speaking as Viceroy in October, 1929, were quoted, and I will quote them again:

"It was implicit in the Declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of Indian constitutional progress as then contemplated is the attainment of Dominion *status*."

The most reverend Primate went on to speak about the matter of other proposals and said it was too late. My Lords, it is too late to go back upon a Declaration of that nature, made by the President of the Board of Education when he was Viceroy and speaking with the authority of the British Cabinet. With great respect, we cannot trifle with these things in dealing with a problem of this immensity and this vital importance. One of the great assets we have had throughout the world in past decades has been our reputation for keeping our word. In Asia, in South America, throughout the world, the Englishman's word is quoted by other races as a mark of integrity. A Spanish-American merchant will tell a fellow countryman that he seals a contract with him on the word of an Englishman—meaning he is going to keep it—the greatest compliment we could have as a race. I am proud to say, though I differ from him politically, that the noble Viscount, is not only a typical Englishman but a typical Yorkshireman from my own county; he has attained a position of great importance in His Majesty's councils, and yet there is not in this Report one word implementing that Declara-

tion in which he pledged his word and the word of the British Government.

The most reverend Primate also spoke about our good government in India in the past. Do let us clear our mind on this question. We have given India in the past honest, conscientious government. We have sent out the best of our young men to administer the country, and they have upheld the traditions of our race; but you cannot really call it good government, judging by its results. The most reverend Primate spoke of good government and a little later he deplored the illiteracy of the great mass of Indians. Has it been good government, however honest, however clean, if it has left India with only eight per cent. of literates? If you would compare like with like, compare India with the pre-War Turkish Empire. The standard of literacy there was far higher than in British India in 1934. In many of the Indian States also the standard of education is higher, as indeed the condition of the people in some of the Indian States is higher. Present-day revolutionary Turkey has universal, compulsory education. The result of our 150 years of "good government" in India, with great respect to the most reverend Primate, is this great mass of illiteracy and, still more, the terrible, grinding poverty of the masses of the Indian people. It is not good government to have produced those results: clean, honest, conscientious, but not good government.

The reasons why my noble friends and myself cannot vote for the Government, unless the Secretary of State for War or some other spokesman of the Government converts us, are these. We consider that there are two possible policies for India. The first has just been defended with great ability by the noble Lord who preceded me, and that is the policy of a strong Central Government: the strong hand, the ruling of India by the sword, as she has been ruled for so many centuries—the policy that was pursued with great success for two centuries at least before its decline by the Mogul dynasty. That is a policy, but we believe it is impossible to-day. The most reverend Primate gave us some reasons for believing that that policy would have been possible if we had done certain things differently in the past. What was the secret of the Mogul power? They were, after all, a small invading army, who remained in India for three centuries, and at times gave India a magnificent government, and internal peace for long periods; but they were alien military adventurers, without the resources of Western civilisation behind them in a backward country. What was the secret of the Mogul power? It was that they governed through Indians. If, at the beginning, instead of imposing on India this magnificent bureaucracy, this alien officialdom, we had governed through Indians, using, if you like, the existing system of government through the Indian States and so on—as we are to-day doing, for example, in Nigeria, and as the French are doing very successfully so far in Morocco—that might have been a possible policy. Government through Indians, with only the least interference by the alien power—that would have been a successful Conservative policy, probably, in the past; but that is too late. We cannot do that now.

The other policy, the one which we support, and which we say this Report does not implement if it is embodied in a Bill, is to make as rapid progress as possible towards a Dominion of India. We should, as rapidly as possible, bring India into the position of a Dominion, of a self-governing part of the British Empire with all that that means. In what way does the Report fall short of that? We see inherent in the Report little or no possibility of ordered development. And, secondly, and of the greatest importance, the scheme proposed in the Report offers little hope for the masses of the cultivators and workmen of India. India is going through an industrial revolution. The noble Marquess who, I believe, will follow me, and who governed one of the great Presidencies, will testify to the appalling conditions of the workers, taken from their village life and thrown into the slums of Calcutta to work in the mills there. These are the people of whom we are primarily thinking—these helpless and inarticulate masses, poverty-stricken and shackled and bound by ancient religious social observances. In the proposals of the majority of the Joint Committee there is little hope for these people.

I do not want to be only critical. I hope to make one or two constructive suggestions that my noble friends think

would be preferable to what is proposed by the majority of the Committee and supported by the Government; and when the Bill comes before your Lordships' House we hope that we shall be able to persuade your Lordships to accept certain alterations in it. To begin with, the question of the franchise. The most reverend Primate also referred to the communal question, and so did the noble Marquess, Lord Lothian, yesterday. Everything else in these proposals can be altered in time. But if we once inflict the Communal Award on India it will be to all intents and purposes permanent, and it is the most hideous denial of everything that we on these Benches believe in. The political division of men according to their religious beliefs and the registering of them on separate registers is to us the most reactionary proposal. I personally agree with every word that fell from the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, on this point yesterday.

And is it really so necessary? We are going to attempt to impose this scheme of Government on India. I do not know that any Indian leader has as yet accepted, publicly accepted at any rate, the scheme proposed by the majority of the Committee. The noble Marquess on the Liberal Benches yesterday quoted a mutual friend of ours, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, for whom I am sure everybody who has the honour of his acquaintance has the very highest respect. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru will not publicly support these proposals, if I am correctly informed, and I do not think any other Hindu leader will. Some Moslems will support them, but the progressive young Moslems are not in favour of this communal system of elections; the young men who are trying to organise the trade unions in India in which there is very little communal feeling and in which Mahomedan, Hindu, and Christian workmen are joined together for their mutual protection and advancement. These men who are trying in the face, very often, of opposition from the Government of India to raise the standards of living of the workers are against this communal system. They know it will act as a barrier, a dam, against the economic advancement of the peoples of India. If we are imposing so much on India, why did we give way on this point? The great masses of the Hindus will not accept it. They will always strive to get rid of it. A certain section only of the Mahomedans will accept it. Why, therefore, should we pander to this section of Mahomedans?

There is another very grave consideration in this matter. We have heard a great deal both here and in another place—more in another place—about the unity of India. There is another kind of unity that may come about, that will be somewhat hazardous to ourselves as an Empire and, I venture to say, to the peace of the world. I have the greatest respect, as I am sure the most reverend Primate and all your Lordships have, for the Mahomedan religion as a religion and for what it has done for the advancement of civilisation and learning in the past. It is one of the great religions of the world; but there is a political Mahomedanism now that is active from Mogador on the Atlantic coast of Africa to the East of China and that is most active between Cairo and Delhi and the countries in between. Looking ahead—and in dealing with the affairs of a great Empire we have to take long views—there will be attempts made, the beginnings are visible now, to make a Mahomedan political *bloc*, not friendly to the British Raj, not friendly to the British Empire, from, at any rate, Cairo to Delhi. That is the kind of unity we may end in seeing if we are not extraordinarily careful.

Now it may be said, "what else could we have done?" and the same argument applies to this question of indirect and direct election on which I entirely agree with the noble Marquess Lord Lothian. How are you going to deal with this vast country, with constituencies the size of Wales and a huge illiterate electorate, with these indirect elections proposed on the one hand and this appalling communal electoral roll on the other? It can be done in this way, and, if I may, I should like to congratulate the noble Lord, Lord Phillimore, who also touched on this point last night. It can be done by building up your franchise from the bottom instead of taking your few millions of educated people at the top, men of culture and influence and wealth, and enfranchising them. Start from the bottom. You have in India in many areas old-established village councils, the pancyets, the councils of the elders.

Lord Strabolgi.

Your unit in rural India is the village. Start there. Let these village councils elect the district boards, let the district boards elect the Provincial Councils, your Provincial Legislative Assemblies or chambers.

I am now going to open my armour to the Minister of War if he cares to thrust his lance into it. This is a system that has another name, this system of indirect election by occupational voters. Our Parliamentary system of democracy has not yet been very successful anywhere in Asia. In Japan no one would claim that the Western system of Parliamentarianism has been successful despite the homogeneous character of the Japanese population, their ancient civilisation and universal education. The democratic system that has so far functioned in the East is to be found in Siberia where you have this system of district boards elected by councils of peasants in the rural areas. This is where I open my armour, raise my vizor, to the Minister of War. The fact that in Siberia it is called the Soviet system, based on peasant councils in the country districts, does not mean it is necessarily Communistic. You can have a system of election based on functions either as cultivators or workers without Communism. Indeed you have it even in this country in the University representation in another place. If people vote according to their functions as cultivators or factory workers or anything else they are not necessarily Communists because the Soviets in Siberia, or the majority of them, happen to support the Communist Party. If the Minister of War likes to say I am suggesting a Communist Soviet system for India hs can do so, but it is not really true. I want to find some way of escape from this difficulty of a vast electorate, largely illiterate, and now split by this terrible communal hostility.

The system that I have attempted very inadequately and briefly to describe appeared in the last Home Rule scheme drawn up by the late Mrs. Besant, a woman whose words carried great weight in India, who devoted a great part of her varied life to the interests of the Indian people in a most unselfish way, and who was a woman of most remarkable intelligence as well. That plan was included in the scheme which she brought forward in 1926-27 and which was supported by the present leader of the Labour Party, my right honourable friend Mr. Lansbury, and many other people who have taken a life-long interest in Indian affairs. It is not an impracticable scheme, and indeed I have heard members of your Lordships' House who differ from me on every other point politically arguing for that very system. We consider that the communal election proposals are the most mischievous things in the whole plan. Everything else can be altered except that.

There are one or two other objections that are of great importance. These are not Committee points, and I trust your Lordships will allow me to mention them: I do not think they have received very much mention so far in the debate. I consider the proposals about the Reserve Bank of India most reactionary. Look westward to the United States of America. In the United States of America a great contest is going on between the most powerful President the Americans have had since Lincoln's time and the private banking monopoly, and I do not know, nobody knows, who is going to win. The proposals in the Report of the majority of the Joint Committee and in the White Paper with regard to the Central Bank mean that the real rulers of India on all questions of finance and currency will be the board of this Bank who will be absolutely independent of what is called political influence. I was in India four years ago and the one thing that rang through the arguments of all the Indians I spoke to, especially the business men and merchants, was the alleged manipulation of Indian currency in the interests of the City of London. The noble Lord, Lord Lloyd, I believe, will bear me out in that respect, and I should be surprised if the noble Marquess opposite will not tell us that the merchants and others in Bengal are convinced of the same thing, that we have altered the value of the rupee in our own interests and against the interests of India. That conflict is going on in India, and very many of them are insistent in that belief. This completely independent bank, will always represent, I am afraid, in the eyes of Indians, an outpost of the City of London, and the people will believe that the currency and finance of India will be manipulated in the interests of the

City of London, and not necessarily in the interests of the Indian people. I must make my protest against that proposal of the Joint Committee.

Now may I make one or two suggestions with regard to the immediate future? I am afraid we have got ourselves into serious trouble in India for reasons which we need not go into now. Something should be done if possible to restore confidence in India. My noble friend, Lord Snell, made an eloquent plea, which I entirely endorse, to those who still call themselves our friends in India to do their best with the scheme of constitutional reform, but we can do something to help on this side as well. Is it possible for a declaration to be made with regard to commercial discrimination of a reciprocal nature? There are the so-called safeguards or emergency powers to enable the Viceroy or the Governor-General to step in if our commerce is penalised for political purposes. I am paraphrasing. Could not we make a declaration with regard to the penalisation of commerce for political purposes from our side? I think it is very necessary to do that in view of what has happened as between this country and Ireland, otherwise you simply make a present to those who are hostile to us in India of the argument: "Oh that is all very well; you are not to use the weapon of penal tariffs against the English, but they will soon use them against you if they do not like what your legislatures do."

Secondly, is it possible immediately to release all the political prisoners, to amnesty them—the men who are there for no crime except, if you like, political agitation, or the various technical offences for which they find themselves in prison? Then, wherever possible, I would suggest to your Lordships and to His Majesty's Government that, as soon as vacancies arise, we should appoint Indians to certain of the Indian Provinces as Governors. That would be a tremendous thing. This is no new proposal. We have had Indians as Governors before. One was a member of your Lordships' House. I wish his heir had taken his seat here and could have contributed to these debates. I wish indeed there were more Indian Peers in your Lordships' House. The present Government, in talking of other matters, declares that they are not very good as propagandists, that they are not very good at blowing their own trumpet. I have not noticed it myself, but that is their confession. Let them consider the psychological effect on India of the kind of things I am now discussing, and, most important of all, do let us have some more rapid progress with regard to the Indianisation of the Army.

I entirely agree with what has been said in another place and here about the necessity of dyarchy at the Centre as long as we have responsibility for the defence of India and for Indian foreign relations. Some times it is said: "Oh, wait until the Socialists come into power in England. If they do, then they are going to scuttle out of India." That is said on Conservative platforms in the country. I can assure your Lordships of this: that no Labour Government could suggest clearing out of India. The Indians themselves would not let us. I discussed these matters with Mr. Gandhi in India, besides the matters discussed by the noble Marquess, of which he told us yesterday, and with many other Indian leaders, some of them far more extreme than Mr. Gandhi, but men carrying weight amongst their own people. I assure noble Lords here, and those with a knowledge of India will bear me out, that the idea of our evacuating India now or in the next few years would be received with horror. It would mean immediate fighting in India between the communities and invasion from the North. Everyone knows that. But what we on these Benches say, and what the Labour Party says, is that you must, as rapidly as possible, in the words indeed of the noble Viscount, Lord Halifax himself, make it possible for Indians to govern themselves, and to do that completely and fully you obviously must have an Indian Army. You have Indian troops now in plenty, magnificent troops too, but not officered by Indians. You cannot allow the railways, the posts and telegraphs to be in the hands of Indian Ministers when British troops depend on the efficient working of the railways and posts and telegraphs in case of trouble on the frontier. You are bound to have dyarchy in Delhi until you have an Indianized Army.

What are the efforts His Majesty's Government are making in this matter?

The Secretary of State for War is present, and may I respectfully draw his attention to the present state of affairs? I will quote now from answers given to me by the President of the Board of Education a fortnight ago in this House. And may I draw the attention of the noble Marquess, Lord Lothian, to these figures? He told us yesterday that he was a one hundred per cent. supporter of the Government on the Indian policy except on one question. May I draw the attention of the noble Marquess, Lord Lothian, and your Lordships to a very few figures? We have 60,000 British troops to-day in India, and 20,000 Indian troops in His Majesty's Indian Army—that is 80,000 soldiers. I presume that when, eventually, we are able to withdraw the British troops from India, we will not be able to reduce the numbers of the total Army for some time. Therefore, I am taking the total figure of 80,000 soldiers —airmen, cavalrymen, artillerymen, and so on; 80,000 bayonets, sabres, &c. I am allowing one officer for 50 men, which is not too many, and that means you need in India 3,600 Indian Officers for that Army alone. Allowing for reserves and staff, &c., I put the figure at 4,000 officers. I have not discussed these figures with my noble friend, Lord Marley, who, I am sure, will tell me if there is anything that I have said now which is shocking to him as a soldier.

In answer to me the noble Viscount, Lord Halifax, said we had serving 148 Indian Officers and twenty-eight on the unattached list—that is 176 officers, Indian gentlemen holding His Majesty's Commission. The annual output from the Indian Military College at Dehra Dun is sixty a year. At the same time we are taking in from Woolwich and Sandhurst European gentlemen to be officers to the number of 100 a year; so we are producing 60 Indian officers a year, and taking 100 European officers a year. We have a nucleus of 176 gentlemen bearing His Majesty's Commission to start with, and we need 4,000. I have tried to calculate in how many years His Majesty's Army in India will be Indianised. I make it to be about 90 years at that rate. If we wish to convince the Indians of our sincerity, we must speed up the Indianisation of the Army in India, and we must adopt—I would suggest, with great respect to military opinion—a rather different plan of Indianisation to the present one. I venture to repeat what I said when I asked a question of the President of the Board of Education, that you must not think you are going to make in India for some time to come an Army capable of meeting in the field, say, the Japanese or the French Army. We need not do that, either.

I again say—speaking with great diffidence as an ex-naval officer and not a soldier—that you need in India two things. You need first a good rough-and-tumble fighting force for the frontier, armed with all the most modern weapons, aeroplanes, artillery and so on. That you can get. You have had it in the past. Under the Sikh Confederacy there were practically no European officers with the Sikh Army and they were all at headquarters. The Sikh Confederacy under Ranjit Singh preserved the peace of Northern India. Under the Moguls the Army was officered by Indians. Frequently the Commander in Chief was a Hindu. It has been done and it can be done again. If, as the noble Marquess reminded us yesterday one of the effects of our "good government" in India, if I may quote the words of the most reverend Primate, has been to emasculate Indian manhood and remove their former military virtues, the sooner we begin to get young men of the right physical and mental calibre and train them to be the Army officers of the future the better.

The other Force we want is an up-to-date Military Police force. I make no apology for stressing this point. If you want to convince Indians of our good faith—and here I appeal to that nebulous central body of moderate opinion that supports the Report, not to the noble Lord, Lord Rankeillour, who has just spoken, but to the noble Marquess Lord Lothian, who spoke for the Liberal Party, the most reverend Primate, the Minister of War, the supporters of the MacDonald section of the Labour Party, this conglomeration of people of great eminence and various opinions who support the Report—if you really mean business, and want to convince the Indians that you mean business, you must for once stand up to Whitehall—Whitehall in the form of the two noble Lords opposite, Lord Hailsham and Lord Londonderry, representing two of the great fighting forces. You need not

trouble about the Admiralty, because the Admiralty has done extremely well. The Royal Indian Navy, as it now is, has made great progress under Admiral Warleigh—the noble Lord, Lord Lloyd, I am sure will bear me out—in bringing the right type of young men from the Punjab, many miles from the sea, training them on His Majesty's ships and turning them out as good seamen with officer-like qualities. The Admiralty is all right in this respect.

It is the War Office and the Air Ministry who will have to be fought on this question. You have to choose between fighting them and the alternative of very different fighting in India. I believe, as my noble friend Lord Snell and his colleagues, if I may say so, state in their most admirably drafted Report, that it is possible to set a term to Indianisation. It should be possible in twenty-five years to make a frontier fighting force and a mobile Military Police force for the Plains completely Indianised. Then you can talk about Dominion *status* and the Dominion of India, and I hope it will remain a bright jewel in the British Imperial Crown, to quote the words we have heard so often.

There is a new spirit in all Asia today. I would ask your Lordships who are still inclined to go rather slow in these matters to consider that. It is not of recent growth. It is traceable, I suppose, from the Russo-Japanese War and this new movement was stimulated by the events of the Great War. What is this new movement in Asia, led by Japan? It is a demand for equality of *status*. The Indians are no longer prepared, nor are the other Asiastic peoples who are politically conscious—and their numbers are increasing—prepared to admit our superiority in political wisdom or in culture simply and solely because we have a military superiority of weapons. This new movement has got to be reckoned with. This painstaking Majority Report of the Joint Committee —I heard with tremendous interest the domestic secrets of its composition exposed by the noble Lord who preceded me—has rather overlooked, I am afraid, this new spirit in Asia. For that reason the Majortiy Report is, in my opinion, ill-conceived and has many grave defects which I have tried to describe. We cannot support it, nor, for the reasons I have also described, can we support the noble Marquess Lord Salisbury in his Amendment. We will await the Bill, and we will hope for improvement in the Bill. In any case we hope that there will be a happy issue from this extraordinary situation in which we find ourselves.

THE MARQUESS OF ZETLAND: My Lords, it is one of the many anomalies which are inherent in the discussion of this subject that while I found myself much to my regret in disagreement with a good deal that was said by the noble Marquess who moved the Amendment yesterday, I find myself this evening in some agreement—not very much, but in a few sentences here and there—with the speech of the noble Lord who has just sat down. If I may say so without in any way detracting from the value of the many other speeches which have been delivered so far in the course of this debate, the speech which appeared to me to be one of the greatest significance was the speech delivered by the noble Lord, Lord Hardinge, towards the close of yesterday's debate.

I say that for this reason. I seem to see in that speech, running all through the results of many weeks, indeed of many months, reflection which the noble Lord, as a member of the Joint Select Committee was perforce obliged to give to the problem of the future government of India. I recall the speech made by the same noble Lord on the last occasion on which your Lordships discussed this subject in April, 1933. It seems to me that the difference between the speech made by the noble Lord on the first occasion and the speech which he delivered to your Lordships last night was very significant. On the earlier occasion the noble Lord, while prepared to give a generous measure of self-government to India, was, nevertheless, very apprehensive, very doubtful of the wisdom of some parts of the scheme of the White Paper. Last night it seemed to me that the noble Lord's speech showed that he was now in complete accord with the recommendations which are made by the Joint Select Committee.

My own position is not by any means dissimilar from the position of the noble Lord, Lord Hardinge. When the question as to whether the White Paper should be referred to a Joint Select Committee was before your Lordships I

warmly applauded the proposal, for reasons which I then gave. Those reasons were that, while I was in general agreement with the main principles underlying the scheme of the White Paper, I felt considerable anxiety with regard to the methods by which it was proposed to give application to some part of them, and it seemed to me that a Committee of the kind suggested was the most suitable tribunal to take into consideration criticisms of the plan and, if it thought wise and desirable, to suggest alterations of it.

May I remind your Lordships very briefly of the main criticisms which I made of the White Paper scheme? In the first place it seemed to me that the scheme would impose upon the Governor-General and upon the Governors a burden too great to permit them efficiently and successfully to discharge their responsibilities and their duties. In the second place, I thought that it would place them, *vis-à-vis* the Indian legislators, in a position derogatory to anyone representing the Sovereign; and in the third place, I felt very doubtful whether the machinery proposed in the White Paper for keeping the Governor-General and the Governors informed of what was going on in the various departments of Government would prove adequate to enable them to intervene in accordance with the special responsibility imposed upon them should events show that that intervention was desirable. Then again, I expressed some uneasiness as to the position of the Police under the proposal to transfer the portfolio of law and order; and finally I pointed out that the vast constituencies which were inevitable if you adopted a system of direct election for the Central Legislature, in the case of a country of the size of India, would reduce the representative principle as we understand it to an absurdity.

I am naturally gratified to be able to point to the fact that nearly the whole of these criticisms which I made of the White Paper scheme have been met by recommendations in the Report of the Joint Select Committee. With regard to the first of my criticisms only—namely, that you were going to impose on the Governor-General and the Governors too heavy a burden, have the members of the Joint Select Committee failed to find a remedy, beyond stressing, of course, the necessity for equipping the Governor-General and the Governors with adequate secretariats of their own under the direction of officers of seniority and great knowledge and experience of the system of administration in India. And as against my apprehensions on that point I am able to place the opinions of no less than three ex-Viceroys, who with singular unanimity, have assured us that the duties and responsibilities which will fall upon the Governor-General in the future will be no greater than, if indeed they are so great as, those which each one of them in his different way himself discharged with such singular success. And there I think I must leave that point, expressing only this hope, that the future will not show that the optimism of these three distiguished ex-Viceroys needs to be discounted on the ground of its having been based upon a very natural but not necessarily infallible belief on the part of men who have held positions of great responsibility and of very exacting labour, that no office can be conceived which would impose upon its occupant responsibilities or labours greater than those which they have dischargesd.

For the rest, as I have said, my criticisms have for the most part been met. The necessity of the Governor-General and the Governor indulging in what I ventured to describe as gladiatorial combats with the members of the Legislature have been dispensed with, as will be seen from a perusal of paragraph 104 of our Report. Then again the suggestion which I ventured to put before your Lordships for ensuring that the Governor-General and the Governors should receive in advance information of all that was happening in the different departments of Government which might affect their special responsibilities, has been accepted, as will be seen from a perusal of paragraph 100 of our Report. Again, the doubts and the fears which I certainly entertained with regard to the transfer of the portfolio of law and order have been dispelled by the recommendations which will be found in paragraphs 89 to 97 inclusive of our Report. And finally a perusal of paragraphs 200 and 201 will show that the arguments which I developed at some length in your Lordships' House on the subject of indirect *versus* direct election have been accepted as valid by a majority of the

members of the Committee, and a system of indirect election has been substituted in place of the original proposal.

So much for some at least of the changes in the White Paper which are recommended in the Report of the Joint Select Committee, changes which in their cumulative effect are very considerable, yet changes which I am happy to say meet with the support of nearly all the members of the Joint Select Committee, and I think I am right in saying, of the whole of the Conservative members of that body. Nevertheless it will not have escaped your Lordships' notice, especially after the speech of the noble Marquess yesterday, that there are features of the scheme upon which members of the Conservative Party are unhappily not agreed. The noble Marquess yesterday challenged me to tell your Lordships what were my views of the Communal Award. My views of the Communal Award are well known, and if anybody is interested in the matter they will find them set out at length in a reasoned Amendment which I moved to paragraph 121 of the Draft Report, and which appears on page 338 of Part II of Volume I of our Report. I have always disliked intensely, and I still dislike intensely, some aspects of the Communal Award. I think that it will impose unnecessary difficulties in the way of the smooth working of the future Constitution, particularly in Bengal, and it was a matter of great satisfaction to me that the noble Marquess agreed with me and subscribed his name to the views which I ventured to express.

I should have been glad indeed if I could have persuaded the majority of the members of that Committee to add their names to my own and that of the eight other members of the Committee who signed that particular Amendment; but I was not surprised that they did not, and for this reason: that the Communal Award was in an entirely different category from that of any other matters which came before the Joint Select Committee. In the case of the Communal Award we were faced with an accomplished fact. Nine months before even the Joint Select Committee had been appointed the Government had made their Communal Award and they had declared, when making it, that it was irrevocable, and in these circumstances the responsibility for the Communal Award must be the Government's, and the Government's alone.

Now I come to those matters upon which I find myself differing from the noble Marquess, and those members of the Joint Select Committee who are associated with him, and may I say with what profound feelings of regret I find this difference existing between us. As long as I can remember I have looked up to the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, as the embodiment of everything that an English statesman should be. I have admired profoundly his great knowledge, his great experience, and his great abilities, and above all his transparent sincerity of purpose, yet on these grave issues I find myself differing from him. I would like, therefore, to claim the indulgence of your Lordships while I give you briefly the reasons which have led me to my own conclusions.

The first matter upon which I find myself differing from the noble Marquess and those associated with him is with regard to the efficacy of the so-called safeguards, and particularly with regard to the efficacy of those safeguards which arise out of the special responsibilities imposed upon the Governor-General and the Governors. As your Lordships are, of course, aware, over a wide field of legislative and administrative activity the Governor-General and the Governors, in circumstances clearly defined in the Constitution Act, will have the right "to act in their discretion." That is a technical phrase, and despite that my noble friend Lord Halifax said that he assumed you were all familiar with the details of our Report, I will venture to explain very briefly what is meant by the phrase acting "in their discretion." When the Governor-General and the Governors of Provinces, as the case may be, are referred to as acting in their discretion, what is meant is this, that he, or they, are lawfully acting independently of any authority in India, and under responsibility to Parliament in this country. You will see that the phrase is one of great significance, for it implies the presence of powers in the Governor-General, and the Governors, which may be exercised at any time, should circumstances require it, in the sphere of self-government, both in the Provinces and at the Centre.

The noble Marquess spoke a little scornfully of these safeguards, with what appeared to me at the time to be an inherited aptitude for witty phrase. He dismissed them in the sort of phrase which delights an audience, especially when the subject under discussion is one of political controversy. He said:

"The safeguards looked very well on paper. The whole of the Majority Report bristled with safeguards. Self-government with safeguards was self-government in a strait waist-coat, and a strait waist-coat made entirely of paper. There was no strength in it: no power whatever."

What a little puzzles me is this: If the noble Marquess and his friends really are of opinion that the safeguards are illusory, why, during the proceedings of the Joint Select Committee, when proposals were put forward for extending their scope, did they give those proposals the aid of their most valued support? The noble Marquess said something else in the course of the speech which I have quoted. He said that over a large area they (the Conservative Party) were agreed. "They agreed to the establishment of provincial autonomy. That was a tremendous thing in itself—a vast change." Very well, we know two of the opinions held by the noble Marquess and his friends. One is that the safeguards are illusory, and the second is that we should establish provincial autonomy. A question which I would like to ask Lord Rankeillour, or Lord Midleton, in the regrettable absence of Lord Salisbury, is this. Would they prefer that autonomy should be granted to the Provinces with, or without, the safeguards recommended in our Report? I shall listen with much interest to the answer to that question, whatever the answer to that question may be.

LORD RANKEILLOUR: Does the noble Marquess want an answer now?

THE MARQUESS OF ZETLAND: Just as the noble Lord likes!

LORD RANKEILLOUR: We will take them for what they are worth.

THE MARQUESS OF ZETLAND: Then the noble Lord does think the safeguards are worth something, and that is an advance. Now I come to the question of the functions and the powers at the Centre. The scheme put forward in the Report of the Joint Select Committee, while reserving to the Governor-General complete control over defence and the conduct of foreign affairs, would make Indians responsible, through the agency of the proposed Federal Government and Federal Legislature, for policy and administration in the whole field of economics and social reform. In other words, the functions and powers of the proposed Federal Government and Legislature, subject always of course to the reserved powers of the Governor-General, would be analogous in that sphere of economics and social reform to the functions and powers of the Cabinet and Parliament in this country. Now, as an alternative to that scheme, my noble friends put forward a proposal for a Greater India Advisory Council, and they tell us that if their plan were adopted you would escape the difficulties inherent in the plan of the White Paper. There would be, they say, no extra expenditure for offices or officials in Delhi. Are the noble Lords quite so certain of that? Is this Greater India Advisory Council to have no staff, no secretariat, no registrar? I must say that if the Greater India Advisory Council is deprived of such a staff they will find it a little difficult efficiently to discharge their functions.

Then, again, let me quote:

"There would be no pathless morass to be confronted of direct or indirect election to the Central Assembly."

Why not? Unless the noble Lords propose to abolish the Central Assembly altogether they have got to decide how under the future Constitution that Assembly is going to be composed; and if they tell me that they would keep it as it is at present, then I am justified in asking them why then, during the proceedings of the Joint Select Committee, did they vote for a scheme of indirect election for the Central Legislature in place of the existing system of direct election? No, I do not understand their claim that if their plan was adopted these difficulties would be escaped.

Then the noble Lords appeal to authority in support of their plan, the authority of the Simon Commission. Do the noble Lords not a little overlook the fact that the proposal put forward by the Simon Commission was put forward in circumstances which differ profoundly from the circumstances of to

day? And do they not also a little overlook the fact that all those members of the Simon Commission who have expressed their views on the Report of the Joint Select Committee accept the finding of the Joint Select Committee on that question? And indeed, if you read the summing up by the Simon Commission of the objects which they have in view in making the proposal for an Advisory Council, you will see that their main object was to provide an incentive to the creation of a Federal Government and Legislature, and that they only put forward the proposal for an Advisory Council because they were satisfied that in the circumstances of that time the proposal for a Federal Government and Legislature was beyond the range of practical politics.

But even if I thought that the members of the Simon Commission adhered to their proposal in the different circumstances of to-day I should still hold, basing myself on my own experience of conditions in India, that no Constitution formed on the lines proposed by the noble Lords would have the smallest chance of success. The Advisory Council would be regarded throughout India as a body which was intended to supplant the existing Central Legislature. Believe me, there is no room in any Constitution which you may devise for India to-day for two rival bodies, such as the Advisory Council and the Central Legislature would inevitably become; and if anybody supposes that the Central Legislature is going to settle down quietly to the task of registering the decrees of an Advisory Council he is, I am afraid, destined to meet with a rude awakening.

Be it remembered, my Lords, that the Central Legislature is not a thing of mushroom growth. It dates back in origin to the Act of 1861, and every Act for the better Government of India which has been passed since that date—the Act of 1892, the Act of 1909, still more the Act of 1919—has increased its representative character, enlarged its scope, and added to its powers. You cannot brush aside the existing Central Legislature in India. And if the Central Legislature has a long history behind it, a history which we cannot ignore, so too has the proposal for an Advisory Council. The proposal is no new one; it is the resurrection of a suggestion which was discussed and rejected in the course of the earlier discussions which took place between the Government of Lord Minto and the then Secretary of State, Lord Morley, more than a quarter of a century ago. It met with no friends in the India of that day, it met with few friends anywhere; and we now know, as the result of the recent publication of some of the private papers of the late Lord Minto—admirably edited, if I may say so, by the Dowager Countess Minto—that the Viceroy himself looked upon it with no favour. "I would cancel the suggestion for Advisory Councils altogether," he wrote on August 12, 1908, and again on October 14 of the same year—

> "I have never liked Advisory Councils, but swallowed them in the shape we have submitttd them to you for the sake of showing a united front here."

The proposal, as I said, met with no support, it was quietly buried; and a proposal which was regarded as inadequate to meet the circumstances of 1908 is hardly likely, I think, to be adequate to meet the circumstances of 1934.

No, my Lords, if you wish your Indian public men to act in a responsible manner you must give them responsibility. Does it not stand to reason that if you invite a man to criticise to the top of his bent your methods of government, but at the same time withhold from him the only possible incentive towards responsible criticism, he will behave in an irresponsible, and indeed in a reckless manner. I would invite my noble friend Lord Lloyd to put himself in the place of an Indian public man, a member of the Indian Central Legislative Assembly. He would probably be the leader of a large and powerful Party in it. Like all patriots, he would be consumed with an ambition to play a worthy part in the government of his country. Should I be doing the noble Lord an injustice if I were to suggest that, when he found that the outlet for his ambition was restricted to criticising an immovable Government, the noble Lord's volcanic energy, his great ability and his talents, would be devoted to embarrassing and to bringing into contempt the Government which he had a constitutional right to criticise but no constitutional right to replace? That is the only way in which you can induce people to behave in a responsible manner.

And what, after all, are the objections to granting the measure of responsibility

which we recommend in our Report? There will be the Governor-General in control of defence and foreign affairs; there will be the Governor-General with his reserved powers; there will be the Lower House composed of the representatives of the Princes—surely a stable element in the body politic—as well as the representatives of British India; and there will be an Upper House constituted on a stable, and indeed on a conservative basis. And if, in those circumstances, you are not prepared to grant to Indians in the administration and the management of their internal affairs the measure of responsibility which we suggest, well then, I say you may as well tear up the solemn Declaration which was made by Parliament on August 20, 1917, that the policy of this country towards India was "the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible Government in India."

LORD STRABOLGI: And Dominion *status*.

THE MARQUESS OF ZETLAND: I would ask your Lordships, if you are not prepared to pursue that path, to be prepared to face the consequences of not doing so. I do not doubt that your Lordships can hold India by force if you consider that worth doing, but I hope your Lordships will not misconceive either the nature or the extent of the task which would then be yours. In no part of the world have changes in the political and the social outlook of the peoples been so rapid or so far-reaching as they have been in India in recent years. Let me only give your Lordships an illustration of that. Who, whether in India or this country, would have believed it if he had been told only a short decade before that in the year 1930 he would have seen Hindu and Moslem ladies sitting at the council table at Westminster alongside of the Princes from the native States, delegates from British India, and representatives of the three Parliamentary Parties in this country? Who again would have believed it if he had been told it only a short decade before that a Commission composed of members of these two Houses would have been declaring, as the Simon Report did declare, that "the women's movement in India holds the key to progress"? Or who again would have believed it if he had been told that in 1934 a Committee composed of members of the two Houses in this country would have been found expressing doubts as to whether the proposal to give the vote to six million Indian women was adequate to meet the circumstances of the case?

These things indicate a great ferment in the mass psychology of the Indian people. They indicate a great stirring in the still deeps of Indian life which it would be madness for us to ignore. It may be that idealism is a little out of fashion in the affairs of men, yet I hold that politics devoid altogether of idealism are as dry a husk as statecraft uninspired by any spark of imagination. Let us not keep our eyes riveted exclusively on the foreground of the picture. Let us lift our gaze and try and picture the consequences of what we are doing to-day. Twenty, fifty, or one hundred years hence the historians of those days will be writing the history of these critical times. What is the story that your Lordships would wish them to tell? Is it this: by a lack of courage, a lack of faith, the people of Great Britain in the year 1935 were responsible for one of the greatest calamities which could befall mankind, the permanent alienation of the peoples of the East from the peoples of the West? Or is it this: that in the year 1935, by wisdom and vision and courage and faith, the people of Great Britain inaugurated a new era of co-operation between the peoples of the East and the peoples of the West, a synthesis of all the best that each has to contribute to the progress of mankind? To that question there can surely be but one answer.

LORD CLWYD: My Lords, at this late hour I shall not take more than a very short time in saying what I have to say in reference to the important proposals which are before the House. But as I have for a long time taken a special interest in Indian affairs I feel that the House may allow me very briefly to express the main reasons why I give my unqualified support to the proposals of the Report of the Select Committee. May I say this as a preliminary observation? I listened with the greatest pleasure to the most eloquent concluding remarks of the noble Marquess who has just sat down when he pictured the enormous changes which have taken

place in the situation in India to-day compared with thirty or forty years ago. When I first took an interest in Indian affairs the Indian Budget was discussed in another place on the last day of the Session in a very thin House, and the discussion was of a more or less academic character, but it fell to my lot for many years at that time to move a Resolution in that House affirming the demand of the people of India for what was called their closer association with the administration of their own affairs. I do not blame Parliament for the lack of interest which it took at that time in Indian matters. The English electorate was at that time uninformed. It was rightly absorbed in its own urgent political problems. But a great change has since then taken place and an advance has occurred in public opinion on the rights of Indians to a further measure of self-government which is simply astonishing.

There is just this other point in connection with the growth of public opinion upon the question of the advance of self-government in India—namely, the lack of enthusiasm and satisfaction with which the people of India have received from time to time the many important reforms which have been granted to them. But I do not think that that is difficult to explain. There are, perhaps, innumerable reasons for it, but there is one cause which I think I shall mention because I feel it is true. Much of the explanation for the fact that India has not been satisfied with the many concessions that have been made from time to time in regard to the advance in her self-governing rights is due to the delay which has taken place in granting these reforms—delays which, from time to time, have robbed these concessions of their true value.

I will not detain the House by going into detail in regard to the recommendations of the Select Committee, but will make one or two general observations. The first is this. I do not agree with the view taken this afternoon by the noble Lord, Lord Rankeillour, in reference to the constitution of that Committee. I would say two things about the Committee and its proposals. First, I do not remember, in the whole course of my experience, such an amount of conference and consultation and interchange of views upon any public question as has taken place in regard to the issues which we are now discussing. Secondly, I do not remember a body being set up in modern times equal to that Committee in respect of the distinguished service and experience of public affairs of its members. I would like, if I may as an outsider who has only read the Reports of the Committee, to associate myself with the many tributes of praise which have been paid to the Chairman of the Select Committee, and I would ask the House not to forget that this is not the only contribution he has made to the service and for the welfare of India. I would ask the House to remember also the great service he rendered to India as Chairman of the Indian Agricultural Commission.

To hurry through what I have to say, let me now state very briefly my views as to the present situation. I had the opportunity, during a very long period in my life, of knowing some, at all events, of the leading figures in Indian political life, and I feel that they have a perfect right to exercise their own judgment upon any proposal that is made by a Committee or by Parliament in regard to their constitutional development. But if I may, as one who has for many years acted as one of their spokesmen in Parliament in support of the advance of self-government in India, I would express the hope that they will very carefully consider and not be unmindful of the grave difficulties of passing a great scheme such as this through Parliament in the teeth of very formidable opposition. At the same time, may I make this suggestion to noble Lords in this House, that we, on our part, also should be careful to avoid the danger of substantially weakening the proposals of the scheme in such a way as to make it even less acceptable than it is to-day to those who are now in India supporting it. One word as to the Liberal Party in India, a Party which has undoubtedly rendered very great service in times past to the cause of constitutional reform. I agree with the view expressed by the most reverend Primate. I believe we shall find that, whilst they are naturally dissatisfied with some, at all events, of the recommendations of the Committee, they will be prepared, when the Bill becomes an Act, to co-operate in the working out of its provisions. They will do so, I feel sure, in a spirit and in

a way which, as they think, will lead to their ultimate goal. And that is one of the main reasons why I support these recommendations.

It is because, in my judgment, when they become an Act of Parliament, they will constitute a basis upon which India itself can work out her own salvation and reach her ultimate political goal. I feel that the two essential conditions for success in our endeavour to carry out this great transaction are, first of all, that we should ask our friends in India to believe that behind this offer of a new Constitution there lies good will and sincerity; and, secondly, that we ourselves should resolve to look upon the aspirations of India for self-government, not as something dangerous, not as an unhappy or dangerous phenomenon, but as something which will, in due time, lead to closer union and better understanding. I have given India, for certain reasons, the first place on the horizon of my political life, and it is perhaps not surprising that I should take a very deep interest in this debate and what lies behind it.

I will conclude with this observation. I will ask the House whether it is not becoming clear to those who are watching the general trend of world events that there is a tendency for the pivot upon which will rest the main issues of the future to shift from the West to the East. If that be so, and I think in many ways it may be so, I would ask your Lordships to agree with me when I say that a satisfied and a contented India, an India attached to the British Empire by bonds of sympathy and good will, must be a decisive and a vitally important factor in that new situation. These, without detaining your Lordships further, are the main grounds upon which I most strongly support the proposals of the Committee. I believe that if, and when, the proposals are translated into an Act of Parliament, they will be the means of opening a new chapter and a still greater chapter in the history of the relations between this country and the Indian people.

LORD BELHAVEN AND STENTON: My Lords, I have, I am afraid, but a slight contribution to make to the very eloquent and powerful speeches made by eminent statesmen, ex-Viceroys, Governors and others, in the course of this debate. This is a case of high politics which should perhaps be discussed and settled by the elder statesmen and experienced Governors of our Empire, but it may be that you would like to hear a few words from one who bore the burden and heat of the day in the land with which you are now dealing, for the greater part of a lifetime. I went out to India at the age of nineteen and returned at the age of forty-nine. I spent the first eight years of my service soldiering on the Frontier and taking part in those little scraps and skirmishes which we called the Relief of Chitral, the Tirah Expedition and others, so perhaps I have a fair knowledge of the problems of Indian frontier defence.

I was rather struck by a remark made by the noble Lord, Lord Strabolgi, about the pan-Islamic movement that exists and has existed for many years past between Cairo and Delhi and is now very noticeable. Well, I can see my old friends the wily Pathans, whom I fought against, gathering in their clans on their barren mountains and looking down on the plains of India, looking forward to the day when they would descend, as they had so often done in the past, to plunder the land. These men, in their many thousands, are well armed with perhaps the most modern rifles. They have any amount of ammunition manufactured in the arsenals of Kabul and Dum-dum, and they are only waiting for a sign of weakness in the British Raj to make an attempt. Well, I am afraid that the result of this democratisation of the Central Government of India will be taken by them as a sign of weakness and that they will begin to think that the British Raj is fading out. The noble Lord, Lord Strabolgi, talked about a rough-and-tumble force with Indian officers and of Ranjit Singh's army keeping down frontier troubles as if it was an easy thing to do. I can assure him that it is not easy. The very best troops have to be employed against these trans-frontiersmen. I do not think a rough-and-tumble Indianised Army would succeed. The noble Lord suggested, I think, that they would not be fit to fight against the French. Well, Indians were fit to fight against the Turks in the last War because I was in Mesopotamia and saw them.

I ask your Lordships not to be in a hurry. We have taken a good many years about it so far. The Report has only

just come out and we are not allowed to digest it, but are swept away by a Resolution promising to accept a Bill founded upon that Report. Although it may seem daring and almost impertinent on my part, I would advise following the lead of our great counsellor the Marquess of Salisbury, in whom we all have implicit confidence. I do not suggest that the Report should be condemned in any way. What I say is let us have more time to consider it, let us have the proposals in the form of a Bill so that we can see exactly what are its provisions, instead of resolving now to accept the Bill when it comes, thus depriving ourselves of the opportunity of criticism when the clauses are put forward for our consideration.

I would rather like to bore your Lordships with one of my experiences when I was in the Political Department to which I had the honour to belong for twenty-two years. I was sent to put down an insurrection which had broken out on the borders of Rajputana and Bombay. It was in a time of profound peace just before the War. The people of that country rose—how they got arms I do not know—and stood against all authority, against the Rajahs, the Maharajahs and the British Government. They burnt down the police station and murdered the policemen. I was told to go and settle it as political officer, and I asked for a certain number of troops to be sent from the Bombay side as well as the other side. I gave these poor benighted people —there were about 10,000 of them on a high hill—a promise of absolute pardon and redress of their grievances if they would come down. But they were determined to fight. I cannot tell you how many were killed, but there were a great many. I ordered the corpses to be burnt on the hill. At that time we had to employ regular troops. Volunteers from the native States were pretty numerous, but they were badly drilled and wretchedly armed with Snyders and Martinis, effective at only 50 or 100 yards, while the insurgents were armed with far greater efficiency.

One question I should like to ask is how the Native Princes in India are to maintain order within their States in the future. Are they to be allowed to have military advisers, to employ European officers, to have artillery and aeroplanes? I find that one of the conditions for coming into the Federation is that they will have to surrender to the Federal Government among other things explosives, arms and ammunition, air navigation and aircraft, including the regulation of aerodromes. If the greater ruling Princes, or even half of them, agree to come into the Federation with the condition of surrendering the things in the list numbered 1 to 48 I shall be very greatly surprised. If the Federation is not to take place—and apparently negotiations with the Princes are still going on and incomplete—what is the use of proceeding to put this Constitution into the form of an Act of Parliament? We cannot go forward with an Act of Parliament when we do not know whether there is to be Federation or not. I venture to say that there never will be Federation because the Princes of the Native States will never agree to give up their powers to the intelligentsia or, as they call them in India, the Babus.

Your Lordships have heard both inside and outside this House very full arguments, and I do not propose to enter into further discussion of them. The Reports of this Committee are no doubt a fine achievement although they are somewhat wordy and, to me, at least, unconvincing. That may be of no account. I have had a great deal myself to do with reading and also with writing official reports and I might tell your Lordships in conclusion a rather amusing incident. I came back from India in 1910, and I was sent for by the Secretary of State, the late Lord Morley, who asked me several questions, one of which was: "Do you approve of the Decentralisation Commission's Report." I said "Yes, I think it is very good." He said: "Have you read it," and I said "Yes." He said: "That is more than I have, but I believe that there is nothing in it that would ruffle the susceptibilities of the most rigid Anglo-Indian official." That is hardly applicable here. The decentralisation proposals were no doubt excellent, but we have not had time to read these voluminous Reports, which contain a hundred and one proposals. The least rigid of Anglo-Indian officials like myself, now relieved of any responsibility in that direction, would ask for further time for consideration before agreeing to give a vote or an opinion on this topic without

seeing the proposals put into an Act of Parliament, if they can be so put, which I very much doubt.

LORD LAMINGTON: My Lords, last evening we had a very fervid speech from the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, whose absence from the remainder of the debate owing to ill-health we much regret, and in that speech he laid great stress on the fact that there was no concrete proposal in the Motion now before the House which has been moved on behalf of the Government. That is quite true, and I do not quite know what the object of the Government was in bringing forward this Motion, but I assume that it was to ascertain the opinion of your Lordships on this momentous question. It appears very clear in the Motion that your Lordships are only asked to accept the Report of the Joint Select Committee as a basis for the revision of the Indian Constitution. I imagine that noble Lords will be left quite free to exercise their discretion as to the details of the Bill when the Bill comes forward. There are many matters, such, for instance as the question of franchise or the creation of Sind as a new Province, upon which one must reserve one's opinion until one sees exactly what are the Government's proposals in respect of them.

There was a proposal made in a Memorandum circulated by the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, in regard to an Advisory Council at the Centre. At first I was very much attracted by the idea, but I think that these Councils have now been thoroughly condemned both by the noble Marquess, Lord Halifax, last evening, and by the noble Marquess, Lord Zetland, to-night. An official who has recently been in a Native State in India told me that the States disliked the idea very much indeed. They thought it derogatory to their *status*, and said that they would have no confidence in such a body and that in fact it might lead to their not coming into the Federation at all. Therefore I hope that the proposal will be abandoned altogether. You must have full responsibility of the Governor-General in the discharge of his duties, and any such Council would have the opposite effect of rather weakening and diminishing his responsibility and therefore his predominance as the great authority under the Constitution.

There is one point which I was very glad to see stressed in the Report of the Joint Select Committee. It is dealt with in paragraph 101, which points out the great necessity for the Governor of a Province to have somebody whom he can consult. He may have a Council, or a Cabinet as I think it is termed, of all Indians, and it would be impossible for anybody going out from these shores to undertake the Governorship of a Province without having somebody to whom he could turn for advice who had knowledge and experience of India.

Last evening Mr. Winston Churchill said in another place that these proposals are an abdication of our duties to the masses in India, and a charge constantly made outside Parliament against these proposals is that they are a betrayal of the trust reposed in us by the Indian people. There are also prophecies that corruption will be rife and that there will be inefficiency in administration. I have no doubt that corruption and inefficiency will set in to a certain degree, but those are the habits and customs of the people. I was once Governor of Bombay and I had appointed a very eminent Indian judge—it was a great promotion for him—to go up to Sind. He came to the secretary and said that he could not accept it. He begged to decline it because if he went there he would be going amongst his own people, and we British did not know what that meant—what intrigue went on, and how it would be impossible for him to administer justice where he had his family and relations round about him. He said it would be quite impracticable for him to go there, and of course he did not go. That shows how ingrained is the habit of what you may call corruption. We in our country cannot conceive of any such thing, but there it is not thought a disgrace. It is taken as a matter of course that if you are in a position of authority you benefit those in whom you are particularly interested. However, I am told that a new spirit is springing up, and people want to do their duty quite irrespective of what is expected of them by their own relations.

Then in regard to inefficiency, I have no doubt that there would be greater inefficiency. I am not certain that too much stress has not been laid on efficiency in the past, but there is one test of it that seems to me to be absolutely

unanswerable. Many of the Native States, certainly in the Bombay Presidency, are interlaced with British India, and from time to time one tried to find out whether the people in British India or in the Native States were the more contented. No doubt individuals for reasons of their own had preferences, but you could not say that there was any desire on the part of the inhabitants, either in British India or in the States, to change their domicile in order to get under the other set of conditions. That shows that there is no betrayal of trust on the ground that the administration may suffer in efficiency. As regards other habits and practices which prevail in India, there is a new spirit in regard to them—for instance, on the question of the franchise of women—but at the same time, if you want to get an insight into the conditions in India, I should advise you to read a book called "India Calling," written by a noble-hearted woman, Miss Cornelia Sorabji, which throws great light upon conditions there and shows how different are ideas in India from our own. You naturally cannot expect the habits and practices of a thousand years to be changed in a generation or two.

I was myself rather surprised and disappointed to find that the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee have not disarmed opposition to the Government's proposals. Some months ago my noble friend, Lord FitzAlan of Derwent, and I met on a public platform where these matters were being discussed. He said then that he thought the two rival sets of view were approximating to each other, and that there was more likely to be agreement, and I agreed with him. The recommendations of the Joint Select Committee are so valuable, and so reinforce the proposals of the White Paper to which objection was taken by the critics, that one would have thought they would have modified their opposition, but apparently not.

I feel that there really is no great difference between us. It is only a question of quickness and of haste, and plenty of reasons have been given to show that there is no need for undue haste at the present moment, because even if the Indian States come in it must take time. Lord Salisbury referred to the fact that representative government is being abandoned generally. I recognise that fact, but in my view one of the great advantages to India will be the fact that representative government, as held in this country, will no longer exercise control over Indian affairs, that India in the future, if these proposals go through, will be an entity of its own and Party government in this country will not affect it. At the present moment you might have a Government elected in this country on a question of housing, or whatever it may me, and yet that Government would have the power to deal, perhaps very disastrously, with India.

India in the future will be free from that risk, and that will be a great step in advance. We have now a National Government, and it is a proper Government to undertake any revision of this character. To my mind there are two pre-eminent factors in the situation. One is the diversity of races and creeds in India, which makes it impossible to have a united Government there, except under some alien rule. India is not a country, it is a sub-continent, and a congeries of countries, and you cannot imagine any united Government except under the sway of someone who is not an Indian. The other factor is the excellence of the British Administration which has hitherto prevailed in India. 135,000 white men, women and children form the nucleus of our administration in India at the present time, and our administration there is over 300,000,000 of people. It is inconceivable that unless our rule had been just, and unless it had been over this diversity of peoples, it could have continued for so long and so successfully. These two factors will remain, and I believe will prove to be the foundation of a powerful and greater India.

THE EARL OF LUCAN: My Lords, on behalf of the Lord Chancellor I beg to move that this debate be now adjourned.

Moved accordingly, and, on question, Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at twenty six minutes before eight o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 17th December, 1934.

The House met at a quarter past four of the clock, The LORD CHANCELLOR on the Woolsack.

NATIONAL GALLERY (OVERSEAS LOANS) BILL. [H.L.]

THE EARL OF MUNSTER: My Lords, I beg leave to introduce a Bill to authorise the lending overseas of pictures representative of British art comprised in the collection of the National Gallery, and to move that it be read a first time.

Moved, That the Bill be now read 1ª.—(*Earl of Munster.*)

On Question, Bill read 1ª, and to be printed.

REGIMENTAL CHARITABLE FUNDS BILL. [H.L.]

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (LORD STRATHCONA AND MOUNT ROYAL): My Lords, I beg leave to introduce a Bill to make provision as to the disposition of certain regimental charitable funds, and to move that it be read a first time.

Moved, That the Bill be now read 1ª.—(*Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.*)

On Question, Bill read 1ª, and to be printed.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

Petition presented with reference to the proposed Secession of the Government, Parliament and people of Western Australia from the Commonwealth of Australia.

THE MARQUESS OF ABERDEEN AND TEMAIR: My Lords, in presenting this Petition on behalf of the Government, the Parliament, and the people of the State of Western Australia, I only wish to say this, that the right of petitioning the Crown and Parliament for the redress of grievances is acknowledged as a fundamental principle of the Constitution, and it is in order to afford the State of Western Australia facilities for availing themselves of this right that I am presenting this Petition to your Lordships' House.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (VISCOUNT HAILSHAM): My Lords, the statement which has been made by my noble friend Lord Aberdeen in referring to this Petition seems to me to raise matters of grave constitutional importance having regard to the relationship between the Dominions and this country which is at present in force. I do not think that the position in relation to these questions is free from doubt, and I do not think it is one that we can hastily determine. In these circumstances, before the Petition is actually received, I should be grateful if your Lordships would give me a little opportunity of considering the issues involved and, perhaps, of tendering advice to your Lordships, preferably when we reassemble at the end of next month. If your Lordships would do that, I hope by that time to be in a position to offer your Lordships some advice as to what seems to be the most convenient course of dealing with the questions involved.

NOBLE LORDS: Hear, hear.

Petition ordered to lie on the Table.

WORKINGTON GAS ORDER, 1934.

BISHOP'S STORTFORD GAS ORDER, 1934.

BERKHAMPSTEAD GAS ORDER, 1934.

EASTBOURNE GAS ORDER, 1934.

DURSLEY GAS ORDER, 1934.

LORD TEMPLEMORE: My Lords, I beg to move the Motion as to Special Orders standing in my name.

Moved, That the Special Orders, as reported from the Special Orders Committee on Thursday last, be approved—(*Lord Templemore.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

REGISTRATION AND REGULATION OF OSTEOPATHS BILL. [H.L.]

VISCOUNT ELIBANK rose to move, That the Select Committee have leave to hear Counsel for and against the Bill; and to examine witnesses on oath. The noble Viscount said: My Lords, I hope that this Motion which I am about to move will be of a purely formal character. Last week there was a debate on the

Second Reading of the Bill and it was duly carried. Your Lordships agreed that a Select Committee should be set up to consider it, and at the same time permission was given to call witnesses. At the time I intended to ask your Lordships whether you would agree also that that Committee should hear Counsel for and against the Bill and be empowered to examine witnesses on oath. If your Lordships would agree to that, I feel quite sure that not only will it facilitate the proceedings of that Committee but it will be of great help and advantage in elucidating the proper solution or result from the proceedings. I beg to move.

Moved, That the Select Committee have leave to hear Counsel for and against the Bill, and to examine witnesses on oath.—(*Viscount Elibank.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to, and ordered accordingly.

INDIAN CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM.

Debate resumed (according to Order) on the Motion of Viscount Halifax to resolve, That this House accepts the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform as the basis for the revision of the Indian Constitution and considers it expedient that a Bill should be introduced on the general lines of the Report, and on the Amendment moved by the Marquess of Salisbury to the foregoing Motion, namely, to leave out all the words after "That" and insert "this House is unwilling to pronounce in advance an acceptance of far-reaching recommendations on Indian Constitutional Reform until it has had the opportunity of considering and approving the particular recommendations of the Joint Select Committee to be adopted by the Government and proposed in the concrete form of the provisions of a Bill."

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (VISCOUNT SANKEY): My Lords, the present moment is not the time for a detailed survey of the Joint Select Committee's Report. During the course of this debate, which has been a very helpful one for those who will be taking part in the discussions on the Bill when it is before your Lordships' House, many points have been raised. Some of them undoubtedly are of vital importance; others again, although important, may be more conveniently dealt with on the Committee stage of future proceedings. Yet again there are others concerned with the machinery for carrying out the recommendations of the Committee which perhaps may better and more conveniently be left to be drafted by constitutional experts. Nor would it be fitting on this occasion to tread the well-worn and familiar path and describe the course and progress of the advance towards the plan for conferring greater responsibility upon Indian Legislatures, which began as far back as 1858, and has made slow but sure progress ever since. Let me rather deal with several of the questions which excite the greatest controversy—namely, first, that which concerns responsibility at the Centre; second, that which causes acute anxiety, namely, the transfer of law and order; and third, as to how the Report of the Committee differs from and strengthens the safeguards recommended in the White Paper.

Before discussing these several matters it may be useful to refer to the unanimity which the present debate has disclosed as existing among members of your Lordships' House. No one has suggested, indeed nobody either in or out of the House has suggested, that we can stand still and do nothing. We are all agreed that we must go forward. We are all agreed that a large measure of provincial autonomy is desirable. We are all agreed that whatever measure is passed ample powers should be taken in the Bill to prevent a dangerous situation arising. We are all agreed that the Governor-General must retain control of the Army and foreign affairs.

Let me then first address myself to the question of responsibility at the Centre. Here again there seems to be some measure of agreement. As far as it is possible to gauge opinion it is agreed by nearly everybody in Great Britain, both inside and outside this House, that the ultimate goal to be striven for is an All-India Federation. The Statutory Committee clearly were of that opinion. In a statement recently issued representing the Minority recommendations of certain members of the Committee, it is expressly stated on page 20 that the federal objective need by no means be abandoned. The difference then between those who agree with the Committee and

those who do not is chiefly that the former are willing to decide on and grant some measure of responsibility at once, or as soon as may be, and those who disagree are anxious to try out provincial autonomy first and to leave over the question of responsibility at the Centre to some distant and uncertain date.

The advantages or disadvantages of these views will appear most clearly by an examination of two questions. First, what would be the probable effect of a grant of provincial autonomy only? Second, what is the value of responsibility at the Centre? First, it appears to everybody, as I have already ventured to suggest, that the establishment of a large measure of provincial autonomy is desirable. It does not mark any new departure, but the next stage in the path which India has long been treading and in the opinion of many has long been promised. It is the natural development of the policy which we have steadily pursued for over seventy years. To that extent it has the advantage of satisfying Indian ambitions. Assume such a policy alone to come into force and see what is likely to happen. You will be creating eleven autonomous Governments in the Provinces whilst leaving the present Centre untouched. This surely cannot be a wise course.

The great danger in the present world situation is the tendency of States or communities to shut themselves up in watertight compartments, or, adopting another metaphor, to build walls round their territories which make trade, human intercourse, and all the advantages derived therefrom more difficult and more complicated to carry on. One would have thought that our present political philosophy was in favour rather of breaking down all such obstructions and impediments between nations. What would be the effect in the next generation of erecting these eleven autonomous Governments? Would they not tend in the absence of some strong controlling Centre to diverge further and further apart instead of getting together and establishing that unity or inter-communication which, at any rate as between the component parts of an Empire, is a consummation devoutly to be wished. It is not for me here and now to comment upon the wisdom of any declaration that the Provinces are autonomous communities within the British Empire, but there are some who think that it may cause great difficulty to the Empire in the future. What, think you, would be the effect of eleven autonomous provinces going their own way on questions of law, trade and commercial discrimination? The danger of such a policy would seem to be that before long instead of having what we all desire, a united India, we would have eleven disunited Provinces, each of them jealous and watchful of the others and between whom there is likely to be friction giving perpetual trouble to the home authorities. This view, my Lords, is no idle speculation but one derived from our experience of the past.

There has been for years a long and steady process of administrative devolution from the Government of India to the Provincial Governments which has profoundly affected the whole structure of Indian administration. This has produced, as the Report itself points out, three important results. First, it has tended to remove provincial administration from the immediate purview of His Majesty's Government and by thus weakening the direct accountability of Indian administrators to Parliament, it has rendered inevitable the introduction in some degree of local responsible government. Secondly, it has tended to make the Provinces the centres of the development of Social Services, and thirdly it has tended to transfer to the Provincial Executives the prime responsibility for the preservation of law and order. If these have been results over a period of years when the Provinces have not had anything like the authority which all Parties are now prepared to give them, what is to be expected when enhanced powers are given to them? These tendencies will grow more rapidly both in point of time and in point of substance.

Consider for a moment another side of the question—that is to say, the effect that the pull of eleven autonomous Provinces will exercise upon a Centre constituted as the present one is. Here again, it is not necessary to indulge in idle speculations, for again the experience of history comes to our aid. What has been the result of the composition and powers of the present Centre. Many of its members are quite irresponsible. They are not restrained by the knowledge that they themselves

may be required to provide an alternative Government. Their opinions have been uninformed by the experience of power and they have shown themselves prone to regard support of the Government policy as a betrayal of a national cause.

My Lords, it is a commonplace in the history of our own country during the last fifty years, that nothing steadies a wild politician so much as experience of office. Nothing educates a critic so much as the duty, when he is called upon to perform it, of constructing a policy. Yet it is clear from the history of the last twelve years that the Assembly has in fact from time to time influenced the policy of the Government. It is to be feared that the pressure exercised by eleven autonomous Provinces having more power than ever before will still further weaken the already weakened Centre till it become almost impotent. A strong Centre is surely necessary for the existence of a number of autonomous units. To fail to provide it is like building an arch without the keystone. Once it is proposed to create eleven autonomous Provinces, two choices remain open to you. There will be the choice of seeing them in a few years independent units, or, in order to prevent this, the choice of some central authority which on vital issues will enable these autonomous Provinces to speak with one voice and to the same effect. As it seems to many of us, no more disastrous policy could be pursued than that of conferring provincial autonomy only with the Centre as it now exists. We have yet to hear what is proposed to be substituted for the present Centre.

Let me now turn to responsibility at the Centre. I assume for the purpose of the discussion of this point the creation of the autonomous units in eleven Provinces. Everyone is already agreed that on certain matters there must be some central control. Those matters are defence and foreign relations, which are to be reserved to the Governor-General. They at once bring in another consideration and that is the States which are ruled over by the various Indian Princes. Provinces and Princes are alike interested in these two matters. What other matters are there in which Princes and Provinces are also interested Look for a moment at the map of India. Neither the Provinces nor the States are tracts of country in a ring fence. The Princes do not own all the land south of a certain latitude any more than the Provinces own the land west of a certain longitude. The Provinces and the States are bound up together. To use quite a trivial metaphor, they are not unlike a jig-saw puzzle. But there are obviously many questions upon which, although they may have different opinions, they have the same interest and an interest which is best attained by mutual agreement after mutual discussion.

Further than that, it is obvious that there are great tracts of country in India composed of both States and Provinces. The needs and interests of Southern India as a whole may be very different from the needs and interests of Northern or North-West India and yet there may be certain considerations of an overriding character where their needs and interests are the same. There are some people who fold their hands and say that India is so divided both by religious beliefs and different civilisations that it is quite impossible to unify it. It is urged that the fashions which divide Hindus from Moslems are deep, tragic and irreconcilable, and therefore the only refuge, a counsel of despair, is to do nothing. In answer to that, the first question is: Is unity desirable? If it is, I refuse to think that a project for unification is impossible for Great Britain to pursue and accomplish after centuries of political education, experience and compromise. The different orientation of politics leading to a rivalry, not between Hindus and Moslems, but between different parts of India as a whole, will be the first step towards determination of an age-long religious strife.

What is the greatest need of India as a whole? If one had to sum it up in one word, one would feel disposed to say "stability," and in stability is to be included a number of subjects. The stability which enables India as a whole to exist without fear of hostile, foreign invasion. The stability which enables the Indian all over India to pursue his professional business in peace and quiet and to conduct freely his trade not only with his immediate neighbours but with those further afield. The stability which comes from order, peace and settled government, the rule of law and material

prosperity. The stability which comes from similar laws and economic freedom. Above all, the stability which comes from free intercourse instead of from carping at one another from behind walls of any description.

The greatest factor to ensure such a stability is to be found in unity—a united India, or rather an India united for many purposes of mututal interest, an India well administered. Over and above that, if it is clear that on the creation of eleven autonomous Provinces it is necessary to have a strong Centre, any course which leads to its stability and adds to its strength is one to be examined, welcomed, and, if possible, adopted. It is therefore obvious that if you do desire stability in India, if you do desire mutual laws and economic freedom, if do you do desire to confer added strength, stability and prosperity on India as a whole, it is more likely to be achieved by an All-India Federation, imperfect and restricted though it may be, than merely by a British India Federation. Consider the advantages of an economic policy vitally affecting the interests of the whole which can be discussed and agreed to by an All-India Federation. At the present moment tariff policies in which every part of India is interested are laid down by the Government of India and a British India Legislature in which no Indian State has a voice, although the States constitute only slightly less than half the area and one-quarter of the population of India. Above that, a common company law for India, a common banking law, a common body of legislation on copyright and trade marks, a common system of communications are at present almost impossible, but on all these points a Federation as now contemplated would have power to adopt a common policy. No one who has thought of, and worked on, this problem for some years will under-estimate the difficulties attendant on such a proposal. They are obvious to anyone after the first week of his study of the subject. There are difficulties of distance, there are difficulties of population, there are difficulties of religion, difficulties of tradition, difficulties of modes of government, difficulties too which perhaps are the hardest to overcome. difficulties of sentiment, because against these hardly any argument prevails. Once, however, we are all agreed upon the advantages of our goal, that of a united India, the fact that there are difficulties on the road, a Slough of Despond or a Doubting Castle, ought not to deter us from an endeavour to realise our ambition. Again let it be said that they are not difficulties British brains and British courage, after centuries of political experience and practical common sense, will not be able to solve. The attempt is worth the while. Disastrous as it would be to do nothing, it would be even more disastrous to set up provincial autonomy without a strong and suitable Centre. Let me also ask you, my Lords, carefully to consider what is likely to happen in India if after all these years, all these Conferences, all this weariness, all this expectation, nothing in the way of a responsible Centre is set up. It is almost possible to see some Providence in the timely declaration of the Princes in favour of an All-India Federation.

Let me now turn, if only for a few moments, to the second question, that of the transference of law and order. No one can approach this subject without anxiety. But consider what is involved in granting provincial autonomy. To preserve order and uphold the law is the primary duty of every Government, and indeed a condition of its existence. To create a representative Government in the Provinces and to free it at the same moment from all responsibility for law and order is a contradiction in terms. In an attempt to grant the substance it would be in fact only giving the shadow. Do you imagine that those upon whom you proposed to confer such an illusory form of government would not see through the real meaning of what you intend to give them? Representative institutions in our country go back for centuries, but representative institutions without responsibility have long been an anachronism. What do you imagine would be the result in India of such a policy? Year after year you will have fierce agitation for a grant of the powers which you have nominally bestowed, but which in reality you have refused to hand over. Besides, let the point again be stressed that it is responsibility which makes a man.

Grant them the right to exercise authority and to maintain order, the lessons of history teach you that you will achieve the desired result. Should you

not do so, the very people who ought to maintain law and order will be those who will be most troublesome and most difficult to deal with. It will be part of their policy to make your own maintenance of law and order as difficult and as interrupted as possible. Do not, however, imagine for a moment that if the Provinces get this concession, all will be well from the moment they obtain it. It will not be. They may burn their fingers, but the burnt child dreads the fire. Experience is the school of mankind, and they will learn at no other.

Doubtless there are difficulties which may take place with regard to terrorism in Bengal and with regard to the Secret Service, but your Lordships must not forget the difference between the recommendations of the White Paper and the recommendations of the Committee. Additional precautions have been taken by the Committee with regard to the functions and powers of the Governor in respect of law and order. Let me again put them on record: (1) The prior consent of the Governor given in his discretion is to be required to any legislation which would amend or repeal the Acts in force in any Province regulating the Police force, civil or military. (2) The consent of the Governor given in his discretion is to be required to the making or amending of any rules under the Police Acts which in his opinion relate to or affect the organisation or discipline of the Police. (3) The instrument of instructions is to require the Governor to give directions so as to prevent the disclosure of the names of those who have given information as to terrorism. The names will remain secret and undisclosed. (4) To combat terrorism, the Governor is to have a special power over and above his special responsibility to combat the activities of terrorists or, if necessary, to create new machinery for the purpose. (5) The Central Intelligence Bureau under the new Constitution is to be assigned to one of the Governor-General's reserve Departments as part of its normal activities.

Finally—and I think that we are indebted for this, if I may say so, to the assistance of the noble Marquess, Lord Zetland, who from the very first pressed it upon us—the Governor-General's rules of executive business are to be required by the Constitution Act to contain a provision laying upon Ministers the duty of bringing to the notice of the Governor any matter under consideration in their Department which involves, or is likely to involve, any of his special responsibilities and laying upon the Secretaries the duty of bringing to the notice of the Ministers and of the Governor any matters of the same kind. This is a provision of the first importance. Many of your Lordships whom I have the honour of addressing have had experience of office in Governments in this country, from time to time, and will recognise it as axiomatic that the wise and able Minister is not the one who settles a crisis when it has arisen, but the one who takes early precautions to prevent a crisis arising. Not only is this method wise, but it is easier to nip trouble in the bud. So far with regard to law and order.

Let me turn to the third question—how the Report of the Committee differs from and strengthens the safeguards recommended in the White Paper. Some of the changes I have already referred to, but there are others of great importance. Let me instance two only. First of all, the recommendation that the election to both Chambers of the Federal Legislature should be indirect, and not as proposed in the White Paper in the case of the Lower Chamber, direct. Personally I regret that it has not been found possible to comply with Indian wishes and sentiment upon this matter, but the arguments against direct election seem overwhelming. They were felt by and recorded in the Second Report of the Federal Structure Committee as far back as January, 1931.

It is unnecessary to enlarge upon them. Popular representation according to the accepted canons of Parliamentary government can hardly be found in a system which provides for the election of members by an average number of 5,000 electors scattered over an average area of some 4,000 square miles, and this difficulty cannot be removed by an increase in the average number of the electors by the lowering of the franchise. An increase in the number of the voters in such vast constituencies would merely increase the difficulties of establishing contact between a candidate and the voter. It is to be hoped that when the time has arrived for Elections in India it will be seen that however ideal direct

election may be, the wise course is to adopt the system of indirect election. It is better to accept the practically possible rather than to refuse it for the sake of striving for the ideally perfect.

Another point upon which the Committee differ from the White Paper is with regard to the accession of the States. It has already been dealt with, and therefore I content myself with merely referring to paragraphs 156 and 157 of the Report, and to emphasise the point that it is by a Resolution of both Houses of Parliament that Federation is to be brought into being.

Time forbids my going further into matters, but let me finally point out that the Constitution is a rigid Constitution, which those who work it will not be able to alter at their will. Certain matters in the Constitution Act are to be capable of alteration by Order-in-Council, and certain other matters to be prescribed in detail by Order-in-Council, but no Order-in-Council for either purpose is to be made unless it has been approved in draft, with or without modification, by both Houses of Parliament. No constituent power is placed in the hands of the Indian Legislatures enabling them to alter in any respect the provisional Constitution, but a procedure is to be provided by the Constitution Act whereby any Resolution passed by a Legislature in India recommending such an alteration should be secured consideration by His Majesty's Government.

To sum up some of the main differences between the White Paper and the recommendations of the Committee they are:— (1) tightening up of the regulations securing law and order; (2) the duty of Ministers to warn the Governor of the likelihood of his having to use his special responsibility; (3) indirect election instead of direct election for both Chambers of the Federal Legislature; (4) provisions as to the accession of States; (5) provisions as to the method of making alterations in the Constitution Act.

But, my Lords, to conclude, those who are opposed to the Government's policy quite rightly make repeated references to the risks which are being run. They are perfectly entitled to do so; but I venture to suggest to them that when they are deliberating upon these risks two points should never be absent from their minds. First of all, it is with Empires as with individuals you have to take risks. It is a law inflexible and inexorable that he who will not risk cannot win. Look back on our history. Remember the risks we have run, both in peace and war. Where should we have been if we had not taken them? Success generally attends those who act and it does not attend those who are timid and balance everything. Secondly, you must not fix your eyes upon the risks arising from the recommendations of the Committee alone. It is not a question of risk, but it is a question of choice of risks.

Which is the greater risk? Is it the greater risk to carry out the recommendations of the Committee or to neglect and refuse to carry them out? Are you to pay no attention to Indian hopes, Indian desires, and Indian ambitions? Are you to pay no attention to what they, at any rate, think are promises and pledges? Which do you desire? Do you desire an India companioned by content, or an India disgruntled, disappointed and sullen, an India who will not co-operate with you in your commerce or your administration of the country, an India who will boycott your trade and endeavour to throw every obstacle in the path of government? To these questions there can be but one answer. How are you to obtain the desired result?

A nation may be governed by force or with the consent and co-operation of the governed. Utterly without consent one can be at no man's commandment living. Empires may be won but cannot be kept by the sword. For a time force may prevail, but during that time your military expenditure will increase, your civil revenue will go down, and the end of such an era is inevitable. And beside it is not by such a method and such tradition that we have maintained and shall continue to maintain our rule.

My Lords, let us put, if only for a moment, the extremes side by side. On the one hand you have those who desire to confer provincial autonomy only. On the other hand you have those who wish to go far beyond anything recommended either in the White Paper or in the Report of the Committee, and to confer upon India extensive powers amounting almost to independence. Between these two extremes I ask your Lordships to declare for and steer a middle course—a course which is the one recommended by the Report of the Committee, a course

which will prevent us from any reproach that we have not carried out our promises, a course which I for one, at any rate, believe will bring not only peace and prosperity to India, but which will strengthen and perpetuate the bond by which our Empire is held together.

THE MARQUESS OF CREWE: My Lords, I have felt some hesitation in taking any part in this debate, because my direct concern with Indian affairs dates from almost twenty years back, and so much has happened in the course of those twenty years and your Lordships have to deal with existing conditions, that I feel I can contribute little of value to the debate. At the same time, having spent six years at the India Office, and having there and in the course of visits to India known personally all the leading figures of that time, both among the Indian Princes and among Indian politicians, I do not like to remain altogether silent. But I cannot pretend to examine the details that have been considered, some of which have been so powerfully dealt with by the noble and learned Viscount on the Woolsack, but I will set out a few considerations which induce me to give general support to the Report which has been the issue of these many inquiries and Conferences in which, unfortunately I have been unable to take part.

I think it may be worth while to glance at the manner in which in the nineteenth century this country had to meet the problem which confronted it after many years of peaceful penetration of trade, and after victories gained over European rivals and over various dominations in India. That problem might have been met by saying: "There are two ancient civilisations, Eastern and Western, to be treated on a footing of equality, and each with much to learn from the other." For instance, our Western conception of the Christian religion, which might tend to throw excessive emphasis on the merits of that faith merely as an ethical system, might be elevated and strengthened with closer contact with the more contemplative and spiritually-minded Indian. And in the sphere of government—Indian government being in question—we might have looked back through Indian history to the days of Akbar and considered the methods of different rulers, Moslem, Mahratta, Sikh and other Indians, and the Ministers who advised them—those of them who were the most broad-minded and the most humane. We might also have said: "Let us limit so far as we can our annexation of Native States to cases of absolute misgovernment, or where no inheritance could be found, and even there as little as possible if means could be found to continue Indian government. If this system had been carried out by sympathetic administrators of the stamp of Sir Thomas Munro, and Mount Stuart Elphinstone, or men of high imagination like Sir Alfred Lyall, it is very possible that by now there might have been a federated India, prosperous and content, which would have prevented your Lordships from having to consider these problems to-day.

But events did not so work out. The nineteenth century witnessed a great deal of bloodshed and fighting in India, some of it inevitable, some if it inexcusable. It also witnessed a number of annexations from Native States, not all of them by any means obligatory. It saw too the creation of the Indian Civil Service—that body which, for its courage, its devotion to duty, its humanity and its self-sacrifice, has made all Englishmen proud. And it is mainly due to that Civil Service and also, of course, to some of the great men who have filled the position of Viceroy, that we are able to say, without maintaining that our Government of India has been perfect, that at any rate we need not make the abject apologies which some people seem to think to be necessary for our continuing to remain there. But it is also true—and this, of course, came into being especially after the Mutiny—that there was no attempt to treat India on anything like a footing of equality. We did claim and take a position of racial superiority. That showed itself in a great number of ways. The retention of the use of the English language as a medium of education was probably inevitable. So probably was the introduction of English justices. But in introducing English justice it was not necessary to throw roughly aside, as was done, the practice of Indian justice, and to apply our methods to oriental conditions utterly unsuitable to them.

Then again, in the mere matter of dress. I do not know whether any of your Lordships ever saw or heard of a work over which people smiled fifty years ago, the account of an Indian Judge

written by his nephew. Bengal now writes as good English as Bloomsbury, but in those days a good deal of Indian English was marked by extravagant phraseology and by the amazing interpolation of foreign language. In this case the Judge who had discarded the Indian dress in favour of coat and trousers, was described by his admiring biographer in the phrase: "With him it was *esto perpetuo*, *esto perpetuo* in the pantaloons." Well, that article of clothing has very much gone out of fashion among the younger generation in England, but in those days it undoubtedly was the opinion of Indians most friendly to the British connection that the adoption of English dress was a passport to the favour of the Government.

These, of course, are trivial matters but what we did was to impress upon the educated Indian mind that our English Parliamentary system was the only one which a self-respecting people could hope to regard as the proper system for themselves. I do not know whether some of your Lordships may remember a book written in the last century by the philosophical statesman Sir George Cornewall Lewis, entitled "On the Government of Dependencies." In the course of that occur these sentences:

> "The Constitution of the local Government ought not to be conceived in a form, or its provisions expressed in terms, by which the inhabitants of the Dependency might be naturally led to suppose their country a virtually independent State. The English Government in framing the political institutions of its Dependencies has not been sufficiently careful to give such a form as might suggest the idea of their subordinate character. So far indeed has it been from observing this caution that it has formed them after the model of the Supreme Government and has acquiesced in the use of forms and language by the Legislature of the Dependency which seem to imply that its Government was co-ordinate with and not subordinate to the Government of the dominant country."

Of course, Sir George Cornewall Lewis was not thinking of India but was thinking of the North American and West Indian Colonies, some of which, as we know, have quite literally carried out the prophecy that he made; but the principle is everywhere the same, and I cite it on the ground that having persuaded thoughful and political-minded men that an imitation or reproduction of the British Parliament is the only form of government which free and self-respecting people can hope for, you cannot now turn round, as some people would like to turn round, and say: "Well, Parliamentary government does not carry the prestige which it did. In some parts of the world we see great countries have set it aside in favour of entirely different systems. Therefore do not proceed to go further in forming a Parliamentary system in India, but wait and see what turns up, and in the meantime be content to leave things as they are." That, I venture to say, is an altogether impossible line to take.

I should now like to say one word about provincial government. Ever since I thought about Indian matters at all it always seemed to me that the line of advance was through giving further responsible powers to the Presidencies and Provinces. That, of course, was no novelty, because many years ago Mr. John Bright took up the same line very strongly; but, of course, the objection always was that which the Lord Chancellor has just developed—namely, that you ran the risk of destroying the unity of India altogether if you made the Provinces too independent and too powerful. I confess I was impressed on the occasion of the last sitting by a remark which fell from the noble Lord, Lord Strabolgi, on the question of starting from the foundation instead of trying to work downwards. I remember having a long conversation on that subject with Mr. Gokhale who, I suppose, most of us will agree is the ablest Indian politician we have known, and he strongly took the view that to start by giving more influence and more work to local authorities was the proper line of advance. I wish that had been done, but at that time his supporters—I think most of them—had become much more fascinated by the idea of obtaining more power and more activity in legislative bodies than in anything which could be done by local bodies. I entirely agree with the view which has been further developed by the Lord Chancellor, that having instituted provincial autonomy it would be almost approaching a farce not to give the power of preserving order to the Government. Of that I have not the faintest doubt.

I hope it may be assumed that when the House divides to-morrow there will be a large majority in favour of considering the recommendations of the

Report in the form of a Parliamentary measure. Noble Lords on the Front Opposition Bench are not prepared to support it on one or two grounds, very moderately and clearly set out by those who have spoken on their behalf. Their first complaint was that the Report did not, in terms, do anything to assist, I presume, towards obtaining more political power for the Indian cultivators and industrial workers. I take it that the reply to that complaint must be that this is a measure of political reform not one of social amelioration, and that it will be for the Indians themselves in the future, having obtained this large measure of political influence, to go forward in the direction in which those noble Lords would possibly approve, but that such provisions could scarcely form part of this measure.

The second reason which leads the Opposition to abstain from voting is that there is no mention in the Report of Dominion *status*. That is one of those cant phrases of politics which has been popular because it is undefined. In one sense, I think, in the estimation of the world and certainly at Geneva, there is no country which holds a higher position than India among all those that owe allegiance to His Majesty. But it is also, of course, the case that the phrase has been taken to mean some system of government very much on the lines of the Government of Canada, and, owing to quite recent practice, involving the complete absence of British troops from the country. Those noble Lords desire a term mentioned, a term of twenty or at the outside of thirty years, at the end of which that form of responsible government should have been achieved. It seems to me that it would be altogether unwise to attempt to mention a date, even an approximate date, for the assumption by India of those powers. I do not think the Government of the day has any more right to do that than it has to indicate what the Income Tax should be at that remote date; and for this reason: that if such a promise were made it would have to be so hedged about by the consideration of possible contingencies that it would lose the greater part of its value. Who can say that the Empire, or some part of it, may not be at war at the time mentioned, and, therefore, I cannot help regretting that noble Lords holding those views have thought it necessary on those grounds to abstain from voting for the Report, much of which they favour.

But I should like to make an appeal to some noble Lords opposite, not to those who, like the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, whose absence from the debate we all deplore, after a careful consideration and study of the question, and large experience, have decided that they are not able to concur in the main provisions of the Report. Those noble Lords must, of course, form and stick to their own conscientious opinion. But I feel that on the benches opposite there must be a great many others who without pretending to a thorough knowledge of Indian matters, or to a complete study of all the Papers which have been produced by the different Committees of Inquiry, yet feel that it would be better to wait, that there is, after all, not very much hurry; and, therefore, that it would be wiser to go slow. I beg to say in reply that I think that is not a wise attitude to adopt, and for this reason.

I am sure that every vote which is given to-morrow in opposition to the Motion of the noble Viscount, Lord Halifax, will be taken in India as representing the desire to postpone indefinitely further advance. This question has to be considered as a whole, and, as previous speakers have pointed out, you cannot introduce a Bill including some of the principal provisions of the Report if you strike out some of the others which are really complementary to them. Therefore, as I say, every vote which is given against Lord Halifax's Resolution will be regarded, not as a plea for delay, but as a refusal to proceed. It is not, I think, unfair to say that, because the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, in his initial speech did not confine himself to advancing reasons why consideration might be delayed for a few months, but protested in strong terms against many of the principal provisions which, as we know, will form part of the coming Bill.

I would therefore beg noble Lords who do not consider themselves pledged, by a study of the question, to oppose the Resolution, to consider whether, even if they do not feel able to support it, they cannot agree to stand aside for the moment, because I am quite certain that the figures when they reach India will have an effect on public opinion which I

am bound to say the figures of Divisions in this House do not always carry all over the world. I say this because I have sat for many years in this House, probably longer than most of those who will take a part in the Division to-morrow. I have witnessed two abortive attempts to carry a Home Rule measure for Ireland brought in by two Governments—*quorum pars parva fui.* I remember the creation of the Australian Commonwealth, of which I naturally highly approved although I took no part in its inception. Among all my recollections of this House I think the pleasantest is that it was given to me to be in charge of the measure for creating the Union of South Africa. I am not sure that any of these measures, or any other measures or votes to which we have consented in this House, was of intrinsic importance equal to that which we are considering to-day. If the criterion to be taken is the number of those who owe allegiance to His Majesty whose welfare is affected by this measure, then this measure is the most important with which any of us have ever had to deal. I trust, therefore, that when Parliament passes the measure it will be passed not in a spirit of tardy acquiescence but in a spirit of general and cordial agreement.

LORD AMPTHILL: My Lords, I have had the honour of being an Indian Governor and I therefore feel bound as a member of this House—and indeed one of the oldest members—to declare the opinions which I have formed to the best of my ability and as conscientiously as I am able. I must confess, however, that it is only with great reluctance that I have brought myself to the discharge of that duty as I am no talker and I have reached the age when there is every inclination to leave everything to those younger men who will live to see the fruit of their works. I realize, moreover, that I have long since been placed upon the shelf.

I should, however, like to remind your Lordships that I was an advocate of political reform in India thirty years ago, that is to say before any or your Lordships, except a very few members who still survive, had given the matter a thought. I am still in favour of the progressive development of self-government in India, but only by gradual stages in accordance with the declaration which was made by Parliament in the Government of India Act. I was fortunate enough to be Governor of Madras at a very interesting time which might well be described as the turning point of political evolution in India, and when I returned to England I was one of the very few members of the Conservative and Unionist Party who gave wholehearted support to the Morley-Minto Reforms. That was a long time ago, but in common with all those who have lived and served in India I have been giving constant thought to this Indian question for many years past, and I may say that the course of events in India and the manner in which our policy in regard to the government of India has been drifting has caused me almost daily unhappiness and anxiety.

It is too often forgotten that those who are outside of Parliament and Party politics but are in one way or another concerned with India, have not had to wait for the White Paper or the Report of the Joint Select Committee to form general opinions as to the state of affairs in India and the necessities of the case. They have had before them from day to day evidence just as abundant as that which was brought in more concentrated forms before the Round-Table Conferences and the Joint Select Committee. That evidence was furnished in the first place by the wholly admirable Report of the Statutory Commission which may be regarded as evidence of overwhelming authority. Next there has been the news of all kinds from India published in the daily Press as well as the newspaper reports of proceedings at the several Conferences and Committees. And lastly there has been the evidence furnished by a flood of books and pamphlets written by Englishmen and Indians of eminence and authority as the result of direct and recent experience. Just as an instance I may tell your Lordships that I know for a fact that my old friend and political associate for many years, Sir Henry Page Croft, has read well over 200 books on India and has devoted many hours a day to the study of the Indian question for the past few years. The members of the Joint Select Committee are, therefore, not the only persons who have been devoting months and days and hours to the study of this question.

There are others who have been doing the same thing but in a rather different way.

Can it be said, my Lords, that those who have sat at round tables in conference and have pored over documents which were mainly official are the only persons who can form a right judgment in this matter? There is an old saying that in certain circumstances a man cannot see the wood for the trees, and I think it is applicable to those who have been cribbed, cabined and confined for their study of this question. The interesting confessions of those who have described their conversion to the view of the majority of the Joint Select Committee do not impress me. When a jury of British citizens has been shut up for a good many hours to consider their verdict the time always comes when those who entered the discussion with more or less open minds feel obliged to give way to the members who had made up their minds in the first instance. I should be a much happier man than I have been for some time past if I could give my whole-hearted support to the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee, if I could say to the Government without any misgiving or qualm of conscience that I think they have decided upon the best possible course, and that I believe that constitutional reform on the lines proposed will bring about peace and contentment in India. It is most painful to be obliged to disagree with men whom I respect and admire, with whom I am in political association, and among whom are many personal friends.

It seems almost presumption to disagree with men of such eminence and proved ability and to back your opinion against the opinion of those who have worked so long and so diligently. But a council of experts does not always arrive at decisions which are acceptable to the general public. A British Jury, if I may quote that instance once more, from another point of view, has to give its verdict according to conscience in spite of the persuasive oratory of brilliant advocates and sometimes in contradiction to the summing-up of a learned Judge. This matter has to be decided by Parliament, and the duty of Parliament is to reflect the opinions and wishes of the whole body of electors; that is to say of ordinary people with very little particular knowledge of the question at issue.

Now, my Lords, from the point of view of the man in the street it seems to me that the Government are proposing to give to India something that she does not want, something that she cannot afford, something which will do no good, and may possibly do great harm, to the masses of the peoples in India, and that the Government propose to do this at a time which is singularly unpropitious. Let me take these four simple points in order and try to prove that I am only stating facts which cannot be denied. I say that India does not want the scheme of the White Paper. What are the facts? They are that at least 95 per cent. of India's peoples know nothing whatever about the White Paper. The 5 per cent. who may have heard of it are divided into conflicting sections that regard the scheme only from the standpoint of their particular race, creed, caste or profession. There is only one point on which they are all agreed, and that is in objecting to the very proposals which we are told will alone make India contented. A powerful section of the Hindu Congress refuses to accept the White Paper or the Communal Award of the Prime Minister which is the basis of the whole scheme because it gives some protection to minorities. The Gandhi section neither accepts nor rejects the Award but is determined to bring matters to a deadlock with a view to fighting for the complete independence of India, with the right to secede from the British Empire. The left wing of the Congress, which is strong in the industrial centres, has adopted a Communist policy, inspired from Moscow, which aims at abolishing the Princes, big landlords and the British connection.

There is, moreover, a new movement in India which has been strangely ignored in this country and it is that of the orthodox Hindus, who have been roused to action by a fear of the dangers to their religion and customs which they think the White Paper proposals would bring about. This awakening of the orthodox Hindus has been ignored by all our politicians, who regard their opposite numbers in India as the only persons who can voice the views of India. But these orthodox Hindus are about half the population, excluding the Outcasts, and it is worth while to quote what was said

on their behalf by the Chairman at a recent conference in Calcutta:

"As Sanatanists we believe in a spiritual Swaraj, not in a barren and useless political emancipation. We have no quarrel with the Government or their officers and representatives. If we have any right against our Sovereign, it is to invoke his protecting hand against the enemies of our religion."

Now, whom do these people regard as "the enemies of their religion"? It is the unorthodox Hindu politicians whom the White Paper will put in power. I do not see how we can disregard the views of 150,000,000 people in British India to whom their religion and the customs based on it are the only things they really care about. I doubt very much whether the Joint Select Committee have given sufficient attention to this aspect of the case. It seems to be strangely ignored in that curious paragraph of the Report which refers to the emergence of a body of central opinion.

The sturdy Sikhs of the Punjab, and the Hindu minorities in the Punjab, Sind, North-West Frontier Province and Bengal are violently opposed to the White Paper because the Communal Award would place them permanently under a Moslem majority. The Sikhs are even threatening to fight rather than submit to this. Where do your peace and contentment come in? It is true that the Moslems, who number nearly one-fourth of the population, are quite disposed to accept the Communal Award, but only because it will give them a majority in Bengal and the key Provinces of the North-West and enable them to combine in order to fight against the certain Hindu domination of the Central Government. They are anticipating, just as Mr. Gandhi does, a fight to the death between Hindus and Moslems. Again I ask, how can you count on peace and contentment if you pass this measure as it is? The Indian Christians, who number over 6,000,000, and to whom the most reverend Primate did not seem to make much reference, complain (I quote their words) that

"though their fundamental rights are seriously threatened by the White Paper they were not given a hearing before the Joint Select Committee."

As for the Princes, it is sufficient to say that they are full of anxiety and have not yet arrived at a considered decision.

In face of these facts who will venture to say that India is demanding and crying out for this scheme of constitutional reform? The noble Marquess who has just sat down seemed to think that a plea for delay would be regarded with consternation in India. I venture to disagree with him. I think it would be welcomed by half the people of India, if not more.

My next point was that India cannot afford to have the White Paper scheme at present. The Joint Select Committee admit that their proposals will cost very nearly £5,000,000 sterling per annum. They also admit that special emergency taxation and special economies are still in force and that these in fact represent together a sum of £12,000,000. Thus India at present is short by £17,000,000 of revenue necessary to restore her to financial normality and meet the cost of reforms. The Committee, however, do not say where these £17,000,000 are to come from. They content themselves with a vague expression of hope and belief that the financial problem is "in process of solution." But even £17,000,000 is not a full estimate, for we have learnt from Sir Malcolm Hailey's Memorandum that even more would be required. It follows, therefore, that these constitutional proposals are at present impossible on financial grounds and we are asked to vote for them on the supposition that some miracle will improve the financial position of India; Are we really to believe that the money will be extracted from the pockets of the people and their buried hoards of treasure by this strange "magnetic power" of which we have been told by the noble Viscount, the mover of the Resolution? Will not the people of India say, and say with some justification; "You have forced this new system upon us and it is therefore up to you to pay the Bill"? Will the British taxpayer be willing to finance this specious Home Rule for the futile propitiation of Indian politicians?

My third point was that the time is singularly unpropitious, and I do not think it can be denied that a period of economic depression and frantic terrorism is not a good time for the introduction of constitutional reform. It cannot be too often repeated that the real grievances of India are economic and not political and it seems to me, therefore, that our paramount duty is to maintain the protecting hand of British rule until India is able to share in a revival of economic prosperity throughout the world. It is all the more important to

maintain the protection of British rule until we have purged the country of that terrorism which is described in the note furnished to the Joint Select Committee by the Secretary of State for India with its appendix which we find in Volume II of their Report—a dreadful and terrible document.

In these circumstances would it not be the better, safer and more courageous policy to face these facts and place them quite frankly before the peoples of India, to say to them: "You have seen what earnest and protracted consideration we have given to your demands for a larger measure of self-government. You have seen how far most of us are prepared to go, but you must recogise that the time has not yet come for so large a step in advance. It would not be giving your politicians a fair chance if they were obliged to inaugurate and work this new democratic constitution at a time when the people cannot bear any further taxation, and while the terrorists are still active. You must, therefore, be content for the present with a further experiment in provincial autonomy, while we continue to protect your frontiers and maintain that law and order without which all your endeavours to develop political consciousness and promote social reform are bound to be in vain."

The ultimate sanction for law and order in India is, of course, the British Army, and there cannot be any real self-government in India while India has to depend upon British soldiers, and do not let us forget our own point of view, which must be that British troops should not be jeopardised in any cause for which the British Government is not directly responsible. If the peoples of India have any real wish for self-government, and any real understanding of what self-government means, the first thing they have to do is to devote all their energies to that Indianization of the Army which we are now facilitating to the best of our ability. No better earnest of our good faith could be given than by what we are doing in that respect. We have every right to be in India, and it follows that the duty of Parliament is to maintain uimpaired that existing partnership which is of mutual benefft to India and Great Britain. In other words, we must preserve our commercial, industrial and financial interests in India.

Lord Ampthill.

Now we are told in a somewhat didactic and superior manner that trade depends upon "goodwill," and we are meant to infer that goodwill on the part of India depends upon political concessions to Indian politicians. There is absolutely no justification for that argument, which reminds us painfully of all that was said and done before Home Rule was conceded to Ireland. The same kind of thing was said by the same men who are saying it now in regard to India, but we cannot forget that their views and their confident anticipations have been completely falsified as regards Ireland. There is plenty of good will in India already, and we can keep and increase it if we maintain our responsibility for law and order, and continue to protect the people from oppression. There is no other way of doing it, and it is quite certain that political reforms which will not alter the mode of life of the people will not affect the good will upon which trade depends.

The peoples in India wish to buy our goods, and especialy our cotton cloth, because it is better than their own. They are only prevented from doing so by the high tariffs which Indian politicians have imposed at the bidding of the mill-owners of Bombay and Ahmedabad, and we have it from those same politicians that they intend to discriminate further against us if we give them the power to do so. The proof that our goods are preferred is to be found in the fact that Indian merchants are constantly sued in the Courts for imitating British trade marks on their own goods. When the "boycott"—which was yet another imitation of Irish methods of political agitation—was organised by the Congress Party in 1930-31 it only succeeded where dealers could be intimidated, or even terrorised by bombs, into abandoning the sale of British cloth. But that boycott began to fail as soon as the Viceroy issued an Ordinance making intimidation with picketing illegal, and in many cases the Ordinance had immediate effect. I have these facts from men who have quite recently retired from India, and I would give your Lordships chapter and verse if time permitted.

The proposal to which there is most objection is that of granting responsibility at the Centre and incorporating Federation in the scheme. I shall not repeat

all the reasons for that objection, and I intend to confine myself to one point which, so far as I am aware, has not yet been touched. We are told that the chief object of that proposal is to maintain the unity of India. I submit that no Parliaments and no laws can create, or even preserve, national unity when the people are divided by conflicting interests arising from race and religion, and from unalterable geographical and economic circumstances, unless the form of government be autocratic. The story of Indian unity in the past is familiar to all and the more complete unity which has resulted from British rule has been due to two main causes. The first of these is the presence of the British Army in India, as a defence against external foes and the ultimate guardian of law and order. The second is that use of the English language which has been rendered indispensable by the adoption of our system of government and law, and the introduction of instruments of European civilisation. These real causes of unity are not going to disappear at once, or for some time to come, and yet the Joint Select Committee tell us in their report that unless their scheme is accepted "the prospect of an All-India Federation will disappear, perhaps for ever, but certainly for many years to come."

Does not that statement reveal an utter lack of confidence in the efficacy of the plan proposed? Has the federal scheme so little substance? Is it merely a thing of vapour which will blow away unless it is immediately liquified? I cannot believe that. If the idea of an All-India Federation is a good thing, as indeed I believe it to be, surely it will keep for a few years? What are ten years, or even fifty years, in the life of a nation which has a future? I cannot see why the Princes and peoples of India should not be allowed to evolve their own scheme for the United States of India. If we really intend to make the All-India Federation self-governing, and to give it a *status* comparable to that of the Dominions, surely we ought to let it be based on Indian ideas? But the Princes and the Provinces have not yet had time to develop any definite notions as to their ultimate goal, and it would therefore seem to be the wiser course to let them settle down to peaceful experiment in provincial autonomy, and to find out for themselves upon what terms they can really unite against the time when our protection will be withdrawn. It seems to me that the Princes at any rate will wish to see something of provincial autonomy in British India before they can form a fair judgment as to the possibilities of Federal co-operation for the good of India as a whole.

We have been told that "a strong wind of nationalism" is blowing across the Indian Continent and the whole of Asia. Why not give that wind a chance of clearing the air and blowing away the dust and microbes of present controversies. Mr. Baldwin has told us, with superb confidence, that if we adopt the scheme of the Joint Select Committee we retain India for ever, but that if we reject or curtail it we shall lose India within two generations. He did not explain the reasons upon which he based that prophecy, and I do not think that it has made any impression upon most of those who have passed the better part of their lives in India. I think I am right in saying that there was no member of the Joint Select Committee who had spent more than five years in India, and then only in exalted positions which are far removed from the lives of the Indian masses. I myself am much more fearful of the prophecy which was made long ago, and by a man who knew more about India than Mr. Baldwin—the prophecy that if we ever lost India it would be upon the floor of the House of Commons. My Lords, I live in dread lest the fulfilment of that prophecy may be at hand.

There are no possible consequences of our action in India that we need apprehend so long as we do without fear or favour that which we believe to be right and are not influenced by any considerations other than our responsibility for the welfare of all classes and conditions of people in India and the maintenance of our own just rights. The things above all others that we have taught the people of India is that they can look to us to see fair play between them in all disputes, great or small. What they most respect is the courage of the British officer or official to be an impartial umpire or referee in any circumstances. It is a conspicuous characteristic of the Indian to bow to just authority, and we cannot go wrong if

we adhere to the letter of the great Proclamation made by Queen Victoria, as indeed we may justly claim to have done thus far.

There is only one unconditional pledge that has ever been given to India, and that is that pledge to the Princes of India which has been renewed by each Sovereign and was reaffirmed in the Royal Proclamation at the inauguration of the Chamber of Princes by the Duke of Connaught on behalf of the King-Emperor. That pledge declared that it is the determination of His Majesty the King-Emperor "ever to maintain unimpaired the privileges, rights and dignities of the Princes of India"; and it concluded with the words:

"The Princes may rest assured that this pledge remains inviolate and inviolable."

My Lords, that pledge is sacred, but it cannot be kept if the Princes are unduly pressed to enter a Federation in which they will inevitably be subordinated to the self-governing democracy of British India. There is only one way in which that pledge can "remain inviolate and inviolable," and that is if all the Princes enter the Federation of their own free will and accord. That is the paramount and compelling reason why the adoption of the federal scheme should be postponed. The proposal made by the Statutory Commission that there should be a Council of State seems to me to be a wiser policy, in that it would give to the Princes, and also to the Provinces, the necessary opportunity of forming their own ideas on this vital question, and would not involve any irrevocable step that might cause the violation of the great and solemn pledge of the King-Emperor.

THE MARQUESS OF LINLITHGOW: My Lords, it is always a pleasure, whether we agree with him or not, to listen to the noble Lord who has just sat down. He always knows his mind and exactly how to express it. I shall try in a moment or two to touch upon one or two matters which he has raised. In the meantime, I should like to be allowed, as Chairman of the Joint Committee, to associate myself with the expression by the noble Viscount Lord Halifax, of the sad loss which the Committee suffered by the deaths of Lord Burnham and Miss Pickford. The House will perhaps allow me at the outset to say how grateful I am for the many kind words that have been used here and in another place about my service in the Chair. It has been a great privilege to serve such a Committee, and I desire to acknowledge the unfailing support and countenance extended to me by every one of my colleagues. The Report is before Parliament. Every member of the Committee did his utmost to make it a document worthy of the great issues with which it seeks to deal. No Committee can ever, I conceive, have worked in greater harmony or with more readiness to hear every point of view. Some sections of the Committee did not feel able in the end to vote for the Report, but every section is entitled to claim that it contributed its full share towards the shaping of the Report.

Next the House will, I am sure, desire me to say how greatly the Committee—and Lord Halifax has already mentioned the point—appreciated the help and counsel of the delegates from India and Burma. I think that Parliament owes a great debt of gratitude to those ladies and gentlemen, who were ready to journey far from their homes, often at great personal inconvenience, in order to place their able services at our disposal. I think there is a good deal to be said for the view that those of us who have had, shall I say our generous fling in the multifarious pages of the Report, ought to content ourselves at this stage with trying to help the House with any points of difficulty or of obscurity that may have appeared, and I certainly do not desire either to be too controversial or to speak at any great length this afternoon.

Before I proceed to other and more disputed matters, may I say this word about Burma? I understand that His Majesty's Government accept the Joint Select Committee's recommendation for the political separation of that country from India. With the details of Burma's proposed Constitution, Parliament will deal when the Bill is before us. To-day I content myself by voicing what is, I am quite certain, the wish of the whole House—namely, that Burma may prosper greatly under any new Constitution, and that her sons and daughters may find, within the constitutional field, political contentment and ample opportunity to serve their motherland.

To revert for a moment to India and to one of the topics mentioned by the

noble Lord, Lord Ampthill, I think it may be some service to the House if I say a word about the financial aspect of the scheme of reform. Let me say at the outset that no one familiar with the position would pretend that in this respect it is altogether comfortable. Having said that, however, I would ask the House to remember, in surveying the Indian position, that the whole world is only now beginning to emerge from a prolonged and severe financial crisis, a crisis that has plunged whole Continents in misery and want; that has destroyed credit upon a prodigious scale, and that has led to the collapse of the currencies of more than one important country. This then is not a moment when you would expect to find the finances of India, or of any other country, in any very comfortable position.

First of all, what are the estimated costs of the proposed reforms in the Provinces and at the Centre? I think it will probably be for the convenience of the House if I give all money values in sterling. In order to set the Provinces going, the following costs will be incurred:—New expenditure on what I may call overhead charges, that is to say, upon the Legislature and so on, £500,000 (Rs.$\frac{3}{4}$ crore); loss to Indian revenues by the separation of Burma, £1,500,000 to £2,250,000 (Rs.2 to 3 crores); and subventions to Provinces in deficit on the basis of the 1934-35 Budgets as well as to Sind and Orissa, £2,250,000 sterling (Rs.3 crores), making a total in the provincial field of £4,250,000 to £5,000,000 sterling (Rs.5$\frac{3}{4}$ to 6$\frac{3}{4}$ crores). I shall have something more to say in detail later, but for the purpose of comparison I turn at once to the Centre. The only immediate and compulsory new charge involved in the setting up of the Federal Centre will be about £500,000 sterling (Rs.$\frac{3}{4}$ crore) on new overhead charges; and even if the full ultimate cost of the settlement with the States were added—and that, of course, will not mature for some years—the total charges at the Centre would only be about £1,250,000 sterling (Rs.1$\frac{3}{4}$ crores)—that is to say, £4,500,000 to £5,000,000 sterling in the Provinces against £1,250,000 on the Federal Centre. The weight, then, of financial difficulty is in the Provinces and not at the Centre, and those who assail upon financial grounds the scheme for a Federal Centre for All-India, while themselves advocating provincial autonomy, are taking up a position that is, I submit, quite untenable.

Let me go one step further in analysing the position. What I have called "overheads" and the loss of Burma revenues clearly mean an additional burden on India, though not, I contend, one of unmanageable proportions. But the subventions to Provinces are in fact a redistribution of existing charges. It is, of course, true that so far as provincial deficits are now being covered by borrowing but in future will be met from revenue, the charge on the present generation will be increased; but even this, in the long run, means no more than a transfer of the burden from certain provincial taxpayers to taxpayers all over India. Similarly, in the case of Sind and Orissa, the charge for deficits in these areas (excluding the new "overheads") is to-day borne by taxpayers in Bombay or Bihar and Madras, and will be merely spread over a wider area in future.

I asked the House a moment ago to bear in mind the financial circumstances and difficulties of the whole world. How do the finances of India stand to-day measured in the light of these circumstances? She has balanced her Budget; she has throughout the crisis honoured her obligations; her currency is sound and her credit is good. Three and a-half per cent. India stock may be bought in the market to-day at 98. I say that is a position of which India and this country may well be proud. I think it is true to say, applying the best judgment I can to this matter, that the best opinion available, including that of the Federal Finance Committee under the Chairmanship of Lord Eustace Percy, is that if the price level of agricultural products, by far the most potent factor in India's finances, follows a course that it is now reasonable to anticipate, the resources of India will be found, with prudent management, able to bear the cost of the proposed reforms.

In this connection when we are thinking of India let us never forget that agricultural countries, while they are the first to feel the brunt of falling prices, possess great resiliency and power of recovery. Past experience in India, if we look back over her financial history, proves that she is an outstanding

example of this truth. If, unhappily, the unexpected should occur and prices and revenues fall, then we shall have secured the position to this extent, that whatever may be in the Act, if our recommendations are accepted, the inauguration of the Federation cannot take place until both Houses of Parliament have presented an Address to His Majesty praying that this Proclamation may be issued. In Paragraph 157 of their Report the Committee say they approve this proposal:

"because Parliament has a right to satisfy itself not only that the prescribed number of States have in fact signified their desire to accede, but also that the financial, economic, and political conditions necessary for the successful establishment of the Federation upon a sound and stable basis have been fulfilled."

If the price level of agricultural produce falls to any considerable extent, I have no hesitation in affirming the view that not only would Federation at the Centre be beyond the financial capacity of India but so indeed would provincial autonomy, and so indeed, if prices fell to the point at which at the worst of the crisis they touched, would the present system and scale of expenditure in India prove ultimately impossible.

When we are dealing with finance and with the complicated and often technical operation of estimating revenue and expenditure under conditions not yet experienced, I think we are all of us bound to depend in a great degree upon expert advice for the material upon which to exercise our judgment. I think, too, that in measuring the weight—I do not desire to overstate the case at all—which ought to be attached to various and sometimes conflicting opinions in the matter of finance, the House should not lightly reject the advice and views placed before the Joint Select Committee by the Secretary of State and his advisers, available in the Minutes of Evidence, fortified as he was, and is, by day to day communication with the Viceroy and Governors and their officers throughout India, and in particular by Sir Malcolm Hailey, a former Finance Member of the Viceroy Council and till last week Senior Governor in India, whose views are set out in Record No. 1 of the Joint Select Committee, and to whom the Committee, and I think Parliament, owe a great debt of gratitude for his services.

Not less impressive, I think, if the House will bear with me, are the opinions of the two Finance Members of the Executive Council of the Govenor-General who held office immediately before the present Finance Member. Sir Basil Blackett is reported in *The Times*, when speaking at Liverpool on July 25, to have said:

"I hold that opponents of the White Paper have made altogether too much of the financial problems involved. They add together the increased expenditure due to reforms, the existing provincial deficits, the revenue lost to the Centre by transfer to the Provinces, and the revenue transferred to Burma. They then say that the cost of the reforms is £15,000,000 or £20,000,000 or some such total. This is clearly an arithmetical fallacy. The extra expenditure attributable to the reforms is something under £2,000,000 a year, not an extravagant figure for Indian taxpayers to find for the purpose of securing for themselves self-government and a Federal Constitution. Even if the amount lost by India to Burma (which is, of course, gained to Burma) be added, the figure is still below £4,000,000 a year. After being in charge for a long period of the Central Government finances I am not likely to under-estimate the task involved for the Central Government; but I hold that, given a reasonable rise in prices, the problem is not likely to prove very difficult of solution; and it would be a great gain for all to have the financial position of the Provincial Governments secured."

Sir George Schuster, then Finance Member, speaking in the Legislative Assembly on 20th April, 1934, used these words:

"Statements have recently been made in England by former officials of the Government of India who, if I may say so, seem to arrogate to themselves an authority to speak on these subjects which increases in proportion as their direct experience of Indian administration grows out of date; statements have been made that there must be some enormous adventitious increase to India's public revenue—and one speaker has put the figure at £20,000,000 or something like 30 crores—before it will be safe to start the new Constitution. I cannot understand this line of argument."

He went on to say:

"All the Governments, both Federal and Provincial, are going to have—as Governments are having in every country in the world—an extremely difficult time, unless there is a fundamental improvement in the situation. But that does not mean that the new Governments cannot function."

I make no excuse for having asked the House to listen to the views of Sir Basil Blackett and Sir George Schuster, apart from the present holder of the office, the two last incumbents in that position in the Government of India which in this

country we know as the Chancellorship of the Exchequer. These men are of the school of those that have made the financial system of India and her financial condition the admiration of the whole world, and I respectfully suggest that until good reason is adduced to the contrary, we shall be wise to rely upon their opinions. I think I have shown that the difficulty of finance, so far as that exists, attaches far more to provincial autonomy than to federation at the Centre.

Let me now deal, quite shortly, with some of the other objections to the scheme of reform advanced by those who would, I understand, grant provincial autonomy but who would withhold federation, or responsibility at the Centre, for the present. It is a little difficult to disentangle their arguments, but these are some of those which are adduced in respect of their case. It is said that communal differences so divide India as to make any system of representative Government quite illusory, and my noble friend Lord Salisbury, in moving his Amendment, made great play with creed registers. But where do these difficulties mainly arise? If they do arise it is not at the Centre but in the Provinces. Then it is alleged that the effect of the Communal Award is in the same direction. Do those who mean to introduce only provincial autonomy propose to disregard altogether the communal award, and the problem with which it seeks to deal? It is said in vague terms that Indians lack Parliamentary and administrative experience. Is that circumstance of no importance in the provincial field where the greater part of administration work falls to be done?

Then, again, charges of nepotism and corruption are heard. Where are those failings (if indeed they exist) most likely to appear—at the Centre, or in the autonomous Provinces where the great bulk of appointments must lie, and where minor officials are in touch with the general public in town and village? Another and much favoured assertion is that since it is our duty to secure the welfare of the masses, we ought to preserve the Central Government in its present form. But where will lie at least ninety per cent. of the matters that interest and affect the great mass of the population from day to day? Why, in the provincial field of activity, which our critics are perfectly ready to make autonomous. Then, finally, we are told, in highly picturesque language, that the safeguards are perfectly useless. Do our critics, when they set up these great autonomous Provinces, intend to introduce no safeguards into the Constitutions?

The truth is, and the more you study this problem the more evident it becomes that these arguments, if they are good are arguments against the grant of autonomy to those great Provinces, which in area and population are, many of them, as large as Italy or Great Britain. And if no one, so far as I know, has suggested that there should be no constitutional advance in the Provinces or elsewhere, that I suppose is because everyone recognises that to stand still or to attempt at this stage to go back is not practical politics. But if you go forward and set up these great autonomous Provinces, will it not be wiser to make provisions at once for a system of government at the Centre which will establish the unity of India, which will bring to your councils the representatives of the ruling Princes, and which from its nature will work in harmony with the Provinces, and so provide a check upon those centrifugal tendencies if they should arise?

I do not desire to inflict upon the House arguments already heard. Your Lordships will have applied your minds to the first forty-four paragraphs of the Report of the Joint Committee, and you will be familiar with the considerations that have led the majority of the Committee to recommend the inclusion in the Bill of provisions for the setting up of an All-India Federation. Those considerations, if I may say so, have already been admirably restated in speech after speech in this debate. I should, however, like the House for a moment to consider one or two things that will follow if within a reasonable time after the establishment of provincial autonomy, you do not inaugurate a measure of responsible government at a Federal Centre.

Remember that you are going to have in these great autonomous Provinces which everyone means to set up, a quickening of political thought, and you are going to bring within the influence of political activity millions of men and women not at present subject to it. Now if there is one demand upon which all politically minded Indians are united it

is the demand for a measure of responsible government at the Centre. Whatever the merits of the Constitution, that is the object of passionate desire. Of that there is no doubt whatever. Refuse that demand and you will have every Provincial Legislature deliberately and persistently employed as a lever to discomfort the irresponsible Centre. The Central Legislature will devote every ounce of its strength to rendering the life of the Central Executive as difficult as it can, while at every Election, whether provincial or for the Central Legislature, there will go forth from every platform in India a flood of propaganda directed against the Central system of government. But the Central Executive, if you leave it as it now is, will have no public platform, no Press and no friends in the constituencies to explain and defend its policy and actions and to rebuke the charges of its critics. It will have to try to govern India against a steadily rising tide of public suspicion and dislike. Those are conditions of a kind that cannot for long endure in any country.

There was one matter raised by my noble friend Lord Phillimore in his thoughtful speech about which I should like to say a word. The noble Lord was dealing with the desirability of creating conditions in which indigenous systems of government might make their contribution to India's future. That is a matter which has been much in my mind and in the minds of many of us, and I for one have all along felt that in the meeting of these two very different systems of government at the Federal Centre, the British type as developed in British India, and the Indian States as representing the indigenous form, would lie exactly the field for experiment, adjustment and development that Lord Phillimore has in mind.

To change again the subject, I am confident that this House will not allow its judgment to be influenced in the least degree by criticism levelled against the composition of the Joint Select Committee upon the ground that many of its members had, before their appointment, expressed views upon the merits of the issue referred to them and that, therefore, the Committee was not a judicial Committee nor its findings unbiased. Is it really suggested that, when a great problem such as that of the future Constitution of India has been debated for seven years, you are going to find thirty-two members of Parliament who have never previously formed a view or uttered a word about it? Suppose that in 1907 my noble friend and kinsman, Lord Rankeillour, had decided to appoint a Committee to examine the problem of our fiscal policy. Where would he have found his band of men uncommitted, one way or the other, unless indeed he had shipped to this country *ad hoc* a boatload of Esquimaux? Criticism of that kind does not ring true, and, if my noble friend will allow me to say so, I think it had better not have been levelled.

I do not suppose Parliament has often before been called upon to decide an issue more far-reaching than that with which we are now confronted, for its outcome must profoundly affect future relations between Great Britain and India and between India and every other part of His Majesty's possessions. It must affect their relationship, both constitutional and economic, and what in the outcome will prove even more significant, it is destined profoundly to affect that body of human values and their interplay which are implicit in the word *status*. But that is not all—and here I agree with my noble friend the Marquess of Zetland and the noble Lord opposite, Lord Strabolgi. That is not all, for the decision which this House will give to-morrow night is certain to influence the whole future relationship between the civilisation of the West and that of the East. We seek to deal with the political symptoms in those regions only for which we are responsible. But the basic causes of those symptoms are not confined to British territory in the East, and very plainly you may see them at work across the five and a half thousand miles from the Delta of the Nile to the Yellow Sea and beyond. Throughout that vast area and those immense populations, in varying degree and form, you may everywhere discern the opposition of those two great systems of life and thought.

Beyond any doubt, pressure is rising at their points of contact. These are conditions in which, sooner or later, a major adjustment must be made. The scheme of constitutional reform in India, now before the House, is nothing less than an attempt to establish betimes and in orderly fashion the beginnings of a new relationship between East and West. I

think there is good hope that it may succeed. I think, too, that it constitutes a policy worthy of this great country, and I trust that it may receive the support of this House, and that your Lordships will support the Resolution moved by my noble friend Viscount Halifax.

LORD MIDDLETON: My Lords, I think I deserve a little sympathy in having to speak immediately after the noble Marquess, who has made such a magnificent contribution to this debate. I rise to address your Lordships as a member of the Joint Select Committee who voted against the Report, and I beg now to support the Amendment moved by the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury. My reasons for voting against the Report are, in the main, the same as those which caused the noble Marquess and my noble friend Lord Rankeillour to take that course. I do not stand before your Lordships as one who calls himself a great expert on India. Sixteen years service in India, fourteen years of which were spent in an Indian Service, were quite sufficient to teach me how impossible it is in that time, or even in a longer time, to arrive at any complete understanding of the processes of thought and reasoning of the inhabitants of that great sub-continent. I think that exactly the same would be said by those who can go back twenty years, thirty years, forty years, or even half a century. Endeavouring with sympathy to understand, in the end they are completely baffled.

Serving on the Select Committee, one was naturally immensely impressed with the deep knowledge of Constitutions possessed by members of the Committee, knowledge that was an invaluable asset, an indispensable asset in dealing with the very difficult problems which confronted us. No less was one impressed by the great knowledge and experience of ex-Viceroys and Governors, Secretaries and Under-Secretaries of State, who, after all, are the men who have had to deal with the machinery of government as they have found it in the last twenty odd years. It was, of course, difficult for me to make any contribution in discussions touching high statecraft, which was completely outside my experience, as no doubt your Lordships were aware when you elected me to serve on the Committee. But, at any rate, I was able to be a very interested if silent listener, and if fine points of constitutional law and practice are beyond me, I could, at any rate, claim a closer acquaintenance than all but one of the Select Committee with those who form the great bulk of the population of India. Very often one thought that the great masses of India were completely forgotten, that their interests were not taken into consideration, which seemed to us two on the Committee, at any rate, quite wrong when they form no less than 90 per cent. of the whole population.

I agree entirely with the statement which appears in the introduction of the Report on page 5, that it is not wise to judge the political consciousness of a people by the standard of the least instructed class. Nevertheless, it is the duty of Parliament to see that as far as possible the interests of any large section of the population are not unduly sacrificed, to see that all sections of the population, rural and urban, literate and illiterate, receive fair consideration and fair play. It was a great difficulty for the Joint Select Committee to hold the balance equal, and it was because it seemed to me that the balance was unduly weighted in favour of a vociferous minority that the Report did not satisfy me. There is an old saying in India, "The silent babe receives little milk." Well, my Lords, 90 per cent. of the population are quite silent, and the remaining 10 per cent. extremely vocal. In all the cloud of witnesses who appeared before us, where were the men representing the 90 per cent., the men behind the plough? It is perfectly true that their brief was held with great ability by several of those who have served in India, notably Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Mr. Lyall, Waris Amir Ali, and one or two others; but the great weight of evidence was from the other side.

The most reverend Primate read to your Lordships a certain part of the Preamble of the Government of India Act, dealing with the development of self-governing institutions, and I do not think anyone can say that that sentiment has not received very great attention. But may I read just one more portion of the Preamble:

"And whereas the time and manner of each advance can be determined only by Parliament, upon whom responsibility lies

for the welfare and the advancement of the Indian peoples:"

I would underline the last dozen words. What are the important things that promote the advancement and welfare of the Indian people? I suggest just those things that enable them to develop their land, to farm successfully and to market their products. Those are the matters that concern them: Irrigation, forestry, communications, and that great work, one of the greatest works ever brought into being by the late Lord Curzon, the Agricultural Department. All these things are of the highest importance, and are far more important than many of the things which take up an immense amount of space in the Report and an immense amount of time in this debate. The Simon Commission were perfectly definite about these things and their suggestions were quite contrary to the recommendations contained in this Report. They insisted that recruits should be brought into the Services from outside India, and one is afraid that if this does not happen, if these all become Provincial Services, then there will be a loss of efficiency and the peasants of the country will be the worst sufferers.

The noble Viscount, Lord Halifax, and the noble Marquess who has just sat down have said that those of us who plead the cause of the rural population should not oppose the grant of federation if we are prepared to swallow provincial autonomy. There is this point that I would make in answer. I certainly hold the view that if our plan is adopted and if provincial autonomy alone is granted, then supposing that things in the Provinces go very wrong Parliament will be able to interfere and take such action as will restore the situation. If federal government is granted then the control of Parliament will be very much reduced. That, at any rate, is one answer to that charge which has been levelled against us.

Now I would like to refer for one moment to the speech made by the noble Marquess, Lord Lothian. His words, I must say, rather filled me with apprehension, largely because he dealt entirely and solely with the intelligentsia. He seemed to think of them alone and nothing of the rural population. I desire to be very brief and to take up as little of your Lordships' time as possible, but I hope that I may not sacrifice accuracy for brevity. The impression which I gained from him in part of his speech was that because there are a number of students, professors and others, who are educated, and because they have certain hopes and aspirations, taught by us, therefore we should follow the recommendations of the report because otherwise the only alternative is what I think he called "naked repression." How far can that argument be carried? Are we to suppose that those educated persons to whom he referred are going to be satisfied with this report? Have we not evidence that others who are leading opinion in a rather extreme way in India desire far more? Will his argument apply equally when they ask for a vastly greater measure of self-government?

Those who are most extreme desire that we should leave India—that we should withdraw. How far does the noble Marquess's argument carry us then? All I can say is that if we are to withdraw from India, then undoubtedly the history of India will be repeated. There will be invasion after invasion, and I do not think that there will be any liberty seen in those days. Educated youths may face up to the invaders and quote John Stuart Mill to them as long as they like, but I am afraid that the invaders will be hard-hearted and will scarcely listen. We have a trusteeship for the whole population, and not merely for one section of it.

Next I would like to deal with one or two remarks made by the noble Lord, Lord Strabolgi, whom I am sorry not to see in his place. I would suggest respectfully that in his recent tour in India the study of military problems was completely omitted. He talked about "a rough-and-tumble Army" officered by Indians for the defence of the Frontier. The noble Lord, Lord Belhaven, quarrelled with that idea, and I entirely agree with him. I do not quite know what a rough-and-tumble Army is. I know only two kinds of Army; one is a good one and the other is a bad one. There is only one standard and one kind of discipline of training, and that is the best. In regard to Frontier warfare I have had only a little experience, taking my turn in dealing with small expeditions after outlaws and raiders, and I have commanded a regiment in a small campaign of two or three months. I am a very nervous man, and I must say that I thought that Frontier warfare was the

most nerve-wrecking experience that I have ever endured, an experience which necessitates the highest discipline and the best training.

I entirely agree with the noble Lord, Lord Belhaven, that if there is any deterioration, if there is any slackening in the matter of the efficiency of our troops on the Frontier, we invite attack from the frontiersmen, who will be supported by others. The noble Lord has talked about what happened in the days of Ranjit Singh. He has been dead and burnt these many years, and times have changed since then. I hold it as an axiom that we should never gamble with the security of India, and I therefore disagree entirely with every single word that the noble Lord said on this subject, and I sincerely hope that he is not held to be an expert on military matters in the councils of his Party.

The noble Lord also touched on the question of the Indianisation of the Indian Army, and I would speak with great care on this subject. There is no one who hopes more than I do that the experiment which is being tried to-day may be successful, and I hope that those Indian gentlemen who are wearing stars on their shoulders to-day and those who are in training at Dehra Dun may do everything to uphold the great traditions of the Service to which they will have the honour to belong. We know—we have had evidence to that effect, and I have heard it privately—that they are being given every chance, that in officers' messes of British officers they are received as gentlemen and as brother officers, which does not surprise me.

One word about the position of an officer in the Indian Army, because I can speak with some experience. The position of an officer in the Indian Army differs very considerably from that of an officer in the British Army. An officer in the Indian Army has to know far more about his men. He has to know their family histories, he has to know all about their feuds and all about their law suits and a hundred other things which never affect the officer in the British Army at all; and only when he knows these things does he acquire the confidence of his men. It remains to be seen whether the Indian soldier will transfer his devotion, which some of us have experienced, to officers of his own kin. They have not the same detachment that we have. We are neither Hindus nor Moslems; we have no relations in the ranks who are largely affected, and in time of riots and civil commotion, when communal feeling runs high, may it not be more difficult for them than for us? Then again on active service, when their men are tired, wet, cold and hungry, will they be able to stir them up and keep them going? The answers to all these things are in the future. They will never be learnt by examinations nor in the piping days of peace on the barrack square. These gentlemen—I can say it because I know it perfectly well—are content to await the test, which can come only on active service, and if they are content, I submit that the noble Lord, Lord Strabolgi, might equally be content to wait.

The noble Lord criticised the numbers of Indian gentlemen who are receiving commissions. If he had carried his inquiries a little further he would have known that military service does not make a great appeal to educated Indians. Most of them very much prefer the professions where there are less strenuous exertions and greater emoluments. During the War, 350,000 men were recruited in the Punjab. Of those, there were 70 men of education, that is all. An attempt was made to raise battalions of educated men. The total recruited was 200. It was as ignominious a failure as the attempt to raise troops in Bengal. When they had attained a certain pitch of training, there was a plan that they should go out on some field firing exercises, but it was found impossible, because it was known for a certainty that the half who were Mahomedans would shoot into the Hindus who comprised the other half. We are going slowly with it. We have magnificent young men at Dehra Dun, and no one is dissatisfied with the quality, but we must have quality before quantity.

I do not wish to detain your Lordships any longer. In regard to the noble Lords opposite, I submit that if they understood the reality of the conditions under which rural India lives, their attitude would be entirely different, and they would join with us who are critical and nervous about the measures proposed in the Report. I think we all know that the noble Lord, Lord Snell,

has very tender feelings about the interests of those whose path through life is difficult, but the Labour Party do not appreciate the difference between India and this country. They have seen through history certain measures adopted for alleviating distress and redressing ills and injustices, and they hope that similar measures will do exactly the same in India. I am afraid that they are entirely wrong, and that exactly the contrary will be the result. I will conclude by saying that we must remember the words of Mr. Baldwin, when he pleaded the cause of the men who fought with and stood by us in the Great War. Apart from the Princes very few of the intelligentsia did much, but, to their great credit, the men who fought with us and stood by us were the men of rural India, who are in danger of being forgotten in this Report.

THE EARL OF MIDLETON: My Lords, I do not think I should be doing otherwise than expressing your feelings when I say with what pleasure we have listened to the speech of the noble Marquess who was Chairman of the Committee, and to whom I think the country owes a great debt for the extraordinary work done in that capacity. I am glad the noble Marquess addressed himself to the question, amongst others, of finance. I do not intend to entrench upon the main ground on which many of those more competent to address your Lordships have spoken, but I think that on the question of finance too little has been said. Yet everybody realises that unless there is a sound system of finance, and unless the difficulty of the Provinces can be met, the whole of this system may be jeopardised. I fully accept after some study of the figures the observations made by the noble Marquess. He said that these great deficits which are anticipated, and which according to many members of the House may amount to as much as £16,000,000 or £20,000,000, are grossly exaggerated, and he has given your Lordships figures which, if I were to put them in a nutshell, really amount to a deficit, unless there is an improvement in trade of about £4,000,000.

I am not sure that he allowed for all the pitfalls. I think it is common ground that any serious increase of taxation in India is practically impossible. The Income Tax presses quite severely enough. To raise the Salt Tax is, I think, regarded as practically impossible; but where I think the difficulty is coming is from the direction on which the noble Lord who has just sat down had occasion to speak. Look at the position with regard to the Army, and if I trouble you for a very few moments it is because I do happen to have had experience, having served in the War Office here. I know two things, and one is that whenever there is a shortage it is to the Army that the Chancellor of the Exchequer immediately turns for a reduction of expenditure. The Army is short at this moment, according to the figures presented to me, of some £4,000,000 of money. There have been reductions of pay which were temporary, and also there have been others which were not temporary at all, but a postponement of necessary services in order to reduce the expenditure of the year. I am informed that sooner or later £4,000,000 extra must be paid for the Army.

I want to put this question. It is all very well to say that the Viceroy has the maintenance of the Army in his charge. You may say also that the collection of sufficient revenue may be obtained from Federal sources, including Customs, but the Viceroy is responsible for the whole of the Services, and how can he certify £4,000,000 extra for the Army and leave the Provinces £4,000,000 short? As my noble friend said very truly, it is only when you come to a campaign that you know what an inadequate Army may mean. I have fought this battle over and over again, and I have been told over and over again by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that a reduction of 5,000 men may not be felt and will equalise his Budget. I think we ought to have a little more minute figures even that those given by the noble Marquess to show that the shoe is not going to pinch at the very outset and imperil the whole edifice.

I would also like to speak on the question of time—the time for introducing these reforms. I suppose we should all agree that by every canon of procedure we ought to introduce these reforms gradually. On the other hand, by every person of real experience in India who has spoken we have been told that the whole advantage will be lost if we do not introduce them at once. But the general consent seems to be that progress must be

established. That appears to be the opinion of a most remarkable chain of Viceroys, and to that has been added the testimony which appears in the Life of Lord Minto. There appears a fact hitherto unknown—namely, that he was in advance of the Secretary of State, Lord Morley, in regard to these reforms.

I would like to give you one other piece of testimony. It happened that when the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms were under consideration there was a Committee practically similar, though not so far-reaching, as the one which has just sat, and the time came when it was perfectly clear that the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms would not be carried through Parliament in the form in which they had been brought in. It happened that I was engaged, with one or two others, in the negotiations which ensued between Mr. Montagu and the Conservative Leaders as to these reforms, and the point to which they were willing to go. If there was one man among Viceroys who I think was filled with an ardent desire for the protection of the weak, and the remedying of injustices, if there was one man who, more than any other ruler of India in the last fifty years, believed in a benevolent despotism as between West and East, it was Lord Curzon. And I well remember that of the three men who had to settle the terms on which the Conservative Party would deal with this matter, Lord Balfour and Lord Lansdowne were of opinion that the compromise would be accepted, and Lord Curzon said: "You may accept this compromise, but you will have to go a great deal further within a very few years—probably in ten years from now." I think that that is a not unimportant addition to the evidence of Viceroys that we have already had.

And may I say one word upon another matter upon which I had some personal knowledge? Mr. Baldwin the other day asked his Party in a considered speech not to allow themselves to be placed in this matter in the same position as that in which they found themselves in the course of the Irish trouble. I have not, I think, troubled your Lordships for something like thirteen years on any Irish topic, although I was concerned in all these negotiations, and I am not going to do so to-night; but I do say this, that when in the year 1918 the conviction came to a large number of persons that the time had come when the concession of a Parliament must be made if all Ireland was to be kept together, and when at that moment Mr. Redmond came and made the offer to serve under Lord Carson to keep all Ireland together under a National Government not dissimilar to that which was afterwards formed in this country, the frustration of that effort was not due to the forces of revolution, but to the forces of reaction. Do not, I beg you, let us fall into the same abyss again.

If we are going to give this concession we have to remember the strong views of all those who have served there, and who know the country, not one of whom rises to say that you can put this off without fear. It is not an ideal settlement, but may I remind your Lordships in one sentence that the greatest law-giver in ancient times, who, to all readers of the classics is an agreeable memory, Pericles, was asked "Have you given the Athenians the best laws which you could give them?" He said: "No, I have not. I have given them the best which they are able to bear." My Lords, I think the situation is not unlike that to-day. They may not be ideal laws, but they are the best which, for both countries, they will bear at the present moment. And at all events, when we come to vote to-morrow, it is not as if we had a clean sheet. If we go into the Opposition Lobby against this Resolution, we have to vote against practically the whole of the experience massed in this House of all those who have served longest in the country. We should have, besides that, to put behind us the most minute and longest consideration of any topic, so far as I can remember, which has been brought before Parliament in living memory, perhaps at any time since the trial of Warren Hastings. In those circumstances, though we must have doubts, though we must have some feeling that we are almost gambling with this question, we must remember that since the Irish question was settled, and since Lord Curzon gave his advice, the world generally has gone forward by leaps and bounds, and it is not for us to stray behind when advice and opportunity guide us.

THE EARL OF LYTTON: My Lords, this debate has ranged over a very wide field, and produced a number of admirable speeches, not the least admirable of

which, if I may say so, was the speech to which we listened just now, the very authoritative speech from the Chairman of the Joint Select Committee. Arguments have been used on one side, and answered on the other, and I have no intention of repeating any arguments that have already been used. I intervene only for the purpose of putting shortly an argument before those of your Lordships who may not be as familiar with the details of the Indian constitutional problem as the members of the Joint Select Committee. The issue before us is a very simple one; the issue is whether to-morrow night, at the end of our debate, we are to vote for the Resolution moved on behalf of the Government by the noble Viscount, or the Amendment moved by the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury. Whatever may be the difficulties and the complexities of the Indian constitutional problem—and I know as well as anyone how great they are—that issue is quite simple, and it is one on which we can all have opinions; and though we may not be Indian experts, I, at any rate, have never taken part in a Division in this House with greater confidence and with less doubt as to the side on which I should vote than I shall when I vote to-morrow for the Resolution moved by the noble Viscount. I will tell your Lordships why.

The terms of the noble Marquess's Amendment are very plausible, and they were defended in a speech of great force and vigour, which delighted us all. Whether we agreed or disagreed with the noble Marquess, we all welcomed the vigour with which he addressed us, and we all hope that he will return from his long voyage with health greatly restored. The noble Marquess said in effect: "We, the members of the Joint Select Committee have discussed this question now for nearly two years. We took all that time before we could make up our minds what Report to submit to Parliament; whereas you, my Lords, have only had our Report in your hands for a bare fortnight, and yet you are asked in that short time to commit yourselves to a decision on the merits of the case." That is a very plausible argument. But what are the facts? The first fact is that your Lordships are not asked to pass judgment between a Majority Report and a Minority Report; you are merely asked to say in what form the Government shall introduce a Bill and lay it before your Lordships. Further, we the members of the Joint Select Committee did not discuss this question for eighteen months: the greater part of that time was spent in listening to the opinions of witnesses who came before us.

That is what the Committee was appointed to do. Because Parliament, as a whole, could not hear all these divergent opinions, both Houses set up a Select Committee to do that work for them. Surely it was the intention of each House of Parliament, when it set up such a Committee, that after hearing all the evidence they should decide not what Bill we should pass but in what form legislation should be submitted to Parliament for its consideration? What would be the use of setting up a Committee to do all this work, what would be the use of delegating these powers, unless you were prepared, after they had heard all the evidence and discussed the matter, that the Government should accept the recommendations of the majority of that Committee? That is all that the Government are asking us to do by this Resolution—to authorise them to introduce a Bill based upon the Report of the majority of the Committee. They are not asking you to delegate your legislative functions or to say that the Committee shall decide for you what Bill shall be passed. They are merely asking you to authorise them to introduce a Bill on these lines.

I ask you for a moment to put yourselves in the position of the Government. The Government have been asked in Parliament whether, when the Report of the Joint Select Committee was made public, they would give to both Houses an opportunity of discussing it, and they replied that they would. Supposing they had done otherwise, supposing they had said "No, we do not wish that Parliament should discuss this Report at all but that it should wait until we introduce the Bill," would not the noble Marquess have been the first to criticise them for weakness and to say they did not dare submit the recommendations of the Committee to the consideration of Parliament? Yet when they do the obvious and straightforward thing the noble Marquess describes their action as unprecedented, nay, even unconstitutional. There is the difficulty in which the Government are

placed, and I hope your Lordships will show in the Division to-morrow night that they have taken the straightforward and obvious course, the only course they could have taken, in submitting to your Lordships the Resolution which was moved by the noble Viscount.

But let us be in no doubt as to what the consequence of a vote in support of the noble Viscount's Resolution means. No one who votes for that Resolution to-morrow must be held to be committed to approval in advance of any clause in the Bill which the Government may subsequently introduce merely because such a clause is in conformity with some recommendation of the majority of the Select Committee. Obviously we all retain perfect freedom in our attitude towards every clause of the Bill which the Government will subsequently introduce. Having sat on the Select Committee and listened to all the conflicting opinions which were brought before us, I am well aware of the immense difficulties of this problem. If I had any interest in so doing I could make a very damaging speech against the proposals of the Majority of the Select Committee. I agree with the most reverend Primate in that respect. We have only got to cite the variety of opinions which were laid before us by witnesses from India in order to show how little unanimity of opinion there is even amongst Indians themselves on this question. Yes, it is very easy to criticise. It would be very simple to make a damaging speech against any proposal that has been made from any quarter on this constitutional question, but I submit no one has a right to criticise the proposals of the Majority of the Committee unless he is prepared to recommend an alternative which, in his opinion, would solve the difficulties better.

Let it be said in justice that the noble Marquess who moved his Amendment has such an alternative. He and the friends who agreed with him on the Select Committee submitted an alternative proposal to the Committee. It is in the records of the Proceedings, and the noble Marquess has even taken the trouble to furnish us with a printed document containing his alternative proposals. I notice that he does not recommend your Lordships to approve these proposals. If he had done so, if that has been the nature of his Amendment, I could very easily have shown that all the objections that could be brought against the proposals of the Majority could be urged against the proposals of the noble Marquess, and a good many more. He does not only not remove the difficulties of which he complained, but his proposals would create many which those who have knowledge and experience of India could point out were even greater than the difficulties which exist in the proposals of the Majority.

Again the noble Lord, Lord Snell, and his colleagues, the Labour representatives on the Select Committee, had also an alternative. I also had an alternative proposal with regard to the form of the Central Government which I recommended to my colleagues and for which I found no support. If any of these alternatives were before your Lordships, and you were being urged to accept them in place of the proposals of the Majority, I should be prepared to argue either for or against them; but no such recommendation is made. These alternative proposals did not receive the support of the Majority of the Committee, and the outstanding fact about the Majority Report is that it embodies the maximum of agreement that could be obtained both in this country and in India on this very difficult question. It does not obtain unanimity either here or in India. No proposal could. But the Report of the Majority of the Committee does secure the maximum support of all those who have studied the question both in this country and in India, and that is the reason why the Government have chosen it as a basis for their legislation.

I asked you just now to put yourselves in the position of the Government; and I do feel in this connection that a very special tribute is due to the Secretary of State for India for his conduct through all these years of this great and difficult question. The Secretary of State took office soon after the Simon Commission had reported and just after the first Round-Table Conference had been set up. At that time he was necessarily ignorant of the vast and complicated details of the Indian constitutional problem. He brought to the study of that problem a fresh mind, a mind which, if it had any bias at all, was biased by a traditional Conservative attitude.

No one could say that when the Secretary of State took up the study of this question he took it up in the spirit of a rash man. He took it up in the spirit of an experienced Conservative statesman. Since then he has sat through all these three Round-Table Conferences for two years. He has made an intensive study of the whole question, and at the end he produced on behalf of the Government the White Paper.

Since then he has continued his work on the sittings of the Joint Select Committee. He has listened to all the opinions, he has read all the documents, he has answered innumerable questions, he has stood examination and cross-examination in every single detail, and from every point of view in this complicated problem, and, as a result of all that work, he has confirmed some of the opinions which were expressed in the White Paper and modified others. No predecessor of the Secretary of State has ever, I think, had such an intensive training in the study of this particular constitutional problem, and I am quite certain that no predecessor of Sir Samuel Hoare had ever such a mastery of all its details as he has. And the result is the Majority Report of the Select Committee.

No one, of course, is under any obligation to accept the authority of the Secretary of State, and I notice that the noble Lord, Lord Ampthill, this afternoon professed to know far better than the Secretary of State, with all the knowledge and information at his disposal, both what India wanted and what India could afford. Speaking for myself, I can only say that if, in discussing any detail of this constitutional problem, I was unable to secure the agreement of the Secretary of State, I should feel very humble in the extent to which I held to my opinion, and I should feel far more certain, if I could get him to agree with me, that I was right in the view which I held.

The noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, deprecated the fact that the Secretary of State had been a member of the Joint Select Committee. Whatever may be the theoretical objections against such a course, I have no doubt whatever that the procedure was amply justified by the example of the present Secretary of State, and I am sure that all my colleagues on that Committee, whatever their views may be on anything else, will agree with me that his conduct throughout was truly admirable and extremely helpful to all of us. I may say that if I was able finally to agree with the Majority in submitting their Report to Parliament, it was largely due to the arguments used by the Secretary of State in our proceedings and out of my great respect for the authority which he commanded.

Your Lordships may not be familiar with all the details of this constitutional problem, but you are not asked to express any opinion upon them. There are in fact three alternatives—the draft of the noble Marquess and his friends, that of the Labour members of the Committee, and, finally, the draft of the Majority. With the main lines of those three alternatives and the points of difference between them all your Lordships, I am quite sure, are familiar, and, as between them, there can be no question whatever as to which has the greater authority. The Government in this matter were bound to follow the Majority. They could not do otherwise. I agree with the noble Lord who spoke last; I do not think there has ever been a question which has been studied more carefully, more profoundly than this one, and no policy has ever been submitted to Parliament with a greater authority. That is the second reason why I have no hesitation in voting for the Resolution moved by the noble Viscount.

My third and last one has relation to the position in India. When I was in India the greatest difficulty which I encountered—and I think the noble Viscount will bear me out in this—was the uncertainty which existed as to the future in the minds of those who co-operated with us. And it was a difficulty which it was impossible for us to remove. It is customary in these debates to refer to the opinions of Congress. The extravagance of their demands is given to us as an excuse for doing nothing. Their criticisms of everything that is offered to them is pointed out to us as evidence that we have failed to satisfy Indian opinion. Those who argue in this way speak as if Congress was India. It is nothing of the kind. The Government of India is far more representative of India as a whole than Congress politicians. I have no hesitation in making that assertion, for

the Government of India is able to speak in the name of officials, in the name of the Army, in the name of the Police, in the name of the Princes, in the name of the fighting races, and in the name of both the Moslem and Hindu communities, whereas the Congress politicians cannot even speak on behalf of one of the great communities. There is no comparison between the authority of the two.

But it is only true to say that that argument can only be maintained so long as the Government do command the support of these people, a support which it is essential for them to retain. Therefore, when I speak of Indian opinion I am thinking of those on whose co-operation I had to rely, and on whose co-operation future Governors and future Viceroys will also have to rely. If the Amendment of the noble Marquess were carried to-morrow night, no matter what may have been the motives of your Lordships in voting for it, these men, the men who have co-operated and worked with us in the past, will be profoundly discouraged. It is not a question of whether we have satisfied Congress demands or not, but the men who have supported us, worked with us, co-operated with us, will be profoundly discouraged by such a vote. If your Lordships carry the Government Resolution, and carry it, as I hope you will, by a large majority, you will put new heart into these men; you will strengthen their hands; you will enable them to feel that the faith that they have always had in the British connection has been justified. The whole Government in India will be strengthened in consequence. So, my Lords, I ask you in the Division to-morrow, by the votes which you then record, to make easier the task of those who have responsibility for government in India, and to reduce, at any rate, the uncertainties which now exist in their minds, to increase the confidence with which they will continue their work—work the object of which is to make stronger the ties which unite our two countries.

EARL HOWE: My Lords, I hope most sincerely that it will not be looked upon as impertinence if one, like myself, who has such complete lack of qualifications intervenes for a few minutes in this debate. I intervene merely as one who feels very much the tremendous responsibility which rests upon every member of your Lordship's House and every member of Parliament in connection with this Indian question. I am not one of those that can claim extensive knowledge of India. I have not been a member of the Joint Select Committee, I have not been a Pro-Consul, I have not been in the Services in India. I served on the East India station, but all I saw of India was on the horizon. Therefore, I cannot claim to know anything of India from the point of view of experience.

The thing that makes me profoundly anxious with regard to this question is first of all that we are being asked to pass a Resolution which invites the Government to bring in a Bill based on the Majority Report of the Joint Select Committee. As I see it, such a Bill must inevitably be one to weaken British authority in India. We are dealing with a country—a sub-continent we are told—inhabited by 352,000,000 people, and of those people I think only some 28,000,000 altogether can read and write. It seems to me that to give a full fledged Western democracy to such people, with all the machinery of elections and everything else, is simply to risk the most appalling disaster. It is not as if they had centuries of political progress such as we have behind us. They have nothing to help them. They have only very limited experience of Parliamentary government, and that experience has only been gained by individuals who have been very carefully selected and specially chosen for it.

Members of His Majesty's Government have repeatedly told us that responsibility at the Centre—in other words a Federal Government—is not possible without some of the Princes. What I want to ask some member of His Majesty's Government to tell us is the number of Princes whose adherence it will be necessary to obtain. As far as I can see, the only information so far given on that point is in the form of a declaration made by the Secretary of State, and that declaration was made some considerable time ago. On March 27, 1933, Sir Samuel Hoare, speaking in another place, said:

> "The House will see that the test which we propose is the test of the entry of Indian States, representing half the population of the States, and half the States entitled to seats in the Upper Chamber."

But Sir Samuel Hoare, when it was suggested in another place that fifty-one per cent. of the Indian States would have to come in before Federation could be granted, said he had never heard of it. I do hope some member of His Majesty's Government will tell us exactly what is the position.

Then I should like to know what is the attitude of the Princes themselves. We have not very much information about that. It appears very doubtful, to put it mildly. Certain correspondence which no doubt your Lordships will have seen appeared in the *Morning Post*—and I fancy in some other newspapers as well—some little time ago, in which it was stated that the Princes would certainly not come into Federation unless the requirements which they had laid down were fulfilled. That shows that the assent of the Princes is very doubtful. I should like to know from some member of His Majesty's Government—and I think we should be told, if possible, before to-morrow night—what the real chances are of the Princes coming in. We are told that political India is not entirely in favour of this scheme, and, in fact, rejects it. I believe it is true to say that every single Indian who advocated the White Paper policy, in any shape or form, was beaten in the Elections which took place in India the other day. If that is so, it is hardly an encouraging circumstance for those of us who think that if we are to have a Bill framed on the lines of the Majority Report of the Joint Select Committee, or on the lines of the White Paper, we should carry Indian opinion with us.

I am sure that every member of your Lordships' House must have been delighted to hear the magnificent speech, as it seemed to me, of the noble Marquess, the Chairman of the Joint Select Committee. It carried me back a long time, for nothing has interested me more than to see the oratorical and political triumph of my old "fag." The noble Marquess was, I think, the first of those who have spoken in your Lordships' House to give us some of the details of the cost of this scheme. That is one of the things I very much wanted to hear He said—I took down his words for the sake of greater accuracy—that the Indian economic problem was not comfortable, and he gave us certain figures with regard to cost. It is obvious that those figures are only provisional, but I hope that a representative of His Majesty's Government will tell us whether we are going to be asked to foot the bill, and if so, to what extent. I hope a representative of His Majesty's Government will tell us because it has been said by other speakers that it is really impossible for this country, or for India, in the present economic circumstances, to face large extra items of expenditure.

I hope that we shall be told the whole truth with regard to this economic position, for it is one of the things that make me very anxious indeed. The cost of the reforms in India cannot, I think, be exactly and precisely confined to India. There is a further possibility as to the way in which the cost may conceivably fall upon this country. I refer, of course, to those millions of our people who are either wholly unemployed or only partially employed, and to the others who are happily still employed and who depend for their living upon Indian produce. I do not know whether the noble Earl, Lord Derby, who is looked to by everybody throughout the length and breadth of the country as being the great spokesman of Lancashire opinion, intends to intervene in this debate; but there are many of us who are deeply anxious with regard to the possible effects upon Indian trade of any legislation following upon the White Paper.

I noticed a speech made by the noble Earl, Lord Derby, a short time ago, wherein he stated that if the Amendment of the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, stood alone he would have found very considerable difficulty in voting against it, but he said he really could not vote for it because he felt that it had to be taken in conjunction with speeches and utterances of others who agreed with the noble Marquess. I can quite sympathise with that point of view. At the same time I do not think we can be asked to do anything or to agree to anything which is possibly going to have the effect of still further adding to the number of people in this country who are out of work. At the present time, when one of our most frightful problems is that of the depressed areas, I submit that we ought to go with the greatest caution into anything which may have such an effect.

There is another circumstance which makes me very anxious indeed. I am not aware of a single member of His Majesty's Government or of a single Member of Parliament who supports them, who at the last General Election said anything whatever on the subject of India. I was at that time actually working in the Conservative Central Office and I had peculiar opportunities of seeing the Election addresses of a great many Conservative candidates, but I never came across a single reference to India in any of those I looked at. The country, I submit, never understood and certainly never realised at the last General Election that if they returned to power a Government to deal with the urgent economic situation—as I am sure they did elect them—that Government would be likely to deal with the question of India without first consulting the electors. The only utterance we have had is an utterance of the present Prime Minister six years ago, that he looked forward to giving full Dominion *status* to India.

There is a suspicion which has been alluded to publicly, and therefore I think I do no harm by alluding to it again, that there may possibly have been some sort of arrangement behind the scenes of which the country knows nothing with regard to this Indian problem. If there was, I only hope that it will be stated by some member of His Majesty's Government. The only occasion upon which anybody can say that this matter has been before our people at all is when it was referred to a carefully packed meeting of the Conservative Party Council the other day. That, in my submission, is not a substitute for consulting the country on the matter. I do feel that before anything of such tremendous magnitude is done, before such a terrific responsibility is assumed even by a National Government, the National Government really ought to consult the people in the matter.

The Joint Select Committee made very little material alteration in the White Paper, but they have certainly increased the safeguards; and that brings me to a point about which I am particularly anxious. I do not suppose that any Government would have dared to introduce a Bill based upon the Report of the Joint Select Committee without having any safeguards at all. Therefore I think we may assume that the matter of safeguards is one of the first importance; in fact numerous speakers have referred to it. That carries us back at once to the Irish situation, which is one of the things which make so many of us profoundly anxious to-day. Take the Irish Treaty. There were eighteen clauses in the Irish Treaty. Of those eighteen clauses five were concerned with the possibly entry of Northern Ireland into the Treaty State; two were concerned with matters which, relatively speaking, were really unimportant; and eleven clauses were concerned solely with safeguards.

One of those safeguards dealt with the Oath of Allegiance; that has already gone. Another dealt with the Governor-General, who is now, we are told, a "rubber stamp." A third dealt with the limitation of the armed forces and the formation of auxiliary forces; that seems to have gone altogether. Another was a covenant to pay pensions to civil servants who were compulsorily retired; that matter has been before your Lordships' House several times already, and we know that that has gone. Ireland's share of the National Debt was provided for, and that has been waived; and all the clauses providing that the relations with the Imperial Government should be the same as the relations between this country and Canada have gone altogether. Surely we ought to be warned by such an experience.

We are told that we need have no anxiety in the matter because there is really no analogy between Ireland and India, as we do not propose to withdraw the Army from India. What an admission that seems to me to be! Does it mean that the present scheme of the Majority Report has got to be entirely dependent upon the Army and that we may have to employ the Army to enforce the safeguards and that kind of thing? After all, the Army was not very far from Ireland, but we see what happened in Ireland. It seems to me that the position is going to be impossibly difficult for the Army in India. I am not a military man, as I have explained, but I do not think that it requires a military man to judge that. When you are going to hand over wireless, railways, posts and telegraphs, arms, ammunition, explosives, and the Police to Indian administration, surely in certain circumstances, if you have a hostile India or an India which is

set against you, it is going to make it almost impossible for the Army to operate. I leave alone entirely the question of the possible refusal of supplies; I do not want to press imagination too far.

Another important safeguard which is proposed in the Majority Report is that the Governor-General or the Governor of the State, as the case may be, should intervene on ooccasion if he thinks that intervention is required. But imagine for one moment what the Governor-General or the Governor of the State has got to think about if he does intervene. He has the certain knowledge that he will be attacked up and down India everywhere by a democratically elected people. Not only that, but he will be attacked at home. Questions will be asked in the House of Commons as to why he has so acted, and probably the Secretary of State or somebody of that sort will have to justify his actions here. It seems to me that it is putting a tremendous responsibility on one individual, a responsibility which is almost too great for anybody to bear. It seems to me that once you have got representative institutions and responsible government in any Dependency, it does not matter how much you may restrict it, the Imperial Government can do absolutely nothing if the responsible Government choses to defy it.

If legislation is brought in on the lines of the Majority Report, and if we accept it, and if we grant responsible government at the Centre, a Federal Government, it seems to me that the moment we do that we take a step from which there never can be any going back. The last speaker poured scorn upon the idea of the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, that we should go very slowly, and grant responsible government in the Provinces, and wait a bit for responsibility at the Centre. It seems to me that that is a matter of common prudence. We are told by many who have intervened in this debate that it is an absolutely impracticable suggestion. I am not convinced that it is. At any rate it seems to me to be merely a counsel of prudence, and that is why I do not feel able to bring myself to support the Motion introduced by the noble Viscount, Lord Halifax. I feel that it is a gamble, and I am not prepared to go that far in a step of such first importance as this is. I feel deeply the responsibility resting upon me, and I was and am determined in no circumstances to give a silent vote. Therefore I have tried, without taking up to much of your Lordships' time, to give the reasons why I cannot possibly support the Government in this matter, and why I shall follow the noble Marquess in support of his Amendment.

LORD FARINGDON: My Lords, it is with infinite hesitation that I take up any of your time so late in the evening. If I do so it is because I have not merely lived in India, but did so in rather unusual circumstances. I held neither an official, military or commercial position, and therefore I have seen the country from a somewhat unusual angle. I naturally had not access to official sources of information enjoyed by many other noble Lords, but perhaps on that account I came more directly than some into contact with the man in the street. It is really his position under the reforms of which I should like to speak, and of his position as I saw it.

Primarily I think some protest should be made against the attitude, which I have found only too often adopted, of treating Indians as a backward race. The other day I read a pronouncement on India by the noble and learned Lord, Lord Carson, who claimed to speak with authority on India, primarily as an Irishman—a somewhat Irish claim—and secondly as a member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, before whom many Indian cases had been tried. As a proof of Indian ignorance and backwardness, the noble and learned Lord quoted a case in which the question to be decided was whether a certain idol should be draped or nude. I do not think that is necessarily a reasonable conclusion from that case. Have there not been cases before the English Courts where the question most hotly contested was whether banners should be hung in certain churches, not to go into other more intricate questions of ritual? Surely people who find the draping of a church a matter of impassioned interest, have no right to criticise Indians who attach importance to the draping of an idol.

There are, of course, immense differences between the different races in India, but I think undoubtedly the vast majority of them are of very considerable and very

lively intelligence, fully able to grasp political ideas—as fully able, in fact, as many Europeans, and more able than some. There are probably many European countries who do not govern themselves according to our standard of self-government, but who have magnificent records in history and contrive to govern themselves to their own satisfaction, at any rate. Educated Indians have under our tutelage been brought up on the political thought of England in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and they have imbibed the principles on which our democracy stands. I believe the merest "failed matric." in India will quote you Burke's speech on Conciliation with America. It really is not unnatural that they should expect us to extend to them the principles we have taught them, and should be bitterly disappointed if we refuse to do so, and naturally should suspect sinister motives, even if they do not exist. The great majority of Indians may be illiterate, but illiteracy is not synonymous with stupidity, and so far from illiteracy exposing the peasant to the machinations of the agitators, I suspect it would be more likely to protect him.

How quickly political ideas spread, and how fully they are grasped, in India, has been a matter certainly of very great surprise to me. While I was there, what was particularly noticeable was the difference between the first and second civil disobedience movements. The first was almost entirely urban, and the second reached almost to the most remote district, and caused embarrassment to the most remote District Commissioners. India is undoubtedly changing with incredible rapidity, and for this reason the latest authorities are the best. People with the most extensive experience of India very quickly become out of date, and there is an Indian susceptibility which it seems to me is not quite fully appreciated. That is their attitude to this matter of the *status* of India as a British Dominion and of Indians as free and independent subjects of the Crown, entitled to manage their own affairs. They have been repeatedly assured by various statements on behalf of different Governments, one of whose spokesmen was Mr. Churchill himself, that Dominion *status* for India was the object and, in fact, the immediate object of this policy, and attempts to whittle down these declarations have made Indians intensely anxious, and I think rightly indignant. They are therefore extremely keen that some such declaration should be included in the new Constitution. Such a declaration, I am absolutely convinced, would enormously help the chances of acceptance of this Constitution by the Indian people.

Another objection, of which I heard a great deal whilst I was in India, was that at the time of the publication of the Report of the Statutory Commission for every line of concession there were twenty pages of safeguards. Well, that is of course a purely psychological reaction, but it seems to be a very natural one, and one which it would be advisable to consider. The word "safeguard" is a very unpleasant one, and one that is much resented. It is probably too late to change it now. And the administration of the safeguards will undoubtedly depend upon the Governors who are sent out to administer them. As was the case under the Canada Act, they may not prevent the growth of an Indian democracy, but let us hope that there will be sufficient Elgins forthcoming so to administer the safeguards, or rather to refrain from administering them, as to develop democracy in India.

Great anxiety has been constantly expressed lest we hand over the masses in India to a small literate class. Surely, the very best defence for the masses would be the widest possible franchise. The technical difficulties of adult suffrage are obvious, but surely they are not insuperable; and if Indian democracy is to develop, adult suffrage is perfectly essential. With a fully extended franchise special representation for labour could probably be dispensed with. Obviously, with a limited franchise such as that offered such representation is absolutely essential. It may have the useful result of teaching labour her strength and how to use it. Let us hope so. No such considerations, however, seem to apply to commerce and industry. Anyhow, if representation is to be given to commerce and industry, which in virtue of their wealth must be more than adequately represented, surely the representation of labour and capital might be made numerically equal. The power of capital must inevitably be stronger, but

at least the numerical strength of capital and labour might be made the same.

It is very late, and I do not wish to detain your Lordships, but I should like to say a word on behalf of a community for whom I have a very deep sympathy, and I am sure your Lordships will have, the Anglo-Indian community. They seem to me to have been perhaps a little neglected. They are people who are very peculiarly our own responsibility. One of the reasons why the Communal Award raises such very strong feeling is that on the number of relatives or co-religionists an Indian may happen to have in the Government depends his chance of employment on the railways or in the Secretariat. The Anglo-Indian has no such protection. When an Anglo-Indian makes good, he quits his community and returns to England. They are people who, apart from our obvious responsibility, have served us faithfully, and to whom we owe a great deal. Before Indian clerks were available Anglo-Indians supplied the *personnel* of the Government in India and on the railways. Without them our government and our trade could never have been built up. It has been suggested that it would be a gracious act on the part of the British Government to take over the charges of the Ecclesiastical Department. This would seem to be the merest justice. A far more gracious act would be to do something on behalf of this invidiously placed community. Could not the British Government—at some expense, but not too colossal an expense—perhaps endow schools or scholarships to Universities for this community, and thus place them more on a level with their more favoured, or rather more protected, rivals? The generosity of such an action, I am quite certain, would be enormously appreciated by Indians in India, and would enormously increase their respect for us.

The most surprising part of the Report is the particular tenderness with which the landlords of India have been treated. Why a community which must inevitably have such colossal influence has been treated as if it was weak and defenceless, and needed special protection, is very obscure. Perhaps members of the Committee, themselves landlords, thought they were protecting their own most estimable class. Speaking myself as a landlord, I should very much dislike to call Indian landlords my fellows. Indian landlordism is a very different affair from landlordism here in England, and as it is one of the abuses which an Indian democracy will have to deal with at once, it is natural that the landlords should seek all the protection that they can get. But that they should be given it by Englishmen of any Party is amazing. It is, in fact, shocking. That, moreover, in certain Provinces, as it seems, Second Chambers are to be created, apparently expressly in order to protect these landlords, is appalling. Their influence is bound in any case to be enormous, and surely they need no more.

The overwhelming impression of India, to which the display of the Princes cannot blind us, is one of intense poverty. The revenues of India are literally made up of mites. I will not weary your Lordships with figures of the average incomes of Indian ryots, but they are so small that it is amazing that men can live on them, more amazing still that they can raise families upon them, and positively astounding that they can pay taxes. The revenue is drawn from sources so impecunious that it is a moral duty to see that those revenues are expended in the most economical manner possible, and, above all, not on political luxury. For this reason my noble friends on the Committee were opposed to Second Chambers in the Provinces and at the Centre alike. The noble Lord, Lord Ampthill, drew attention to the expenses which would be incurred by this new Constitution. If the suggestions of my noble friends were followed, undoubtedly these expenses would to a certain extent be cut down. Every saving in India is undoubtedly a great saving. It seems to me, apart altogether from this reason, that these Second Chambers should be created to protect a vested interest with a Constitution granted by the democratic Mother of Parliaments as the vesting instrument is shocking.

That the problem is incredibly complicated and difficult is obvious to all your Lordships, no doubt, but there is one attitude which surely does not help anything: it is the attitude of self-righteousness which Englishmen are inclined to adopt when they consider the Indian problem. Surely this is not justified. Why did the English go to India? It was not the British Crown that sent forces to India to rescue the

Indians from tyranny and oppression, from famine and disaster. It was the old "John Company" which in the interests of their trade and for the extension of it gradually conquered the whole sub-continent. If that unification of India has produced also peace and tranquillity that is for Indians a happy chance; these were equally essential for the trade of the Company. If irrigation and communications have been built, these were not charitable endeavours. If the admirable fight against famine and disease has been largely successful, it has also had the profitable result of preserving consumers for commerce and producers for industry.

If, on the other hand, we look at the social side we find a far less creditable position. Fearful of disturbing our trade, we have left undisturbed and perpetuated abuses under pretence of consideration and respect for religious and communal feeling. Our sole effort to improve such conditions, I think I am right in saying, was the abolition of suttee, and even the passing of the Sarda Act abolishing child marriage was the act of an Indian Parliament. Of course it may be said that reforms of this kind come better from Indians themselves, from within, than from the British Government, from without. That seems only an additional reason for creating at once a Parliament responsible for such reforms and able to enforce them. Probably most of the opposition to Parliamentary advance in India comes from those who fear loss of trade. The noble Lord who spoke before me, in fact, drew particular attention to the prospective loss of trade to Lancashire. Such an attitude is perfectly natural, if not perhaps extremely admirable. But our pledges to India must be implemented, and that quickly, if we are to retain any trade at all. Probably it is consciousness of losses suffered by trade, the figures for which I have never seen—probably they would be difficult to compute—which has led the European commercial community in India to change its attitude radically towards Indian difficulties, and to take up an attitude far more liberal, far more generous. I urge your Lordships, therefore, to consider whether it is not advisable both on ethical and material grounds to implement our pledges and to give to India the Dominion Home Rule we have promised her.

THE DUKE OF ATHOLL: My Lords, at this late hour of the evening I am sure the noble Lord who has just spoken will excuse me if I do not follow some of the arguments he used in a well-thought-out speech. I rise to give my support to the Amendment moved by the noble Marquess. Rarely can this House have been asked to commit itself on a question of such tremendous importance to this country and to the Empire with so little time to digest proposals of vast range and complexity. Noble Lords who served on the Joint Select Committee have, of course, full knowledge of what the Report contains, but I submit it is impossible for any of us who have not so served to have been able, in the three weeks that have elapsed since the Report was published, to have sufficiently mastered its contents to be able to come to considered decisions on the very grave questions with which it deals. And that really is my answer in short to the noble Earl who spoke from the Cross Benches. Yet, when two or three weeks ago one of your Lordships asked that this debate should be delayed until the New Year, the noble Viscount, the Leader of the House stated that in that case the Government's Bill would probably have been introduced into another place before your Lordships had considered the Report. That statement implies that the Government Bill must be already in draft before the Report of the Committee has been approved by Parliament.

VISCOUNT HAILSHAM: No.

THE DUKE OF ATHOLL: The noble Viscount says "No." I am wrong. But I should have thought it was inconceivable that any Bill dealing with all the recommendations of the Joint Committee could possibly be drafted between to-morrow and the beginning of February, with the Christmas holidays intervening. Moreover, the Report appears to be based on an assumption which now appears doubtful—namely, the belief that the Indian Princes as a whole, or a large proportion of them, desire the proposed Federation and insist on the great transfers of responsibility to the Federation which the Report proposes. In Paragraph 32 we read:

> "The Princes have stated clearly in their declaration that they are willing now to enter an All-India Federation, but only if the Federal Government is a responsible and not an irresponsible Government."

But it was stated two days ago in another place that as long ago as April last a letter had been received from five leading Princes of the Chamber of Princes, including the Chancellor and the Pro-Chancellor of the Chamber, to the effect that they would not be prepared to enter the Federation under the terms set out in the White Paper. The Member for Chichester to whom that letter had been addressed stated that he had had information that the Princes in question had carefully examined the Committee's Report—of course I do not know, but this is what we are told—and were satisfied that it did not grant the majority of the amendments for which the Chamber had stipulated as a condition of entry into the Federation.

There is, therefore, I think, obvious reason to doubt whether the Princes as as whole, or a majority even of the leading Princes, desire Federation. That being so, it appears to me to be wasting your Lordships' time and to be hardly consistent with the dignity of Parliament to ask your Lordships to commit yourselves to proposals which, before Parliament reassembles, may have been put out of court, so to speak, by a refusal of the Princes to accede to them. The Chamber of Princes, I understand, is not to meet until January to consider them. But there is a further point which I feel bound to mention here. It has been said that the Viceroy has exercised personal pressure on the Princes. I am not suggesting it, of course. The Viceroy has denied this, and of course we accept his statement. But as he went out to India on the nomination of a Government pledged in outline to the scheme adumbrated in the Report and has often publicly stated his belief in it—I am not suggesting that he should not—can it be wondered at if Princes, who have an enormous respect for the Viceroy, as representative of the King-Emperor, find it difficult to express openly the fears many of them evidently entertain with regard to it?

Further, can it be denied that the policy of the Government is to offer inducements to certain Princes to adhere to the Federation? In 1932 a Committee known as the Indian States Financial Inquiry Committee was sent out to enquire into and report as to the conditions on which the States might agree to federate. The Committee recommended that the States which paid tributes of money to the Government of India should have these tributes gradually remitted to them by the Central Government over a period of years, and payment should also be made to certain Princes for territories ceded by them at different times to the Government of India. These remissions and payments would amount, I think, to something like £750,000 in a year, or over one per cent. of the present Indian Central Budget. It is important to note that the Committee, in paragraph 435 of their Report, emphatically state that these remissions or payments are to be made only to Princes who join the Federation.

They add that they were not empowered to make recommendations for the settlement of financial questions outstanding between British India and the States upon any other basis. In other words a system of inducements, bribery and of threats was suggested, because if they did not accept the inducements they were going to be financial losers and were practically to be put into outer darkness. In connection with this it should also be observed that the Joint Select Committee referred to "complicated financial adjustments" discussed by the Indian States Financial Inquiry Committee, and state that they "endorse the main principles" on which the Committee's Report is based. As the Government have approved the Report of the Joint Committee, presumably they also approve of these monetary inducements euphemistically described as "complicated financial adjustments."

I observe indeed with concern that the Lord President of the Council, speaking in another place on Wednesday of last week, referring to the question whether inducements were being offered to certain Princes or not, appeared to condone such a procedure by reminding honourable members of the bribes offered to secure Scotland's consent to the Act of Union. But, surely, my Lords, we hope and believe that our standards of public morality and conduct have advanced since the year 1707? Bribery, then rampant in our public administration and our electoral system, has long since been made illegal, and is now regarded as shameful. I cannot help, therefore, expressing my deep

regret that one for whom I have so great a personal regard as the Lord President of the Council, and who above all men is the soul of honour himself, should seem to think so lightly of the use of such political methods in India to-day.

But more precious inducements than money are being offered to certain very influential Princes. The Hindu state of Mysore, the second largest in India, with a population of six and a-half millions, besides remission of an annual tribute of about £187,000 per annum, is being encouraged to believe that its request to have retroceded to it the civil station of Bangalore will be granted in the event of its coming into the Federation. Bangalore, as your Lordships know, has an exceptionally good climate, and the civil and military station there has been occupied for considerably over one hundred years, not only by British troops but by many civilian residents, British and Anglo-Indian. When Mysore was handed back to the present dynasty in 1881, a Treaty was made under which it was agreed that the civil station would remain under British administration so long as British troops were kept there. The Secretary of State has announced in another place that the troops are not to be removed. Yet the Mysore Government has asked for the retrocession of the civil station, and the Under-Secretary of State stated last week that the Government had the matter under consideration.

Indeed, I hold here a newspaper report of an interview given as long ago as last March by the Prime Minister of Mysore to a deputation from the mercantile community of Bangalore, in which the Prime Minister stated that " partial retrocession had been decided on, and that there were certain details connected with it that needed further discussions with the Government of India." As this statement goes much further than that made by the Under-Secertary of State last week, I would ask the Leader of the House to inform us to-morrow whether any decision has been taken by the Government on this important point. There are said to be about 130,000 residents in the tract of land in question, 2,700 of whom are Europeans, 5,500 Anglo-Indians, and over 30,000 Mahomedans. A memorial of protest against the proposed retrocession was sent to the Viceroy in February last by the Bangalore Trades Association, in which grave fears were expressed on grounds of educational administration, of hospital administration, of legal *status*, and other matters in regard to the proposed transfer. In September a renewed protest was made, not only by the Trades Association, but by associations of ratepayers, and by the Anglo-Indian Association of Bangalore. More recently 30,000 Moslems in Bangalore civil station have vehemently protested against being transferred to a Hindu state.

It is also important to note that the Anglo-Indian Association is opposed to this transfer, because two or three weeks ago a well-known newspaper published an interview with Sir Henry Gidney, who has represented the Anglo-Indian community at the Round Table Conference and on the Joint Select Committee, in which Sir Henry expressed approval of the proposal. An unsolicited cable was immediately received by a member of another place, asking her to make known that the Anglo-Indian Association in Bangalore " dissented entirely " from Sir Henry's view. A statement to this effect was sent to the newspaper in question, but as this was not published I am glad to have this opportunity of making the views of the Anglo-Indian Association known to your Lordships. Now, the Mysore Government is said to have raised this matter of the retrocession of Bangalore in the years 1912 and 1924, but the matter cannot have got very far then, as it never reached the stage of public discussion, and I feel that the fact that it is being openly discussed now cannot but give rise to the belief that the Government of India are to-day willing to consider what has formerly been refused, in order to bring Mysore into the Federation. Anyhow that is what is believed in Bangalore itself. The Joint Memorial of September last, already referred to, states that

" it is common knowledge that Mysore, which has so far declined to enter the Federation, has now consented to do so, provided the subsidy "—

that is to say, the tribute—

" is abolished, and the civil and military station handed over to them. This we know is what she has been urging for some time, partly culminating with a definite stipulation, as the price of her participation in the new federal scheme."

But it is not only citizens of Bangalore, British and Anglo-Indian, whom it is pro-

posed to hand over against their will to a Hindu State.

This has been also proposed in the case of a community of some two thousand persons at Tangasseri, whom it is proposed to transfer to the rule of the State of Travancore. All but one family of the two thousand are Roman Catholics, who are protesting vehemently against being obliged to become citizens of a Hindu State. I have always understood that to transfer British-Indian inhabitants against their will to an Indian State is in direct conflict with the long-established custom of the Government of India. The significance of these attempts to force British subjects to become citizens of Mysore and Travancore respectively becomes clear when we realise what the Report proposes as the main condition precedent to setting up a Federation. This is not to be the adherence of a substantial majority, or indeed of any majority of the 560 States as a whole, or of the 235 States represented in the Chamber of Princes, but the adherence of States represented in not less than 50 per cent. of the total population of the States and not less than 50 per cent. of the seats proposed to be allotted to the States in the Upper Federal Chamber. My Lords, a few of the Indian States are so very much larger than others that, to meet the condition in regard to population, the adherence of only nine of the largest States is necessary, or one twenty-eighth of the States represented in the Chamber, and to fulfil the second condition, only twenty-seven, or about one-eighth of these States. Mysore is the second largest of the States and Travancore is the third. The adherence of these two States would therefore go far to provide the population necessary and to meet the first condition. It would, indeed, provide more than a quarter of the necessary 50 per cent. of the total population of the States. That is the reason why such interest is taken by the Government in these two particular States.

As the question of these transfers of population is not referred to in the report, and, being an administrative matter, is not likely to be referred to in the Bill, I have felt bound to bring it to your Lordships' attention as a matter vitally concerned with the setting up of an All-India Federation, the main proposal of the report. The noble and learned Viscount, the Lord Chancellor, referred this evening to the nation of India. Did I believe or know that India was a nation instead of a conglomeration of nations between whom there is very little love lost, and speaking I think over one hundred and twenty dialects, I would not be so doubtful as I am to-day of the success of the White Paper scheme. But it is obvious to me that in asking us to approve a report as the basis of a Bill which we have never seen, the Government are, in effect, asking us to sign a blank cheque on a matter of transcendent importance. I, for my part, feel that I simply cannot do it, and I am therefore going to support the Amendment of the noble Marquess. In conclusion, my Lords, may I apologise for keeping the House so late in order to say things with which I know a great many of you certainly do not agree.

THE EARL OF LUCAN: My Lords, on behalf of my noble friend Lord Hastings, I beg to move that the debate be now adjourned.

Moved accordingly, and on Question, Motion agreed to, and debate adjourned accordingly.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

VISCOUNT HAILSHAM: My Lords, before the House adjourns, it may be for the general convenience if I mention what I think is not in the Notices, that is, that it has been found possible to arrange for your Lordships to meet at three o'clock to-morrow afternoon. That will ensure that we are able to get the Division at a reasonable time. I am also glad to tell the noble Lord opposite that I have been able to make a similar arrangement for Wednesday, which will give rather more time for the discussion of matters in which I know he and those associated with him take special interest.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before nine o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 18th December, 1934.

The House met at three of the clock, The LORD CHANCELLOR on the Woolsack.

ABERDEEN CORPORATION ORDER CONFIRMATION BILL.

Considered on Report (according to Order).

INDIAN CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM.

Debate resumed (according to Order) on the Motion of Viscount Halifax to resolve, That this House accepts the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform as the basis for the revision of the Indian Constitution and considers it expedient that a Bill should be introduced on the general lines of the Report, and on the Amendment moved by the Marquess of Salisbury to the foregoing Motion, namely, to leave out all the words after "That" and insert "this House is unwilling to pronounce in advance an acceptance of far-reaching recommendations on Indian Constitutional Reform until it has had the opportunity of considering and approving the particular recommendations of the Joint Select Committee to be adopted by the Government and proposed in the concrete form of the provisions of a Bill."

LORD HASTINGS: My Lords, those of your Lordships who have attended in your places during the preceding three days of this debate and have listened to the eloquence with which the whole great subject has been treated, ranging from the discussion of important detail to the expression of lofty sentiment, may be excused for wondering what can be left that is new to be said by anyone having the temerity to speak on this the last day of the debate; and so wondering, your Lordships may have it in your heart to sympathise with anyone who has that temerity and to wish him a greater fortune than might at first sight seem to be his. But there is that may be borne in mind. The reactions of a great subject such as this on the individual mind must necessarily be very varied. There are those who approach great subjects solely from the fulness of their own experience; there are others who approach them on the lines of the traditional political view which is at the root of all their opinions just as truly as their religion; and there are others who are mere searchers after truth. And so until the last word is spoken there is always a chance—remote perhaps, but still a chance—that some new opinion may emerge which will start a fresh line of thought in others and so make its contribution to the common good. And this is the excuse that I would offer to your Lordships for venturing myself upon your Lordships for a very brief space this afternoon.

It has been said in this debate, most notably by the most reverend Primate and by the noble Earl, Lord Lytton, that criticism of the scheme of the White Paper with its consequential Report of the Joint Select Committee is clearly an easier task than that of the defence of the whole of its proposals, and that is patently true. But while it is possible to criticise, and easy to criticise, it has been proved in this debate infinitely more difficult to suggest alternatives to the scheme which is before the House and the country. While I am not disposed to spend much time in answering criticism, I would suggest that the application, or the combination, shall I put it, of faith with practicality probably finds the best answer to them all. If I might quote a case which I have in mind, in the impressive and attractive speech delivered last night by my noble friend Lord Middleton, he touched upon—indeed, he did more than touch upon, he dealt at some length with—the case of the illiterate and inarticulate masses of the Indian population. He expressed the fear that that great mass of tillers of the soil had been forgotten in the estimations and proposals of the Joint Select Committee.

There will have been many on that Joint Select Committee, as there are many in this House, to whom the case of the tillers of the soil in India has been ever present. It is very certain that they have not been forgotten. For myself, all my life I have been deeply impressed with the relative importance of the tiller of the soil as compared with what without offence I would describe as the parasitic classes of the community who live upon primary production but do not contribute to it. And I am conscious that

that train of thought is uppermost in the minds of many of your Lordships, and that you would never consciously hand over the tiller of the soil to be a prey to those who have no regard for him, whether in India or here. It is, of course, a certain fact, and I doubt whether there will be any found to deny it, that the mass of the present population of India have been, and would be, better governed, in the sense that they would be less open to any form of interference or oppression, under a benevolent autocracy. I doubt whether there would be any disposed to deny that fact. And it is true that they will, under the proposals of the Joint Select Committee, be made in a degree far greater than now subservient to the political necessities of the Parties which may spring into existence in India. But the situation is a wholly different one from that which exists in England.

Bear in mind that for long years, indeed for generations, the agricultural population of England has been subservient to the over-weighted mass of the industrial population, and that in point of numbers it has had little chance. In India, if I may use the colloquialism, the boot is on the other leg, and the surest and most certain way to bring political consciousness to the masses of the Indian population is to give them a Parliamentary majority in any way inclined to oppress them, and to give them a vote by which they can repel that oppression. The vast masses of the Indian population will learn in time, and it will not be a very long time, to protect themselves, and the individual who for an instant need is the first to set in motion the political sense, which will develop quickly when once it is set in motion, will live to regret the foolhardiness of his action. Illiteracy is not a synonym for lack of intelligence. The Indian peasant, safe to-day from interference and mindful only of agricultural prices and the punctuality of the monsoon, will not be slow to realise his danger if there are those in authority who will attempt to exploit him for purposes only of their own.

I have it in mind that that line of thought may be conceivably applied, to some advantage, to sundry other problems connected with the grant of provincial autonomy in India; and I would venture to remind your Lordships—and of course I am not the first in doing this, for other speakers have expressed much the same thought, that it is the Provincial Government and not the Central which will be brought into instant and daily contact with the masses of the Indian people—that our traditional responsibility for the welfare of those masses is going to be affected by the grant of provincial autonomy, and only in the most trifling degree by the grant of responsibility at the Centre. Even so, if one may cast back for a moment, I think that the line of thought developed in my own mind, when applied to the agricultural masses of the people, has application to sundry other elements of the problem as touched by the grant of provincial autonomy, and I have in mind, amongst other things, the question of finance.

We are all conscious that, when all is said and done, ways and means have a habit of intruding themselves into all our opinions and all our judgments, and it is a fact, as was said by my noble friend, Lord Linlithgow, last night, that the financial situation in India, while highly satisfactory when compared with the financial situation in any other country in the world, is yet not entirely comfortable. When Indian Ministries get into the saddle, and find themselves in power, they will also find themselves under the necessity of dealing with day to day problems of administration always in the light of the exigencies of the financial situation, and there is nothing so certain as this, that a shortage of money would compel reasonableness of action. Without desiring or in any way intending to give offence, may we not compare the action from time to time displayed by the Socialist Party in England? When there is much to divide the Socialist Party is very active, but when there is little in the till we hear less of the Socialist Party. I think we shall find much the same thing in India; that the necessities of careful meticulous administration will go an immensely long way towards bringing home the responsibilities of their office to those who are to be the first Ministers in India. I have this faith, that they will be infinitely more anxious to obtain the co-operation and advice and influence of the Indian Civil Service, and of experienced Britons in India, than they will be to fight with them and to endeavour to dispense with

them, and so to make the whole of their own methods and system of government so infinitely more difficult for themselves.

Now, my Lords, I object to the inferiority complex which many of the opponents of the Joint Select Committee's recommendations have apparently assumed for themselves, and are apparently anxious to fix upon others. Let us rather dwell upon what the British race has done in India, and its incredible accomplishments. Are we not capable of continuing to do in the future what we have done with such conspicuous success in the past? My noble friend Lord Halifax, outside this House, made some remarks the other day which I read with intense interest. I think he was giving advice to young men proceeding to India, and what did he say? He said: "Remember the power of influence." It was a great phrase. And although unquestionably in the past we have had behind us the autocratic power, enabling us to force our will upon India, what in effect has made it possible to force that will? Only the influence of the personalities which have emerged from Britain, and gone and placed their services at the disposal of India. What has been done in the past can be done in the future. And while it would be foolish—it would be worse than foolish—to be so unpractical as to allow sentiment to outweigh or to entirely displace consideration of the patent difficulties of the situation, those difficulties are made infinitely less by the application of a little faith, by the recollection of what has been done in the past, and by a determination to co-operate in the future and to compel a success where others foretell misfortune.

I do not think that I can profitably develop that line of thought any further, for I do not, after all the speeches that have been made, intend to discuss in any great detail the difficulties of the many subjects which arise for consideration under the proposed grant of autonomy to the Provinces. I would like, if I may, to turn from that to some brief consideration of the proposal, made both in the White Paper and by the Joint Select Committee, for the setting up of responsibility at the Centre. The arguments in favour of so doing have been placed before your Lordships with an authority and a conclusiveness which I am unable to equal; but I would say this for myself, that I would be found opposing the grant of provincial autonomy by all the means that I could find at my disposal, if at the same time responsibility were not to be granted at the Centre. I regard the grant of responsibility at the Centre as the greatest safeguard that we have, and I am convinced that any attempt to set in motion the Provincial Governments, with the great powers which it is proposed to confer upon them, without at the same time establishing the strongest possible form of government at the Centre, would end in disaster to the British connection and nothing but suicidal conflict between the Provinces themselves.

But there are other reasons than that which lead me to commend to your Lordships these proposals. You are aware that, whereas we are bound to speak of British India and Indian India, yet in fact no one in India itself can tell when he passes from the boundary of British India to that of a State and back again, for the reason that the States themselves are interwoven and interlocked with British India; and really it would be unpractical and impossible to legislate solely for one part of India. The unity of India is necessary for the preservation of India itself, and the possibility that the States of India are now to be allied in the legislative sense with British India offers greater hope for the future than any other of the adventures on which we are embarking now.

Last night my noble friend Lord Howe asked a categorical question. He said he wanted to know how many, if any, of the Princes of India are going to accede to the Federation. Many of us would like to know, and I venture to say that neither the Secretary of State nor any member of His Majesty's Government speaking in this House will be able to give a categorical answer to that categorical question. Why should they be able? In this morning's paper—and I make no comment either upon the propriety or otherwise or the wisdom or unwisdom of the letter—we read of a letter addressed to certain Princes of India by certain notable members of the Conservative Party. But while I make no comment on that letter I permit myself to smile at the reply. The Maharajahs of Patiala and Dholapur and Panna and Bahawalpur and

Jhalawar are not going to be caught quite so easily as all that. Their attitude has been one of perfect reason from the beginning. What have they said?—and there is nothing oriental in it. They have said "We have propounded certain desiderata, and we wish to know whether they are to be met before we will commit ourselves to final agreement." And what do they say now? They say: "When we have seen the Bill we shall know what answer to give, and until we can see the Bill we cannot give a conclusive answer."

LORD LLOYD: Hear, hear.

LORD HASTINGS: It may be said—I know, I think, what is in the minds of those who say, "Hear, hear,"—it may be said that if that is reasonable for the Princes of India it is also reasonable that the House of Lords should agree to the Amendment which is before the House; that if it is reasonable that the Princes of India should wait for the Bill, so also is it reasonable that Parliament should wait for the Bill. But, my Lords, there is an immense difference. Here in Parliament the Bill has got to come before us. By giving an expression of opinion to-day in the Lobby we do not commit ourselves to acceptance of clause after clause of the Bill. The Bill will be ours to deal with as we will in due course. But the Bill will not be that of the Princes of India. When the Bill has been introduced and passed, they will have to take it or leave it. We shall have the moulding of the Bill; they will not, and there is an immense difference. But in any case I can conceive of no more natural attitude than that taken up by the Princes of India, for they have two underlying motives in all they do and say.

I do not pretend to any information on this subject which is not available to all your Lordships, but I have this small advantage in personal acquaintance with very many of these Rulers and their Ministers, and while, Heaven knows, I do not pretend to any greater knowledge of the psychology of the Oriental than any others of your Lordships, at least it is some advantage to know many of them personally and to have discussed these subjects with them. I say that there are two underlying motives in all they say and do. The first of these is a lofty one. They are determined that their link with the Crown shall be indissoluble, their loyalty to the Crown beyond question. They rely on the Declaration of Queen Victoria, emphasised and repeated by successive Sovereigns, and by no action of theirs shall the indissolubility of that link be affected. Their second motive is the perfectly reasonable one of self-interest.

With regard to the first I think there is nothing that I can add to what I have already said, but with regard to the second there is something I can add. What is their self-interest? Assuming always that the attributes of independence are left to them—and none proposes to interfere with these attributes—and assuming also that the details, for they are no more, of the financial adjustments necessary to secure their signatures to the Instruments of Accession are arranged—assuming these things, where does the interest of the Indian Rulers lie? The Indian Rulers know just as well as you and I. The advantage of being able for all time to take part in the legislative business of All-India, of having a direct voice and not a voice through the Viceroy's Council only as now, is immense and overwhelming. There is no Prince in India who is not deeply conscious of it. There is no Prince in India, I venture to say, who is not conscious, too, of the relative weakness which will be his when these Provinces are set up with independent Governments, Parliaments and Ministers. He cannot afford in the future to stand alone. His interest lies in participation in the legislative business of All-India where he will be infinitely better able to protect his interests than in any other way.

I go so far as to hold the belief that if the Princes of India enter, all of them, into Federation, they will by that action secure for themselves an eternal position in the hierarchy of India, which circumstances that none of us will be able to prevent will cause them to lose if they do not so enter. That is my belief, and I believe, although clearly it is impossible to put it any higher than that, that under this Bill, if passed into law, we shall find few if any Rulers in India so short-sighted as to withhold and withdraw themselves from the opportunities it offers to them. Mark you this, my Lords. We have been told that a certain minimum number of the States estimated on the basis of population must

enter Federation before Federation can be set in being, but I would beg your Lordships to bear in mind that, although eighty millions of persons are the subjects of Indian Rulers, yet an immense proportion of these eighty millions are in a very few States indeed, and these great States are already in little doubt as to their action when the opportunity of federating is offered to them. I think that those who believe, or hope perhaps, that Federation will be prevented by the non-accession of a number of Indian Rulers are relying upon something which is not in the least likely to happen.

It is because of that belief of mine that I am enthusiastic, if I may put it so, for the future of India with this Central Parliament. A vision unfolds itself before your Lordships if you care to see it, something with infinitely greater possibilities than anything we have envisaged before: a mighty India tied indissolubly to the Crown, co-operating with its British Governors-General and Governors, its administrators, its civil servants, suffering no doubt in the early stages from the very difficulties inherent in the situation, but gradually conquering them because the spirit of good will has been inculcated in them, and because they have been trusted by the British people.

Those of your Lordships who fundamentally, conscientiously, and sincerely disagree with the opinions and recommendations of the Joint Select Committee must recognise that your cause is lost. Self-government is going to be given to India and, bear in mind, my Lords, the graciousness of a gift makes its value. If you are going to give, as you are going to give, give with the grace which befits the occasion. You have expressed your disagreement; you are disquieted at the difficulties which are so obvious; but you are going to be a party to the adventure to which this country has set its hand and, recognising that fact, there is nothing to be gained, but there is all to be lost, by giving grudgingly, by expressing suspicion, by withholding all you can. It would be far better for the future that your gift should be given with all the grace with which you can give it and that, having given, you should determine on that co-operation which alone can make the success of your gift secure. I have occupied sufficient of your Lordships' time. I do not intend to occupy any more of it, but I would appeal to those whose inclination and natural instinct would be one of disquiet at the immensity of the adventure which lies before them, to follow the line that has impressed itself upon myself to make up their minds that the thing has to be done, and to go into the Lobby this afternoon in support of the noble Viscount's Motion, and so assure a very great majority for that proposal.

EARL PEEL: My Lords, I should certainly have preferred, in the interests of controversy, to have followed a less consistent admirer than my noble friend of our achievements on the Committee. And, indeed, as a member of all these Conferences, and I think the only member on this side of the House on all of them, I must confess to a certain satiety with the details of Indian constitutional change. But I need only, I think, say one word on the question of the Amendment. I can imagine what indignation would have been expressed by some of our more vigorous critics if we had had no discussion on these problems at the outset, but if we had had to wait no less than six months, probably till June, before we could express ourselves on the details of the Bill. Greatly daring, I take a rather higher view of your Lordships' intelligence than does my noble friend Lord Salisbury. I think that your Lordships have fully grasped what I call the main pillars of this controversy, and as for the detail, your Lordships might quite well leave matters of detail till you get the Bill before you. I can imagine, too, if we had had no discussion, what a wealth of constitutional precedents would have been supplied by my noble friend Lord Rankeillour against that course, drawn from the depth of his great knowledge of constitutional law.

Before I say a word on the general Indian situation I must be allowed a reference to Burma. I was getting a little anxious during your Lordships' debate that no reference had been made to that great country. I was relieved of my anxiety by our noble Chairman, Lord Linlithgow, who, with his usual tact, felt, I suppose, that he would supply that omission. I felt it all the more because I was myself the Chairman of the Committee that shaped that Constitution. I naturally felt that my Committee and my-

self deserved at least that it should be said that our Report was swallowed almost wholly by the Joint Committee. It only made certain changes which brought our Report into line with the general position in India. I congratulate the Committee on their wisdom, and, if I may say so, our critics also who have not said one single word in criticism of the Constitution of Burma. I therefore suppose we must have produced an almost perfect adaptation of a Constitution for the requirements and needs of the country.

I would say this about Burma. I do trust that after the long cogitations they have had, after, I may say, certain permutations of opinion through which they have gone, they at last have realised, or will realise—because I see no recent expressions of opinion that they have realised—that their greatest interest and prosperity will be found, not in association with, but in separation from India; that they can in that way best develop their true national tendencies; and that if they were to be united with India they themselves, a mere handful of men in a great Indian Assembly, would find, I am afraid, that their special interests were too often either subordinated to the interest of India or neglected altogether.

I need not dwell upon that vigorous plea made by the noble Lord, Lord Ampthill, yesterday, when, in trumpet tones, he urged upon us the substantial and sovereign virtues of inaction and delay. But I may say that I approach this subject, and have approached it before, not with any tendency to surrender either power or anything else that this country can get hold of. I approach it rather as a lover of authority, as one who has a profound belief also in the capacity of his own countrymen to govern, who believes that they govern other people probably much better than they govern themselves. Nor do I do share the view of my noble friend Lord Lothian of the extraordinary permuting magic of democratic forms. I think, further, that one of the greatest tributes to our consolidating and welding rule in India is that we are here actually discussing gravely what is the degree of self-government that it is wise to confer upon a united India.

There are, I think, two chief questions which we have to weigh. One of the first questions is the extent to which this desire, this aspiration, this feeling for these democratic forms, which we all know have been rather discredited in Europe, is a growing and developing feeling among the leaders of Indian political thought and among their followers also. It is extremely difficult, I think, to state with precision exactly how one's opinions are arrived at. They grow and form in one's mind after innumerable contacts, after long study of the situation and the development of forces. We have the testimony of the Simon Commission, and we have during the last dozen years or so had innumerable signs and portents of the condition of the political firmament in India, which has borne upon most of us the conviction that we had to deal in India with a very great and constantly growing aspiration for self-government. Some of our critics, not all of them—some are, of course, so well informed—are basing their views on what I call a wrong picture of the situation in India. The background of their minds, I think, does not reflect the actual situation there.

May I take one or two instances of what I am saying? Too often we have on the one hand the representation of a small body of intelligentsia, a small compact body, very largely composed of lawyers, learned in constitutions, impatient of authority and pasturing on phrases, and on the other hand a separate picture of the great masses of India, the peasant on his farm and so on, indifferent to anything but the needs of cultivation and not moved by the political storms blowing all over his head. I believe that that picture of the separate intelligentsia, compact in itself, is growing less and less true in India, and I have had opportunities during the last dozen years or so of observing the constantly growing influence which these leaders exert among the masses of India, both in the country and in towns. I do not say that that means that you can discuss some of these constitutional problems with many of the peasants, but I do say—and that is what makes the difference—that the masses are more and more ready to follow these national leaders, and if the national leaders can command large masses of opinion behind them, obviously it is more than the personal equation that has to be considered.

Again, a great many noble Lords have dwelt upon the duty we owe to India of preserving the masses of the people from

wrong and injustice, and that is a sentiment which everybody, I suppose, will applaud. My own feeling is that we must not press that too far, that the trustee should be extremely careful that he does not go beyond the wishes of his beneficiary, and when the beneficiary thinks it is time for him to exercise more power the trustee should be very careful not to press his rights too far. There was a very striking instance of that in one of the Conferences—I think it was the first Round Table Conference. We had sitting round the table all the chief representatives of Hinduism, the representatives of the Hindu Mahasabha, the President of the Hindu University of Benares, and other great and learned men of the United Provinces. But in the middle of them we had the representative of the Depressed Classes, Dr. Ambedkar. What was his attitude? He said: "Give us the vote and we will deal with these gentlemen." That caused some perturbation, as you can imagine, among the audience. I was profoundly struck by that as showing that the lower castes are themselves prepared to deal with the Brahmins, as indeed they have dealt with the Brahmins, particularly in the Province of Madras.

My noble friend the Marquess of Salisbury also dealt very vigorously with the great question of Hindu and Moslem rivalry. He seemed to think that that was so contrary to democratic ideas and principles that it was a grave obstacle in the way of extending democratic institutions in India. It is not altogether in accord with the doctrine of democracy, but dozens of leading Hindus and Moslems with whom I have discussed this point have all given me the same answer. They have said to me: "Do not make our rivalries the excuse for not extending to us self-government. We can deal with these matters ourselves." Criticism was also directed by the noble Marquess against the Communal Award. Like my noble friend the Marquess of Zetland, I am not going to be rushed into a discussion of the Communal Award, or of that curious excrescence upon it, the Poona Pact, at this stage. He and I who sat at the Round-Table Conference know that every effort was made to make a compact agreeable to both sides. Efforts were made by the head of the Government here at the same time. That arrangement, so much criticised by the noble Marquess, was only made by the Government over here—I must do them that justice—as a last resort forced upon them, and not because they wanted to interfere in that ancient controversy.

Another point that has been urged against the scheme is that it has not been extraordinarily well received in India. When I went on the Joint Select Committee I was not under the slightest illusion that any Report we brought forward would be received with enthusiasm in India, or that we should have garlands thrown about us in recognised Indian fashion if we visited that country. The matter is too big and complicated for that. Let me also remind your Lordships that, just as in this country, all are not statesmen. Some of us are politicians, and those who are politicians, especially those who are leaders of Parties, are careful to scan the statements of their rivals to see if they can get Party advantage by premature condemnation or premature panegyrics. But I am comforted by the fact that there has not been, anyhow—perhaps I am not putting it very high—so thorough-going a condemnation of our Report as there was of the Simon Commission's Report—that Commission which, though coldly received at the time, has now so many warm advocates, especially among critics of the Joint Select Committee.

Now I want to pass to another great question to which varying answers have been given. There are critics who say: "Well, that may be so. You may have this forced upon you. You may have to accept it in some form. It may be wise to give way to it. But anyhow, the scheme you have propounded to us is really so impossible to work that with the best will in the world we cannot support it." I should like to say one or two words on that practical side. First of all, I would say that we on the Joint Select Committee were not professors trying to produce the most perfect Constitution. We were just practical men trying to evolve the best scheme that we thought we could devise. Let me ask again this question: What are the advantages of a Federal scheme? I suspect that the advantages of a Federal scheme, with all the anomalies and difficulties that have been found in it, are so transcendent that we ought

to look with a much more tolerant eye upon it than some have done.

When one was considering this question at the India Office when the reforms were introduced, one had always to be looking forward to what was to be the organic connection between the States and the Provinces in India, because it was obvious that if these two great halves—shall I call them that?—of India were going to move off on their separate courses, you would produce a state of things in India, from the point of view of good government or economics or any other principle, that would be hopeless and intolerable. It was not love of trying to make a perfect Constitution—that last infirmity of noble politicians—but simply the pressing economic necessities of the case that drove most of the members of the Joint Select Commitee, I think irresistibly, in that direction. The pressure of economic facts, the growing necessities which in modern life make unity between Provinces and States essential—that, I think, was the great governing idea in our minds which compelled us to overlook the considerable degree of imperfection in the theoretic aspect of the case.

I will not go through all the anomalies, but I will mention one because I think it has been exaggerated in the course of the discussion. That is the suggestion that some of this business in the Central Government is really purely British-Indian business and ought not to be presented before an Assembly which is composed of representatives of States and Provinces alike. The only logical way of dealing with that—which has been considered, for we did consider it at certain stages—would be to have a separate Assembly to deal with that small amount of business alone; but that would have been an absurd and intolerable way out of the difficulty. You cannot, I think, compare it fairly to the proposed Irish Bills. There, of course, one country had to manage its own affairs. To have general power of interfering not only with general affairs but with all the private affairs of another State is a different question. The area of British-Indian business is a very small one, and if it is suggested that the States are really going to make trouble in that Assembly and interfere in those questions which do not directly affect themselves, I cannot treat that as a practical question at all, because the one thing upon which the States are most anxious and determined is that there should be no interference by the British Government, if possible, and certainly not by a Federal Government, in the internal affairs of their States. They know quite well—quite as well as any of your Lordships—that there will always be the possibility of reprisals and that if they dared to interfere with affairs affecting British India only, British India would be very ready to interfere with their own.

Again on the question of the Income Tax—I only give it generally; I cannot go into the details of the question—the assignment of Income Tax and the fact that for a certain time the States do not contribute to it and that it is paid for by British India, cannot be looked at in isolation. It is really a part of the general settlement with the States, one of the terms of it being that the whole of the debt should be taken over by the whole of the Federation whereas the States might very fairly have made it a condition that the debt incurred in British India should be attributed solely to the finances of British India. I do not wish to dwell further on any of those details; as I say, they are all set out in our Report.

But I do wish to deal with one point which has been assailed, and I think very naturally assailed, by critics who have not gone through all those processes through which we have passed, and that is the point which is often raised—the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, laid great stress upon it—"Why is it that you are going to remodel the Centre and remodel the Provinces at the same time? Have you any precedent for that? Have you ever heard of anything so laborious as reshaping the Provinces and reshaping the Centre at the same time?" This really arises out of the necessities of the situation. That is why there is no precedent. I think in all other federations you have first had Provinces and no Central Government, whereas in this case you have a Central Government. You have to deal with the facts of the case. You have to deal not only with a Central Government but with a very centralised Government which has been in a relation to the Provinces totally different from that which must be established when the

Federation comes into existence. You must, therefore, remodel your Central Government, and if you are going to remodel your Central Government, are you going to remodel it as a purely British-Indian Government? That question presents great difficulties, because if you remodel your Central British Government and start a Central Government for British India the chances of uniting the States in an organic whole grow more and more remote.

It was then that the offer of the Princes came, I will not say as a solution, but as an immense contribution to the solution of that question, because at one stroke you were able not only to remodel your Central Government in the way you might desire but also to effect that organic union between Provinces and States which could be done by one and the same effort. To remodel your Government and later on to bring in the States would have been a double operation which could far better be performed at one and the same time. I have always felt that if you were going to start a Federation for British India and if the bias and tendency of that Government were going to be established it would be more and more difficult for the States to come into it as a body, and that the possibility of one State after another separately coming into a Central body which had already got, as it were, its British-Indian bias was almost hopelessly impossible. I remember very well the change which was made in the minds of all of us at the Conference when that statement was made by the Princes. It gathered up all the floating ideas which had been sketched in the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, and which had been alluded to also in the Simon Report. It was really the most dramatic moment that I have seen in all these Conferences and discussions. It is, therefore, in my judgment worth doing even at the expense of a special effort. It is worth, too, putting into one Bill, in order that those who are examining that Constitution may know that they are assured of both changes at the same time. It would be worth putting into one Bill even though it should make a thousand clauses in that Bill, even though it should necessitate all the efforts of all the Clerks at the Table to bring up so weighty a Bill from another place.

Other suggestions, of course, have been made. There was the proposal made by the Simon Commission of a Joint Council. That has been revived by some of our critics; it has been taken out of the dust-bin and put into the chief place in the parlour. But now the time is past, and it is worth observing that not one single member of that Commission who still survives—and fortunately there are five surviving out of the seven—is in favour of it. Indeed I do not think you will find either here or in India any support for that proposal. And I believe, too, that if its supporters were in a position of authority and able to bring it into action, they would find that there were so many forces against it that they would be unable to put it into actual practice. The argument upon which it is based seems to me to rest on a misconception of the movement of affairs to-day in India. It is said, and the point is admirably argued, that most of our institutions began as advisory councils and gradually developed authority and power. I think that in this case if it did develop authority and power it would make an unpleasant and awkward rival to the other central body in India. But let that for a moment pass. Nowadays no one really is content to go through those old slow movements of our ancestors. We are ready enough to accept conclusions, but we are much too impatient nowadays to go through the processes which led up to them.

It is sometimes said that this conception is lacking in simplicity—that it is over-complicated. Whenever we could follow simplicity we followed it, but in most cases the facts were too complicated to allow us to produce other than what is in some respects, I admit, a rather complicated scheme. But the one great central point about it is that you do associate the States and Provinces together, and that is the greatest security we can have, I think, for the stability of India. I do not need to dwell upon the point which Lord Hastings has already questioned, as to whether the Princes will join the scheme. I know that since they made their first offers opinions amongst some of them have waxed and waned, and I do not wonder at it, considering the tremendous issues of the future security of their States and their own prosperity. As different aspects of the question presented themselves to their

minds their views have, to some extent, altered, but if I may express my own opinion, based on personal knowledge of many of these gentlemen and also of their representatives, their Ministers, and so on, I do not think there is much likelihood of their not joining this Federation. I think on the whole, on a fair computation of their own interests, their loyalty to the Crown, and also, if I may say so, of their loyalty to India, they see that the future good government both of British India and of their own States is probably best secured by a unity of that kind.

I will only dwell for two or three minutes on two other points. The first is the question of finance, as to whether the financial condition of India really would forbid such an extension of self-government as to provide a Federal system. I need not discuss a question which was so well put before us by Lord Linlithgow yesterday, as to the real incidence, or rather as to the real extra cost which would be necessary in order to establish the Federation. He showed how much was attributable to the Federation, and how much to the establishment of these new Provinces, and the financing of deficit Provinces, which would be necessary whether the Federation had been established or not. For my part, I do not think it is at all an unfortunate thing that when new Provinces are starting upon their new life they should begin, I will not say in the trough, but not on the crest of the wave. They will learn necessary lessons in care and economy with the spending of money which have been learned by less prosperous countries. If a financier from some outside country were to be asked to examine into the financial position of India I think he would be, not perhaps gratified but amazed at the contrast presented by the finances of India to those of his own State.

Apart from what I may call the details of the income account of the Indian finances, I do not think mention was made yesterday of the extraordinarily satisfactory position in which India is placed in regard to its debt. The amount of dead-weight debt is really extremely small. The interest on it is only about £6,750,000. If you can point out any other State at all comparable to India in its resources and so on, is it possible to cite any other case where so small is the amount of the burden of debt, and where, indeed, the finances have been so carefully managed that debt is being constantly paid off every year? It has been said that India is now balancing its Budget. That is the more remarkable after these last four years of depression, and I think Lord Reading will remember that that was by no means the case a few years ago. During the years after the War there was a considerable margin on the wrong side of the Budget, which was ultimately dealt with, but the comparison now, after all this depression, with what took place twelve years ago is remarkably in favour of the finances of India. I do not believe that anybody looking at these finances carefully, either the income or capital account, would see any reason why there should not be any development of a federal character. We know that if there is any depreciation in India then it might be necessary to examine the situation again, but I need not go into that further, because, of course, a Proclamation would be necessary before self-government is brought in.

Then one word on the much criticised safeguards or emergency regulations. They have not been treated very satisfactorily, I think, by our critics. The critics in India say, of course, that they destroy self-government; the critics here say that they are of no value, or, if I may quote Lord Rankiellour, "must be taken for what they are worth"—an expression which is not generally regarded as very high praise. I have no doubt of the great value of these safeguards. I think a totally wrong picture has been given of the attitude of the Governor towards his Ministers or Assembly. The great bulk of these questions will be settled in conference between the Governor and his Ministers, and those who draw a picture of the Governor set against not only his Minister but also the Assembly, are apt to forget the close and intimate connection there is between the Governor and his Ministers. Indeed, if it is supposed that the Governor will find himself isolated amongst a host of opponents, I would only suggest that these safeguards or emergency powers are really to stop unfairness and oppression, and very rarely do you find the oppressed taking

the side of the oppressor. I think myself that these possible limitations, which only come into action at certain times, on the powers of the Ministers, will be of the greatest value in the early years of administration in the Provinces, when you have a number of Ministers, inexperienced perhaps in the difficulties of some of these political problems, are more ready to rely upon an equitable arbitrator, who would be able to give an unbiased and fair judgment upon these problems.

I am very conscious that we can go on almost for ever discussing these problems, and that after all, when controversy is exhausted and discussion has done its work, and when opinions are as divided as they are even amongst the wisest on these things, we have to rely a good deal on that instinctive judgment of affairs which is one of our possessions, and which has carried us through so many and great difficulties. We have to rely, further, upon that creative imagination which, united with a tenacity of purpose and a sense of justice, has brought us through so many difficulties which might almost seem to be insuperable. We have before us the gigantic task of pouring into a fresh mould all our methods and attitude towards our fellow subjects in India. It is a very long time since our Aryan ancestors on the high places of Asia moved on their separate paths, some of them to colonise the peninsula of India, some of them to reach our far Western isles. We have met certainly in that pilgrimage with very different fortunes. Sometimes we can hardly recognise each other; but if we can re-create, or rather re-incarnate, some of those ancient friendships, and if good fortune attends us, then the great vision of a united India, proud of its place in the Empire, will be an achievement, and not a mere dream.

LORD RENNELL: My Lords, I have only a very few words to interject, and those few words would, perhaps, have been left unsaid were it not that, in all the speeches which I have listened to and have read, nowhere have I found any reference to one particular aspect of this grave question which seems to me to demand very serious consideration. I trust that the Resolution which will later be put to the House will receive a very decided vote of approval from your Lordships, and that not only because the recommendations of the Report confirm those pledges and promises which have been held out after long and serious study; not only because they acknowledge cordially and with good will the legitimacy of aspirations which our own political instruction has awakened, but for another and even greater reason which I will try to explain to your Lordships. It is that, while I fully appreciate the great danger of giving affect to the commitments of the Report, these difficulties, which only time and patience can solve, appear to me far less formidable than other difficulties which we may have to confront if those considerations are rejected. It is to explain this point that I ask your Lordships' indulgence for a very few minutes, as one whom a political training through many years has accustomed always to take the long view.

In the whole of this discussion up to the present time the issue has very naturally been the most direct one, that between Great Britain and India. But I wish to point out that, so far as I see things, there is also a larger question, from which it cannot be dissociated. There was a traditional Asia that we knew—an Asia stationary, changeless, apparently dormant, where it had had direct contact and associations with the West; but with rapidity of communications, with expanding needs and with a growing experience of the contrasts between life there and in the West, all that is rapidly changing. To-day two currents of influence are perceptible, indoctrinating Asia with new ideas and perceptions. I ask your Lordships for a few moments to consider the position of India between these two currents.

On the one side you have the very active propaganda of Bolshevism, with a programme of promises which, however incapable of fulfilment, are naturally somewhat attractive to the simple minds. On the other side you have the awakening of new ambitions for national evolution and expansion. You have that very notable example of a naturally vigorous and highly gifted people who, within a century, have developed energies and potentialities new to their former life, assimilating the experience, the inventions, and to a certain extent the organisation of the West, with conspicuous efficiency and with a remarkable unity and tenacity of purpose. This is

not the occasion to discuss what may be the outcome of the failure of an association of nations, in which the views of the Western peoples have predominated, to realise that an idealistic, rather than a practical, appreciation of issues cannot easily be made accessible to the East Asiatic mentality in its present phase; but we can hardly fail to be aware that, since the beginning of the century, successive events have very considerably diminished Western prestige, or that a moderate and restraining influence, which an old sentiment of regard for this country at one time might have enabled her to exercise, has perceptibly weakened. I do not claim to foresee the future, but things are conceivably there to-day which were undreamt of only a short time ago.

Those who have many contacts act as receivers for many rumours from afar. They hear of a growing insistence, of the pressure of an increasing population upon limited means of subsistence in a very restricted area. They hear from time to time of unguarded utterances in moments of expansion when naval units meet in Eastern waters: sometimes utterances, even deliberate perhaps, which seem to betray a progressive tendency towards aspirations of ascendancy. I am speaking in no critical spirit, and I will not press the point. Our own people have not been altogether guiltless in the past of utterances of a similar nature. I am only weighing the indications of many conversations which reach me.

Now, whether these currents of influence have penetrated to any considerable extent into the Indian consciousness I cannot say, but I feel they would make little headway there in an India looking westwards, as she has so long been used to do, and absorbed in working out her own political evolution under the *ægis* of that Power which has guided her along the lines that have made aspirations for self-government inevitable there. If those aspirations for which we are responsible should encounter disillusion, if pledges which Indians are entitled to regard as sacred should be diminished or postponed, might not a great number of the intelligent and articulate elements in India, not less than the personally ambitious, be tempted to turn their eyes and ears elsewhere? Doors might be opened in that vast sub-continent which we should be quite unable to control or even adequately watch—doors would be opened to intrigues from many quarters whose interest it might seem to be to undermine an influence which has so long held an equitable balance between rival sections and appeared to them to constitute stability and support.

At a moment when so large a portion of Europe seems in danger of being administratively orientalised, might it not be our interest to fortify by good will against these creeping, nay menacing, currents that great wedge of continent in Asia, that India which has derived its law, its culture, and its civilisation from Western European culture and civilisation; an India liberated from any sense, real or imaginary, of inferiority; an India with pride of membership, in the form best adapted to her own special conditions, in a great federation in which she can play an honourable part, that British Empire in whose maintenance and evolution I for one see the best hope for the future of this disjointed world? Such an India would form a glorious bulwark in an Asia whose problems have all yet to be solved. The dangers I apprehend from the shadows they cast before them may not be immediate, but behind the shadows there is a substance. I do not expect to see it grow formidable, but even the oldest among us feel we have a duty to look forward and not to drag back, and if this were the last word I should ever have the privilege of uttering in your Lordships' Assembly it would be most earnestly to beg those who may contemplate doing so to pause before they cast a vote which may have the ultimate effect of disappointing aspirations which the great majority here believe to be legitimate, and which may have effects incalculable on the future of the two peoples.

LORD LLOYD: My Lords, there is no one of your Lordships who will be listened to in this House with greater attention on any matter of foreign concern, still more of Middle Eastern concern, than the noble Lord who has just sat down. I, too, have been long and intimately connected, in a less illustrious manner than the noble Lord who has just sat down, with the political developments of the Middle East, and I am as fully aware as the noble Lord of the dangerous in-

fluences which have been spreading during the last decade or two throughout that area. But when one has seen, as I have, closely and intimately, the strong framework of autocracy right through the Middle East crumble before the insurgent rise of democracy, seen that democracy again submerged and wrecked by dictatorships and superseded by them, one cannot help being a little doubtful whether responsible government in the East is likely to be acceptable for any long section of time to any countries in the East, least of all to India.

I remember the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, pointing out in his speech only the other day that he was far from certain that the Western solutions which we are trying to apply to India with the best intentions were necessarily the only solutions. But, so far as I read the situation, that is not an issue that is open to our practical discussion at all to-day. Whatever our experience, whatever our views, whatever our forebodings about Parliamentary government in the East, we are bound to accept the Act of 1919 which pledges us to make an honest experiment in self-government, but which does not pledge us—indeed it indicates very clearly that we should not attempt—to paint all the picture in at one sitting.

A great deal of play has been made both in this House and in another place about the impracticability of provincial autonomy without a Federal Centre. That is an entirely new doctrine, is it not? My noble friend Lord Halifax, in his Despatch of 1930, did not take that view. The Statutory Commission did not take that view. They did not think that a Federal Centre was essential to the working of provincial autonomy. On the contrary, they used phrases indicating exactly the reverse. They said evolution must be slow and not be rashly pressed. They went even further. They said Federation could come about only when the units to be federated are ready for the process, and "we are far from supposing," they said, "that the Federation of Greater India can be artificially hastened or, when it comes, will spring into being at a bound." It is perfectly clear that the greatest authorities who have made the most prolonged study of the Indian situation certainly did not take the view that provincial autonomy could not work without a Federal Centre.

The Government come to us to-day and they say that circumstances have changed since that was written: the Princes have come in; that makes all the difference. Or they suggest that the whole of the question of the Native States was outside the scope of the Statutory Commission's inquiry. Of course it was not. The Statutory Commission, almost as if they anticipated a criticism of that kind, were careful to use these words:

> "The whole study of the question of the Native States was well within our terms of reference."

And as we all know, one of the most brilliant chapters in the whole of that wonderful Report was devoted to its consideration. Indeed, one of the strangest features in what I think may be rightly called an unparalleled affair was the sudden jettisoning of all past policy—of the Preamble of the Act of 1919, of the Statutory Commission's Report, of my noble friend's Despatch of 1930—in favour of an All-India Federation. Even the declaration of my noble friend Lord Halifax on Dominion *status*, which received such posthumous condemnation from the most reverend Primate the other day, was swept away in the landslide.

Again we were told it was because the Princes have come in and that made all the difference. The Princes have not come in. Only five or six—a handful any way—out of 115 or thereabouts in the Chamber, only half a dozen or so out of 400 or 500 jurisdictions, small and large, have approved of Federation in principle with far-reaching reservations, and they never even pretended to have a mandate. If on such a fragile foundation as this so vast a structure has been built, and the Government have been willing to stake the whole of their future, to risk a division in a great Party, surely there must be a great deal more to be told us about how this came about than we have yet learned. Fortunately for us, of the two people best qualified to explain to us the full circumstances of that situation, one, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, is not here to-day. The other, the noble Marquess who, I believe is to follow me shortly, is in a better position, I think, almost than anybody else to tell us how it all occurred, and I hope we may have the benefit of his great knowledge on that question in due course.

May I now for a few moments explain why it is that my friends and I are so

much opposed to a federal solution of this problem. In the first place, and here I think we are all on common ground, we all believe that a strong Central Government of one form or another is essential to the good working of provincial autonomy. But we think that a Federal Government would not give you that strong Central Government. We believe it would be infinitely weaker than the Provincial Governments. We believe its procedure would be made cumbrous, its decisions very often questioned, its authority very continually challenged, and, therefore, its minds less sure and more often embarrassed than the present Government at Delhi. Indeed, I do not think it is too much to say that a Federal Government is almost notorious amongst constitutional lawyers as being one of the most complex and litigious, and, as a lawyer called it, in the true sense of the word most disconcerting, and, in the execution of the law, one of the weakest of all forms of government.

The very fact that a Federal Government involves a division of internal sovereignty means that every citizen is only too apt to discriminate between obedience to the laws of his own Province, which he is near, and obedience to the Federal Centre, which is remote and far away from him; and, if he is a peaceful-minded citizen, he is only too apt to repudiate the laws of the distant authority by civil disobedience, or is prone to violence or something more dangerous still. But in India, under a Federal Government, there will not be, as in other Federal Governments, only a dual allegiance for the citizen in the Province to obey; there will be several. He will have to have obedience to Federal Statutes, to Provincial Statutes, to Governor-General's Acts, to Governor-General's Ordinances, and I doubt if there are not one or possibly two more allegiances that he might have to serve. We only have to consider for a moment what enormous possibilities there are in such divided obedience in a country where disobedience has become a creed and litigation almost a disease. And if the ordinary Federal Executive is so notoriously weak, how much weaker still is a Federal Executive whose authority itself, as in this case, is going to be subdivided in a manner unknown and unprecedented in all history.

Lord Lloyd.

The Government defend themselves by saying that the Princes will only come in on condition that there is responsible government at the Centre. That does not make the dangers of the proposal any less. In any case the Government have no right to make the Princes of India responsible for their recklessness. Theirs is the responsibility, and theirs alone. And it is all the more their responsibility, I suggest, when we remember, a little bit uncomfortably to-day I think, the statement made by a representative of the greatest Native State in India, when he declared openly at the third session of the Conference that "His Majesty's Government and the Secretary of State have slowly but relentlessly pressed us into Federation." The responsibility there must be the Government's and not the Princes. Every administrator—and in your Lordships' House there are a large number of them—knows the enormous importance of swift decisions and an unhesitating and a sure hand in moments of great difficulty in a great country like India. I submit that these are utterly lacking under any Federal Government.

It is a by-word in the United States to say that the great growth of lawlessness there is almost entirely due to the federal system. We have seen the situation to-day in Australia. If ever there was one country in the world where Federation ought to be a complete success, where there was community of people, community of interest, and a very large community of climate, that country is Australia; yet we have to-day the representatives of Western Australia actually in London at this moment petitioning to get out of a Federal Government. We have South Australia and Tasmania only waiting to see the result of Western Australia's plea before they decide to do the same.

My noble friend Lord Salisbury has proposed an Advisory Council in place of the Committee's solution. My noble friend Lord Zetland the other day, in a most brilliant and interesting speech, poohpoohed and made light of my noble friend's suggestion, and to-day one noble Lord—I think it was my noble friend Lord Peel—said that that had been revived from the dustbin of the Statutory Commission's Report. That is rather the way in which the Statutory Commission's

Report is often referred to nowadays. It may be a good or bad suggestion, but it was the Statutory Commission's own recommendation, or virtually so. What did they recommend? These are the very words they used:

"We wish to suggest that steps should be taken now to devise the creation and setting up of a standing consultative body containing representatives both from British India and the Indian States, with powers of discussion and of reaching and recording deliberative results on topics falling within the list of matters of common concern."

It really is going a little too far to say that what was reform yesterday is mere reaction to-day. We believe that a strong Central Government such as we propose is of vital importance to the functioning of provincial autonomy. I venture to say that no one who has governed a great Province in India and who realises how small is the number of people who are available for Ministerial posts and for wielding the authority of Government, can look upon the proposals of the present Government without dismay. Some of the very best brains in the Provinces will all be needed there to make that great experiment a success, but they will be drifting off to Delhi and Simla, leaving the experiments at their perimeter practically deserted by those who could solve them.

I pass to make a few comments upon the statement which my noble friend Lord Linlithgow made yesterday in this House. I, unfortunately, through indisposition, was not able to hear him myself, but I read his speech with great interest and attention this morning, and, if he will allow me to say so, I cannot imagine a statement more calculated still further to increase our anxieties with regard to finance than that he made yesterday. The noble Marquess summoned to his aid the most cheerful prophet he could find in the shape of Sir George Schuster, who was, as everybody knows, a very brilliant Finance Member recently in India. Let me read what the noble Marquess said, quoting from Sir George Schuster:

"All the Governments, both Federal and Provincial, are going to have—as Governments are having in every country in the world—an extremely difficult time, unless there is a fundamental improvement in the situation. But that does not mean that the new Governments cannot function."

Of course any Government can function. The Soviet Governments are functioning to-day at the expense of the famine and misery of their countryside.

What we want to know—and it is a fair question and perhaps the noble Viscount who is going to reply at the end of this debate will answer—is whether the Government think the new Governments they are setting up to-day will be able to function without imposing still further burdens of taxation on the masses of the people of India. That is the first consideration of all of us. The Joint Select Committee admit that there are formidable financial problems, but they go on—I think rather too comfortably—to assume that His Majesty's Government will review the financial position and inform Parliament how matters stand. Yes, my Lords, but before we are told anything about this, we are asked to-day to pass the plan and equip them with a blank cheque before we even know what the cost of the bill is going to be.

May we look for one moment at the economic situation in India? Has there not been rather too rosy a picture given of it? Memories are short. People here may have forgotten—I am sure the noble Marquess who is going to follow me will not have forgotten—the disastrous results which followed, I think just before he assumed the Viceroyalty, the Babington-Smith Committee of 1920, when the rupee was fixed at 2s. gold, when by a stroke of the pen the burden of every sterling obligation in the country was doubled, which in a few weeks involved the Indian treasury in a loss of about £35,000,000; and when producer and trader were thrown alike into ruin and despair. I was in India at the time and I remember it myself. Even the salvage work of the Hilton Young Committee only partially remedied the damage. All this was the preliminary to the prolonged fall in commodity prices which has had such depressing effects on agriculture and industry ever since.

We have only to look to-day at the ordinary signs of prosperity or the reverse to see the effects. If we look at the earnings of the State railways or the earnings of the municipalities, the district boards, the port trusts, all the self-governing bodies, we find them all in great difficulties. Provincial Governments are in almost equally bad situations. Do you remember, my Lords, in this House, that agriculturists' incomes in India have diminished by no less than £360,000,000 in quite recent years? Imagine the effect of that on Provincial

Budgets which depend so much upon agriculture and on land revenue for their fortunes. Naturally the result is that the Provincial Budgets have only barely been balanced, if that—and many of them have not been balanced—and the Central Government has only got its Budget balanced by continually increasing taxation, so that the less taxpayers in India earn, the more in recent years they have been asked to pay. Do we realise that the value of India's export and import trade is less by half to-day than it was ten years ago? And on the top of that India has got to face the intense hurricane of Japanese competition.

As Sir George Schuster has been quoted, I should like, if I am not wearying the House, to read a further quotation which is of some importance from the speech he made in the Budget debate at Delhi in 1933. That speech has received, I think, too scant attention in this country. This is an extract from the speech as reported in the *Statesman* of June 2:

"I want to ask honourable Members to consider what are the tasks to be put upon the Central Government by the Constitution plans which are now pending. I feel that in this discussion, and in all discussions which are going on to-day finance is being considered in an atmosphere of unreality. Here we are at present just able to balance our Budget, although, as honourable Members have pointed out and as I myself recognise in our Budget Speech, our imports, and therefore our Customs revenue stands at a level many crores higher than is justified by the exports of merchandise. Yet even with that adventitious assistance we are only just able to balance our Budget, and then we have the constitutional changes impending which show a vast amount of additional burdens."

Sir George Schuster went on to mention some of the main items—separation of Burma, which he said would mean a loss of three crores in the Central Budget: surrender of half the tax on jute to Bengal, another loss of about two crores: subventions to the deficit Provinces, eighty lakhs in Sindh, twenty-five lakhs for Orissa, and so on, and the setting up of a Reserve Bank. Then he went on to say:

"All these items together—I have not got them in my head—but the total of these and other charges will come to about eleven crores. On the top of that the Central Government are supposed to hand over more than half the Income Tax"—

which I notice, according to *Whitaker*, is probably twenty crores, so that adds another twenty crores, or twenty-one crores in all. That is not quite the same picture, either in figures or atmosphere, as that which we have had painted to us in this House, in the last few days. I can only say from practical experience—and I doubt whether my noble friend the Marquess of Zetland, who has had similar experience, would contradict me—that I believe that the result of these reforms must be an increase of expenditure in the Provinces. Certainly the evidence points that way. Since 1921, since the reforms came in, I think it is quite clear that there has been a 20 per cent. increase at least in the cost of Government. If you add to that the steady and large increase in the population, I think one must come to the conclusion that the situation is a very dark one, and that to hand over 360,000,000 people to an entirely experimental form of government is at least a very, very grave and dangerous experiment.

There is one thing which I think the noble Lord, Lord Strabolgi, mentioned the other day. I do not often find myself in agreement with those who sit on the Benches over there, but in this case I do agree. It has been argued that when Indians are in charge of their own affairs they may find the remedy themselves for this difficult financial situation. But, my Lords, if I may remind you, this is precisely what the Government under their proposals are not going to let them do. Under the new Reserve Bank Act Indians are specifically prevented from changing the ratio of the rupee, from opening the Indian mints for fresh coinage, from coining more silver money, from doing any of those things which certainly 90 per cent. of experts in India—and they are not small experts—believe to be almost the only way to reproduce agricultural prosperity in India in our time. That, I think, is not an unfair picture. I have tried not to overstate the case. If I have, I am sure there are plenty of noble Lords who will be willing to correct me. I think it is a very, very grave and dangerous situation.

May I turn for one moment to some remarks made by my noble friend Viscount Halifax, in the speech he made at the beginning of this debate. My noble friend stated, as regards law and order, that "the Committee followed"—he was referring to the Joint Select Committee

of course—" the recommendations of the Statutory Commission." I am sure he did not mean to mislead the House, but this is a misleading statement. Indeed it is not quite accurate. The Statutory Commission only recommended transfer of law and order subject to very important qualifications. The Governor, for instance, was to have power to appoint one or more Ministers, an independent member, if he liked, of the Indian Civil Service, to take charge of the portfolio. The transfer again was conditioned by the existence of exactly what the Government are not going to give them—a strong Unitary Government at the Centre responsible to the Crown and to Parliament here. It is therefore a little misleading, if I may venture to say so, to suggest that the Joint Select Committee have adopted the proposals of the Statutory Commission in regard to law and order. By such strong provisions as those, and no less, were the liberties of both British and Indians buttressed and secured under the Report of the Statutory Commission.

My noble friend also said that the proposal of the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, to delay transfer " for a reasonable time "—you will remember the words—would alienate and embitter all Indian opinion. He reminded us (I hope I shall quote him fairly) that

" . . . the whole of our British and Imperial experience shouts at us the warning that representative government without responsibility, once political consciousness has been aroused, is apt to be a source of great weakness and, not impossibly, great danger."

I think that is an accurate quotation. The Government talk to us a great deal about good will in connection with these reforms. There is nothing so calculated to alienate good will as to lead people to expect that they are going to get something which in fact they are not going to get. My thirty years' experience in the East has taught me one thing at least, and that is that Indians amongst others, of whom so many are of high breeding and quick perception, do not mind any amount of candour provided it is coupled with courtesy, but they confuse disappointment with deception, and that leads to grave ill-will.

One would imagine that, my noble friend having said all this, he would be the last to delay transfer, least of all in an area where political consciousness had been aroused. But that is exactly what he and the Committee propose to do. Pages 52 and 54 of the Report, if your Lordships will read them, show that their confidence in the capacity of Indians to manage their own affairs falls short of any emergency. In normal circumstances they are willing to hand over law and order to Ministers, and even then not all of it, for they propose to enthrone in the Police Department the dyarchy which they deprecate in every other Department of Government, and wreck its efficiency by a division of authority which a decade of personal experience in handling rough circumstances in two countries in the East has taught me is utterly unworkable. Security Services cannot be placed under divided control. The functions of district magistrates, magistrates and Police, the whole administration system of law and order, are interdependent, and control cannot be separated without dislocating the whole system. If there are noble Lords here who do not believe it, I only ask them to go and handle a really disturbed situation and then see what they can do with divided control in their Police organisation.

But when there is a menace to peace, then my noble friend provides that the Governor shall take over the Police Department and any other Department of Government and remove from the hands of Ministers all control and exercise it by the Government itself; and in the case of Bengal, far from any delay, if the situation should not have materially improved they are to be taken over forthwith. This is not the moment to discuss how necessary these special provisions are. I for one should think them very necessary indeed; but if I may respectfully say so, it is, I think, amazing for a body of men who assert that there cannot be any real responsibility without effective transfer of law and order, and that a system of representative government without responsibility is weak and even dangerous, then to make recommendations not only to delay, but to deprive Ministers, not of one portfolio only, but possibly of all, and this in an area more politically conscious than any other at all in India. I really cannot believe that good will can be won by proposals in which profession and practice are so violently at war.

I noticed with great interest some remarks made by my noble friend Lord

Zetland in regard to safeguards. The noble Lord asked why we pressed for safeguards if we doubted their efficacy. My noble friend Lord Rankeillour gave him, I think, the right answer: we take them for what they are worth. What indeed would have been thought of the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, and his colleagues on the Joint Select Committee if they had not tried to support anything which would have mitigated the recklessness of the Majority? In the absence of a strong Central Government we must have safeguards for what they are worth. I do not say that safeguards are always valueless; what we say is that the Government are placing much too much reliance on them.

I hope your Lordships will not mind if I mention for a moment some personal experience; but even when a safeguard has value and its operation is found to be necessary, there are an enormous number of powerful factors which are used to influence the Governor against their use. In a local crisis, first of all he has to face immense opposition in his local council, in the Press, in his own Parliament, and probably, or possibly, opposition from Delhi, and almost certainly from Whitehall. I know from my own experience the kind of arguments which are so often used to shake the determination of the man on the spot. One is asked to take a broader view; one is told: "You were sent out because you had Parliamentary experience; I hope you will not forget our Parliamentary difficulties at this end." "Please do not lose your sense of proportion. Your local difficulties, I know, loom very large, but please do not forget the Cabinet's difficulties. Remember we have got an Election in two years' time." "There is an anxious situation in Europe." You can hear it all! Have we not all had it said to us? I remember struggling with a situation of immense complexity in Egypt, when the Cabinet had agreed to every step that I was taking, and yet at the last minute: "Please remember our difficulties here. Please remember that there is a General Election in a year and a half's time. We do not want to hear anything about Egypt," and so on.

Those are the facts of the situation. No one will, I think, doubt Sir William Marris's authority to speak about the Reforms and their working. He was for no less than ten years a Governor under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reform scheme. And what did he say? Referring to safeguards, he said:

> ". . . . during the past ten years out of anxiety to avoid using them [the safeguards] the Government of India has repeatedly been forced into positions which it is difficult to believe its better judgment would have accepted."

That is the verdict on safeguards of a man who was in favour of the Reform scheme, who was at the side of Mr. Edwin Montagu when he made them, and yet his experience of safeguards is that which I have told you. Put in a nutshell, the chief infringement of a reserve comes as a rule not by infraction but by erosion, and a safeguard is of no value at all when you are dealing with a power which is determined to erode your reserved position and to nibble it away bit by bit.

If those are the difficulties—and I have mentioned only one or two of them—which face a British Governor, they are nothing to those that are going to-morrow to surround an Indian Governor. You say, my Lords, "We are not talking about Indian Governors." But you will have to talk about them. If you pass these reforms through in one stage to-day there is nothing in logic, in reason, or indeed in fairness, which is going to entitle you to say to Indians—that is to say, if you want their good will—if they are fit to govern themselves, that in every Province an Indian Governor should not administer. Then what becomes of all your safeguards? However well disposed and brilliant the Indian Governor is, it is common knowledge to all who have served in India that the difficulties of an Indian official are infinitely greater than those of a British official, for a thousand reasons which I will not enumerate. I do beg of your Lordships to believe that the safeguards have infinitely less value than many of your Lordships, who are not familiar with the East, would readily understand. Remember also that the Indians have been perfectly frank with us all along. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has already said openly that the intention of the Moderates in India is to "whittle down the safeguards," while the high priest of Moderate Liberalism in India, Mr. Shastri, in discussing the question of British recruitment of the Indian Civil Service and Police for only five years more, said that that

safeguard was an "intolerable indignity." If that is the attitude towards so mild a proposal as that, are we not right to be a little careful, and very anxious about the question of safeguards?

I turn from that for one moment, if I may, to speak very briefly about a passage which fell from the lips of the most reverend Primate in the second day's debate, in regard to the position of Indian Christians. We listened, of course, with very deep respect and interest, as we always do, to the assurances of the most reverend Primate with regard to this question. He referred to criticisms which he said had been made—I have not heard them—of his being on the Joint Select Committee. May I say, respectfully, that I think it was of the highest value that he should have been on the Joint Select Committee, and that the spiritual side should have been represented in our deliberations; but his comparative contentment about the position of the Indian Christians a little bit surprised me. I wish I could share his confidence. I have a letter from the Catholic Archbishop of Simla, written so recently as the end of September—and we have to remember that three-fifths of the Indian Christians are Catholics—pleading for what he called the "six and a-half millions of unsafeguarded Christians."

The Archbishop of Simla—in this case the much-talked-of man on the spot, who is sometimes regarded and sometimes not—does not feel so happy as does the most reverend Primate, for referring to the recent debate in the All-India Legislature on this subject, he says that "The Government's reply demurring to the resolution [for safeguarding Indian Christians] was feeble, irrelevant and illogical." In the same debate Dr. de Sousa, representing the Indian Christians, said:

> "Although their fundamental rights were seriously threatened by the White Paper, they were not given a hearing or represented in the Delegation which appeared before the Joint Select Committee."

He added, speaking for the Indian Christians:

> "We are gradually being elbowed out from our position in the Public Services."

Believe me, the fears of Indian Christians have every justification. I have in my house at this moment a plea from missionaries in Egypt—such pleas as I often receive—asking me to intervene with the Government for the protection of this or that minority. The particular case in question is that of an Egyptian woman, a Mahomedan who married a Christian and became a Christian. She was driven out of her own village and Province, and even out of the country, and forced to reside, I believe, in Palestine. We have given guarantees for the safety of minorities. In 1922 we pledged ourselves to protect all minorities. Yet the British Government refuse to intervene in this case, and this lady is not able to live in her own home or village.

We do not intervene, and when we have handed over power in India to an Elective Assembly we shall not intervene there on behalf of these people, because we shall be unable to do so effectively, any more than we could intervene in Ireland. As my right honourable friend said in another place, the Government had power to intervene and could move an Army to Ireland. Why do they not do so? Because once they have handed over the power to an Elective Legislature, they have forfeited their power to intervene in any effective way, much less by force of arms.

If that is the case, I ask your Lordships ought we not to see the Bill before we agree to the policy? In a very eloquent peroration which was delivered by Lord Zetland—if he will allow me so to describe it; perhaps it is not fair to analyse perorations too closely—the noble Marquess said that if we wished Indian public men to act responsibly, then we must give them responsibility. I noticed the murmur of applause with which that was received. How unquestionable an observation that seems. Nobody could disagree with it. Yet I think we ought to be very cautious before accepting it as being true, of the East at any rate. It is not always true of the West. We gave Ireland responsibility. Have her public men behaved responsibly? Let us remember the case of Italy. At the close of her period of responsible government the economic situation crashed in corruption and the country in communist control. Look at the East. The Turks and the Persians were given responsibility. Did they respond? We gave the

Egyptians responsibility. The more we gave the less responsibility they showed. That is commonly agreed. Over and over again the responsible system has crashed to the accompaniment of bloodshed and recrimination. We gave it to Ceylon, and the less said about that the better.

The Central Legislature has had it. It has had the two great responsibilities of the voting of the Budget and the enactment of legislation, and yet Sir Basil Blackett, in his last speech to the Legislative Asembly in India, was constrained to use these words:

> "My difficulty to-day is that I see at every turn this Assembly to all appearances trying to commit political suicide. Every opportunity that is given to it of showing that it has a responsibility and can use it is taken to prove that it is irresponsible."

It may be said: "They have not had time. After a while the charm of responsibility will work." Yes, my Lords, but that is our point. In the meantime while the charm is working, what is going to become of the people?

My noble friend Lord Hastings made light of the people who talk as if we were not going to give the people votes, or at any rate, as if we were not going to give them immediately. He said: "They will soon learn to look after themselves." I remember so well the leader of the Congress, Mr. C. R. Das, saying in 1922:

> "If to-day the British Government were to grant provincial autonomy with central responsibility, I, for one, would protest against it, for it will lead to the concentration of power in the hands of the middle class, and I do not believe the middle class will ever part with their power."

Mr. Das knew something about the Indian mind, and I agree with Mr. Das. If once you part with your power, you are going to put the masses of the people in the hands of the old, able autocracy or oligarchy which succeeded in governing them for hundreds of years, and who will never part with their power once you have handed it over to them.

In this House for centuries your Lordships have had the final authority, the delaying authority—the delaying authority, irrespective of Parties, irrespective of Governments—to take your own course and put that mark of prudence and care upon the perhaps hastier work of others. I am a very recent member of your Lordships' House, but I have been thirty years in the East, not as a Governor most of the time but amongst the people, of them, knowing their language, talking with them; and may I respectfully say one word? Beware, my Lords, at playing at politics in India. That is the most dangerous thing, because you will lose the game. And you will lose much more than that. You will lose your honour and your repute with it, and you will forfeit the confidence, and rightly forfeit the confidence, of the 360 millions of people who look to your Lordships in this House as the only anchor of their faith.

What are we asking? We are not reactionaries. Everybody is talking as if we meant to take no stride forward. You must go forward. You cannot go back. That was the argument which was used to send the Gadarine swine forward to their destruction. We are willing to do all that the Statutory Commission were willing to do only two short years ago. That is not reaction. Is not it the wiser part? I do appeal to your Lordships. There are only a few of us to-day in this House. We are handicapped by the absence of my noble friend Lord Salisbury, whose appeal still rings in our ears to-day. Is it not the wiser part, the prudent part, the part of statesmanship—much more than that, the part of duty—to accept the proposal to retain during the process of this great experiment—not much, and yet everything—the ultimate source of our power and authority unimpaired while the charm works, while the experiment in the Provinces is being carried out? If by any chance the thing went wrong—and it might easily go wrong; it has gone wrong everywhere else in the East—if grave misgovernment should ensue, inflicting terrible injury upon the people, then you would have lost your power of intervention and you would have to watch the disaster impotent and ashamed.

I would appeal to the Government to-day. I know it seems a lot to suggest, but I hope the Government will not think me impertinent for suggesting it. I would ask the Government not to press their Resolution, but to accept our Amendment; because, after all, if their Resolution is not intended to commit us to their policy, they will lose nothing whatever by abandoning it. There is not a single one of your Lordships who votes on our side to-day who will be voting against the Government's policy. All you will be doing will be retaining in your hands, absolutely free and unimpaired,

the power to judge the Bill on the merits when it comes forward. Is not that a thing which it is reasonable to ask your Lordships to do? If, on the other hand, as I gravely fear, the Government's Resolution is intended to commit us, then I respectfully beg your Lordships not to fail to heed Lord Salisbury's advice, based as it was on mature and proved experience, and long leadership of the House, and retain your freedom to vote, with all the weight of this House's ancient wisdom, as you think best when, but only when, the Bill is before you.

THE MARQUESS OF READING: My Lords, no member of your Lordships' House can speak in relation to India and the East with greater authority than the noble Lord who has just sat down, and I can only say for myself that when he pleads for more time and more opportunity for thought and examination, I regret that he did not avail himself of the opportunity that was offered to him by the Government to sit on that Committee and take his part with us in the consideration of all the problems that were before us. Because, if he will forgive me for saying so—and nobody knows it better than I—it is a much easier thing to make these statements across the floor of the House than to consider them when sitting round a table, when we can put questions to each other and arrive eventually either at a solution or a disagreement. I regret very deeply that, with the knowledge that he has on the subject, and with the capacity that he has for expressing his views, he did not take the same position as Lord Salisbury and those associated with him. And when I say that, I would like to add that I think that we in the Committee owed the noble Marquess and those associated with him a real debt, for they helped us most materially. Whilst we were not able to agree on some fundamental issues, nevertheless they did supply us with material for discussion upon which we reached conclusions. With the noble Marquess and with the noble Lord, Lord Rankeillour, who has a special knowledge of certain subjects such as the audit of accounts and so forth, they really did help the Committee.

I will now deal with the various points raised in the course of the argument, but I would just like to make this observation at the start. The noble Lord has quoted and relied strongly, apparently, upon statements which I have not before me, but which he read out, and which I assume were complete in so far as they were laid before us—statements made by Sir George Schuster, the Finance Minister, and Sir Basil Blackett when he was Finance Minister, either in my time or just after it—in support of the arguments which he addressed to your Lordships. I am not going to attempt to-day to discuss details of finance. But I would like to say that both Sir George Schuster and Sir Basil Blackett are strong supporters of the proposals which are now being put before you by the Government. And, whatever they may have said, I should be very surprised if in the course of the many discussions that have taken place on this subject one could not pick out sentences open to criticism from the remarks of anybody. Although I have been a very strong supporter of them from a certain moment, I have no doubt I have made observations casting some doubt upon the value of safeguards; indeed, from the very first I made it a condition that the safeguards should be effective before I would support the proposals that were coming before your Lordships' House.

Now I will pass from these subjects, dealing with some other points raised by the noble Lord in due course as I proceed with my speech. I will only make this observation at the outset. It is impossible to go into all the matters of detail which have been discussed and which have been raised by the noble Lord himself to-day. All we can do is to concentrate upon the problems before us, to deal with the main issues, and leave the minor issues for consideration when the Bill is introduced into your Lordships' House and is considered in Committee. We can only concentrate on main principles. If we had sat as a Committee for another five years we could never have attempted to settle every point of detail that arises. I propose to address my observations to the main questions, leaving others for a later stage.

May I say at once that I was a supporter of the White Paper. I desire to say now, after the 159 sittings of the Committee, that I think in some respects the recommendations in the Report are an improvement upon the White Paper. As an instance—I am not going into them in detail—I refer to the

special precautions taken against terrorism and to the strengthening of the powers of the Governors and of the Governor-General over the Police, police intelligence, and so forth. It was always intended, as I have understood from the first, that these matters should be considered, and certainly the discussions in Committee were of the greatest value. I accept what fell from the noble Marquess, Lord Zetland, when speaking yesterday, and to him, if I may, I should like to pay with all respect a high compliment for the speech that he made, because I think it was of the greatest value to the discussions we are having, as were so many of the observations he addressed to us in Committee.

I must add one observation, as an instance of why in some respects I prefer the White Paper to the recommendations of the Report. Whether I am right or wrong is a matter upon which your Lordships can decide when the matter comes before us in Committee. I do not take up time in discussing it now, because it is of comparatively minor importance, having regard to the decision and the statements in regard to it in the Report. That is in relation to indirect election. Our view—that of myself and of those associated with me—has been that election to the Lower Chamber of the Federal Legislature should be direct election and not indirect as is now proposed. I do not trouble your Lordships with arguments on the question now, but I would add that the Indian view is strongly in favour—indeed I am right in saying unanimously in favour—of direct election. By the Majority of the Committee, preference was given to indirect election. I admit quite frankly there are difficulties whichever proposal is adopted. Undoubtedly it is a very troublesome question.

I cannot believe you will get a true representation in the Federal Legislature by the indirect system proposed—that is, in the Lower Chamber where indirect election is to take place; but I leave the matter there. I am particularly anxious not to be drawn into discussion about it. I would merely make this observation, addressed perhaps more to Indians than to your Lordships, in the hope that some of them may read it and may be impressed by it, that, however strongly they may feel upon this point, whatever resentment some of the delegates may now be feeling because of the views they represented and brought forward in the Committee, they should nevertheless bear in mind that the Committee's decision was not reached in the main, I think I am justified in saying—and there are members of the Committee present who took a different view from me and who will correct me if I am wrong—because they were so pleased with the indirect system proposed.

No better arguments could have been put forward than were made by the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, when he introduced his Amendment, and he really said everything we have been saying against the indirect system of election; but the difficulty foreseen is that if you continue direct election, which has been the system since Parliament enacted it in 1919, there would be a difficulty if afterwards you want to go in for indirect election. It would be preferable to try indirect election and, assuming that system does not work well, or even a better system of indirect election is not found, then you may have recourse to direct election. It would be easier to go from indirect to direct than from direct to indirect. I and those who are associated with me accepted that view, because we realise that it is not a cardinal matter, although we may make an attempt to raise it later. It does not touch the really vital questions with which we have to deal.

May I just ask you to consider what is in substance the whole question before us? It is true that the form of the Amendment is that we should delay and not accept the proposal that the recommendations of the Report should form the basis of the Bill. I think the noble Earl, Lord Lytton, dealt with that quite effectively last night, and all I would say is I do not understand at this moment why it is the noble Marquess introduced this particular form of dilatory Motion or why, on the other hand, he was not prepared to put forward the views he laid before the Committee and put them as the Amendment to the proposals of the Government. But let us pass from that.

I cannot myself understand how it is that you will be in any better position after you have read the Bill than you are after reading the Report of the Committee which is now before you. That, at least, is expressed in ordinary lan-

guage which most of us can understand. I have had a very long experience of Statutes, both in my practice and in Parliament, and later on the Bench, and I can say that I should deeply regret it if I were forced into the position of having to glean what is proposed by reference to Statutes rather than by reading a volume such as this Report, however lengthy, from which we can understand, particularly from the sequence, exactly what is proposed. For some reason this course has been adopted. Fortunately in this House, as so often happens, we have dealt really with the merits of the whole situation, and I am glad of it. The speech of the noble Lord, Lord Lloyd, which he has just made with such force and power, nevertheless was an argument, not for delay, but against the proposals in the Report. I quite understand this view which he and those associated with him have taken, but may I ask your Lordships just to consider where we are in regard to this matter?

I suppose there is nothing that is clearer than this, that since the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms came into existence we have always known there would have to be reconsideration at the end of ten years, or a little before the ten years. It is well to take stock of the situation as it then stood. You will remember that power was given under the Act of 1919 which led to the appointment of the Simon Commission to enquire as to whether and to what extent we should modify or restrict the reforms that had been granted. There is common ground on quite a number of matters to which I want to direct your Lordships' attention. First of all, there is no suggestion of any kind that there should be any restriction upon the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, no suggestion that there should be any retrograde movement. I gather from what the noble Lord said just now that he agrees that some advance must be made. Further, there can be no stand-still policy. We must go ahead. We must make some advance. Again, I may point out that there is no suggestion at this moment even from those who take a different view upon one point—those who sit on the Benches close to me—that we should have a fuller inquiry, but there are suggestions from them that there should be things included in future which in the Report are not included.

The only question therefore that is left—and I beg your Lordships' consideration to this—is how far we should advance. The noble Lord has said that he and those associated with him are making an advance. As we know, their policy, if I may put it quite briefly, is that provincial autonomy should be granted with the reservation of law and order, and that there should be no responsibility at the Centre, but at most that there should be what has been called a Central Advisory Council. I would ask your Lordships to pause for a moment to examine where we are. I ask you to bear in mind throughout that what we are considering and what those who are opposed to us also have in mind is that an advance must be made. Some of your Lordships may not perhaps recall at this moment that under the Act of 1919, and ever since these reforms were inaugurated, as they were in 1921, when I went there, the Provinces have had the transfer of everything that is substantial in administration, except two things. One was land revenue and the other was law and order.

Now on land revenue there is no controversy of any kind and never has been. We have all been agreed that that should be transferred to the Provinces, and it has never formed the subject of any serious discussion or controversy. It is not suggested now that it should not be transferred. Your Lordships see then what the position is. The Provinces have had those reservations to which I have referred up to the present moment, and now it is proposed, after all this period, after the thirteen years during which time they are entitled to say that it is admitted that the reforms have not worked so badly, that there should be a restriction on them, or practically no forward movement when we are all agreed that there must be a forward movement.

The whole of the argument of those who do not agree with us, and which was advanced by the noble Lord, is that law and order should be reserved. There is no reality in any suggestion of autonomy with such reservation, and the noble Lord knows it quite well. It is idle to pretend that you are giving real provincial autonomy and yet reserving law and order. Nowhere is that more unreal than in India. I would like to call to the noble Lord's attention that when we had a debate in this House in April, 1933,

upon the appointment of the Joint Select Committee the noble Lord then spoke, and I had the honour of following him and replying to the debate. This very question was then raised between us. I do not want to trouble your Lordships by reading the whole of what was said, but what I understand to be the effect of what he then said was contained in these words of the noble Lord:

"I am sorry to interrupt the noble Marquess, but it is an important point, and I would like to make my position clear. He has stated my view perfectly correctly, provided that he will not forget the dilemma which I sketched to the House—namely, that I believed there was no reality unless you transferred, but I feared there would be no security if you did;"—

this is referring to law and order—

"and therefore, while I believe in the main that you have got to hand over law and order in the Provinces"—

that was what the noble Lord said in April of 1933—

"it makes me doubly sure that the policy of devolution at the Centre at the same time is very dangerous."

LORD LLOYD: I do not want to interrupt the noble Marquess, but as he has specifically referred to me I should like to make the position clear. I have always gone a little further than some of my friends in this matter. My position has always been this, that there is very little reality in responsible government without law and order, but you had the dilemma to face and it still remains. I would be willing to hand over law and order with the risks involved provided I had a strong enough Central Government, but you are not giving me a strong enough Central Government.

THE MARQUESS OF READING: I am much obliged to the noble Lord. That states exactly what I understood to be his position in April, 1933. I would call his attention to one fact, not that I want to press too far upon him anything he may have said. I do not want to repeat the observations I made at an earlier stage of my address to your Lordships to-day. I am not pressing this against him for the purpose of making that point. I want to say that whilst he had it well in mind he, as an experienced Governor, realised that there was no reality in the transfer unless you did transfer law and order, and he agrees with that view to-day. That is the point I want to make. What is the alternative? When we are considering a subject of this gravity, when we are dealing with the whole future of our Empire in India, I beg your Lordships to think what it is that is proposed to you against the recommendations of the Report. It is proposed that you should make—what? A grant of this provincial autonomy with a reservation which the noble Lord himself, one of the great protagonists of the opposition, admits makes any transfer unreal. He says he is not in accord with those who have taken the view hitherto that law and order should not be transferred.

LORD LLOYD: I do not want to interrupt but the noble Marquess is pressing my point a little far. I want to make clear what is my position. The noble Marquess is suggesting that my conduct is not quite consistent. Of course, there is no complete reality in transfer; I should not say there is no reality. After all, we do not control the Police even in this country, but, of course, to have a complete transfer you must transfer law and order. But we have to move by stages and security has got to be considered further.

THE MARQUESS OF READING: I shall not pursue it. I have made the point I desired to make. We are very limited in time and I am anxious not to take up time. I am trying to be brief in my observations. What I desire to press on your Lordships is the only alternative that we are considering to the plan which has been evolved after consideration in three Round-Table Conferences, by the Simon Commission, by the Commissions that went out to India, by the 159 sittings of the thirty-two members of the Joint Select Committee. It is this, I almost said ridiculous suggestion, because of the really diminutive character of the extra advance that is now to be made after seven years' inquiry, after all that has been held out to the Indians who came over here and sat with us at the Round-Table Conference and afterwards. After all that, what is to be offered is this very small advance.

Before passing to consider other aspects of this question, I pause for a moment to reply to one of the questions put by the noble Lord. After the declaration of the Princes I took the view that there should be responsibility at the Centre. I

took that view only after grave thought and consideration—not hurriedly by any means—after consultation with those with whom I was associated, and I may add, with whom I was not closely associated. After that statement made by the Princes, I changed the view I had held and decided that, if there was Federation and the Princes would come in so that there would be union of All India, then I would be prepared to give responsible government, subject to certain safeguards. The noble Lord said that although Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru was absent I could give an explanation. I do not know what he supposes I can tell your Lordships that is not known already. I know nothing about the genesis of the Princes' declaration. Nothing surprised me more than that declaration of the Princes. No more dramatic announcement was ever made at any Conference or any political meeting at which I have been present. I believe that it surprised everybody else.

Your Lordships will bear in mind that Federation as been the dream of us all, but we have never been able to give effect to it because the key to the door was in the hands of the Princes. Until they unlocked the door voluntarily we were absolutely powerless. When I was in India, and constantly had to keep in view all the difficulties involved in daily administration, I asked myself every day how we were to continue to govern India. Remember that Mr. Gandhi was then at the height of his power, the greatest height he ever reached, in the years 1921-22, when there was agreement between him and the Hindus and the Moslems, and they were all working together against our Government. I ask you whether you think I could ever rise in the morning or could ever go to bed at night without putting to myself the question what was to happen—there were roughly 350,000,000 Indians and 135,000 British all told in the country, counting in 60,000 or 70,000 soldiers. Men, women and children went to make up the remainder. I ask you to put to yourselves the question that I had to put to myself. I ask you, if you reject the Report, to consider what there is in the future for us, and how we are to carry on in the years to come in the government of India.

All I would say to you with regard to Federation is that when that door was once opened it gave us the prospect for which we had always been hoping, of stability in India. That is the only word to express compendiously what it meant. The reason why Federation is of such importance is that the Princes, in their own interests, are involved in the matters that concern us most. If the Princes come into a Federation of All-India, and you have therefore one Government of All-India with the conditions, into which I will not enter at the moment, which the Princes have made, at least you can say that in the future, as India learns to govern herself and assume the responsibility which it is proposed to confer upon her, there will always be a steadying influence. I will tell you how I put it to myself. It may be that some will criticise me for it. I ask myself the question, what will be the result if the Princes are with us. It must follow that in both the Lower Chamber of the Federal Legislature and in the Upper Chamber of the Federal Legislature you will have a large proportion of representatives of the Princes. That will be a steadying, a stabilising influence more valuable to us than appears perhaps at first sight.

What is it we have most to fear? There are those who agitate for independence for India, for the right to secede from the Empire altogether. I believe myself that it is really an insignificant minority that is in favour of that, but it is an articulate minority and it has behind it the organisation of Congress. It becomes important therefore that we should get what steadying influence we can against that view. The Princes are as interested in the preservation of the connection of India with the British Empire as we are ourselves. They want—and it is an essential feature of every discussion we have had with them—their treaties preserved. Their treaties are treaties with the King. They want to have direct relations with the Viceroy as representing the King, so that in any questions that arise, they may go to the Viceroy direct, and not have anything to do with Ministers who are to be responsible to the Legislature under this new scheme. That shows the importance of having their co-operation. In my view the maintenance of internal order and the resistance of anything approaching anarchy or communism is as much in the interests of the Princes as it is in our interest, and

it is also in the interest of the vast majority of Indians.

There again you will have a tremendous great stabilising influence. Remember that under the present proposal there will be approximately 33 per cent. of the Princes who will be members of the Legislature with 40 per cent. in the Upper Chamber. There are, of course, large bodies of Indians who do not take the view of Congress or anything approaching it. So that with that influence in the Federal Legislature, I am not afraid in the slightest degree of anything that may happen, even if Congress managed to get the largest proportion of votes. Then, too, the Princes are as interested as we are in the security of India against external aggression. It is just as important to them as it is to us. If the Communists gain the upper hand the Princes go, just as we should have to disappear. Therefore they are with us on those three main questions. May I ask your Lordships to put to yourselves in consideration of this matter the three questions which I put to myself, and to take the answers as I have given them? They cannot be disputed; they are beyond controversy. Then you will see the value of the Federation to the stability of the connection between India and ourselves.

I pass from that to responsibility at the Centre. Again I make the observation, taking up what I said before, that when the Princes' Declaration was made it did create a very pewerful impression upon my mind and it did bring me to compliance with the condition which they imposed, that there must be responsibility at the Centre before they could federate. I am utterly at a loss to understand what the noble Lord meant by the insinuation, if there was one, that I could tell you, or that Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru could tell you, what had happened to bring about this Declaration of the Princes. I do not know, and could not follow, why he suggested that. I know no more about it than he does, and it was just as unexpected to me as it would have been to any of your Lordships. In considering the question of responsibility at the Centre, I would say to your Lordships, let us keep our minds concentrated upon the essential principles. We shall only get confused and lose all sense of proportion by paying too much attention to the questions of detail which are raised, in themselves no doubt of moment but in comparison with the main things really unimportant.

What are they? In the responsible Government, first the Army—the whole of the defence of India—and external affairs are reserved entirely for the Viceroy. There is no question about those, and Indians have accepted that. They do not raise any question there, and that remains entirely with us. Then the peace and tranquillity of India are reserved to the Viceroy and to the Governor of the Province; and rightly, because let me remind you that the Viceroy, the Governor-General, is the head of the Executive in India. He is, of course, the representative of the King, and it is for him to see that peace and tranquillity are maintained. It is essential that he should have not only the right of intervening but the right of control to prevent a menace to peace and tranquillity. That is ceded, and as far as I know no question has been raised; the Indians have not attempted to raise one. Another point is the protection of minorities. That is granted to the Viceroy. Why? That is more in the interests of India perhaps than in the interests of ourselves, but we take the responsibility so far as we are concerned to see that Indian minorities are properly protected.

Then I go to the last points that I would mention; because I do not want to take up too much time. There are other matters, such as protection to the members of the Public Services, which again is vested in the Governor-General, notwithstanding the responsibility at the Centre. That naturally follows; and also the right and indeed the obligation upon him to prevent discrimination or penal treatment in regard to British imports. I only enumerate them; I do not go into detail. The same thing applies with regard to finance. All of this is with the object of giving him the power and with it also all the necessary rights to put that power into exercise. He has the right to issue Ordinances; he has the right to pass laws himself if he thinks it necessary. He has the power to do everything that may be necessary. In the same way, though of course there are limitations because of the difference between them, the Governor has the same power in the

Province. That is all done with one object, to provide the safeguards which we think are necessary and to make them effective.

I submit to your Lordships that after all the consideration which has been given to them these safeguards are as effective as they can possibly be made. It is of no use saying that they are safeguards on paper. I am myself at least able to tell you that when I was in India there were safeguards—and there are safeguards now—under the Government of India Act, 1919. I had to use them again and again, and never failed to use them when I thought circumstances demanded it and it was necessary to use them either to keep peace and tranquillity or to intervene in the interests of the Indians. No difficulties arose in consequence. There was dissatisfaction no doubt among the members of the Legislature; but nevertheless the safeguards were not paper safeguards, they were very effective.

I think I did remind your Lordships once, and I do so again only that I may bring it to your recollection and just to show that the safeguards are not paper, that out of five Budgets which were introduced during my period of office in India two were passed on my signature because the Lower Chamber refused to accept them, once as a protest against the raising of a tax and the second time as a constitutional protest. But no difficulty arose. The law was passed and in due course all the formalities followed. The noble Viscount, Lord Halifax, followed me in India, and he had the same kinds of difficulties to deal with during his time. If I may say so with all respect, it is absurd to suggest that safeguards put into a Statute are mere waste paper, when our preoccupation has always been to determine what we could do, as we necessarily should, to avoid having to use a safeguard by getting them to take the right step, though always maintaining, as I think one must, an attitude as conciliatory as possible, but firm nevertheless so that what you think is necessary shall be done even though you have to use a safeguard.

I want to hurry on so as not to take up your Lordships' time. We have heard much about the risks. Of course every new venture involves risks. Nothing is certain except what can be demonstrated by science, and after all we have not yet reached that stage in politics. Of course what you have to consider is the balance of risk. It was said by my noble and learned friend on the Woolsack yesterday, and I agree, that it is the balance of these risks which you have to take into account. That is the problem. Is it better to stand still, or to give this miserable advance which is suggested by those who are opposing the recommendations, or is it right to go forward and to give a substantial advance—and it is a substantial advance—taking care nevertheless that you are protected against possible dangers which you cannot help foreseeing may arise if powers become operative which we trust may not?

I have been addressing your Lordships upon this question I am afraid, when I think of it, with perhaps some heat, because I feel very strongly upon it—very strongly indeed. I am at least in this position, that I am addressing your Lordships with no personal ambition at all. There is nothing that can be offered to me at this moment, at my advanced years. All I desire is to be able to serve my country in whatever capacity may come to me, although I have passed the years in which I could accept responsible positions such as might have been offered, and were offered, in the past. I do say this to you, bearing all this in mind and speaking as one who has had some experience of administration in India, and who, ever since that time, has given endless thought and attention to Indian affairs, not because it was an obligation of mine but because of my deep interest in our own country and our own Empire, and India's connection —having had to serve on the Round Table Conferences and to take part in discussions and serve on Committees and finally on this Joint Select Committee—that I have throughout had but one object in my mind, and that was to do what is best in the interests both of India and of the Empire.

I believe that by giving examples in India of our activities, in accordance with the ideals that we cherish of liberty, justice, fair-play, integrity of purpose, and, perhaps of as much importance as any, of holding faithfully to the promises which we have made, and acting truly in the right spirit and not trying to shelter ourselves behind the

letter of a Statute or a Proclamation—I believe that it is by means of these activities that we have been able to keep India. I say it with all the sense of responsibility that one can have at my time of life, and with my experience, that I believe that these British characteristics have had the greatest influence upon India, and have done more to keep our connection with India and India's connection with us than all the forces of the Crown which have been in India during that time.

In conclusion I would ask your Lordships, with all respect, to determine whether the policy of advance, which admittedly is the policy of all—of the Opposition as well as of those in favour of the Report—shall be unduly niggardly in the proposals formulated upon it, or whether it should be, as I hope and as all history teaches us it should be, generous, and as generous as circumstances and conditions will permit. I am not suggesting that we should give without thinking what would be the effect of giving. That would be adopting irresponsibility. I am asking that we should go as far as we legitimately can, and as far as the counsels of prudence and wisdom would dictate to us, with our knowledge of the situation. Bearing that in mind I would ask you to support the Government's proposals. I would ask you to remember that if we reject, or appear to reject, or cavil at, the proposals put before us, we do infinite harm in India. I am not going to attempt to picture to you what the result might be, if most unfortunately that should happen. You are as well able to picture it for yourselves. I do, however, ask you, speaking with the deepest conviction of my mind and my heart, to give your vote and support to the Government, to show your good will, and to show that we in England really are meaning to keep the promises we have made in the past. Thus, we shall keep both India and the Indians as partners with us in the Empire.

LORD PONSONBY OF SHULBREDE: My Lords, we are now reaching the concluding stages of a prolonged and very memorable debate. I have listened to the speeches, and those I was unable to hear I have read, and I can hardly imagine that a debate has been held in your Lordships' House in which so many authoritative voices have been raised and so much close knowledge of the subject under discussion has been displayed. Twelve members of the Joint Select Committee have spoken, three ex-Viceroys, five ex-Governors of Provinces, and two ex-Secretaries of State for India, and of those, with the exception of two, all have given their voice with considerable conviction on the side of the Government. Those of us who are less well qualified to speak on this very serious problem must naturally feel influenced to a large extent by such a heavy weight of experienced opinion. The responsibility which falls on Parliament on this question is greater than the responsibility which falls on it usually in matters of domestic legislation, or even of foreign relations, because we have to admit that there is in the electorate considerable ignorance with regard to Indian affairs.

I would venture to say that their voluminous Reports have been read by very few people outside the members of the Joint Select Committee. I wonder how many members of your Lordships' House have digested them. The responsibility on the Government is very great. They have to go forward trusting in the knowledge of those who are closely acquainted with the problem in question. There seem to be three lines of approach to this matter. I will first take the mistrustful and apprehensive. The other two are the trusting and generous and the cautious and conciliating. The mistrustful and apprehensive is represented by the opinion of those who follow the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, whose absence here to-night we all very much regret, because his mere presence in your Lordships' debates always seems to add to the dignity and seriousness of our proceedings. Even when he vacated the post of Leader of the House his attendance was very frequent at your Lordships' debates. This opinion, so far as it is held and expressed by individuals, is an opinion which should be heard and should be met.

With a great deal that fell from the noble Lord, Lord Lloyd, I felt myself in partial agreement, and I think the views have been put forward, not only by Lord Lloyd, but by the noble Lord, Lord Rankeillour, and if I may say so, in a very forcible speech by the noble Lord, Lord Ampthill; so that we understand what those who support the noble Marquess

fear. Laying down a Constitution for an oriental country, or rather an oriental sub-continent, in days when democratic institutions are being discarded, may legitimately cause some fear. But, apart from their opinions on that point, they seem to have been most unwise in tabling the Amendment which is on the Paper. What have the Government done? I am not accustomed to support or commend the Government, but I really feel that in this matter they have proceeded very slowly and very cautiously, and that if this stage had been omitted there would have been a greater cause for complaint and more justification for a protest. What is this stage? It really is the revival of the old stage in Parliamentary procedure, which is a Motion for leave to introduce a Bill. I rather think that the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, when he introduced his measure for the reform of your Lordships' House proceeded in this way. At any rate, it is by no means an unusual procedure, and I think the Government are to be commended for proceeding with caution in this way.

So far for the views of those noble Lords and their supporters in another place as individuals. With regard to their views as a compact section, a political faction, I shall have a word to say in a moment. Now the second approach is the trusting and generous approach. We, on this side, represent the views which are embodied in the Minority Report, and we feel that those views are the generous views which would make the Constitution more acceptable to India, and more secure in its future. I only want to dwell on two points. We very much regret that the expression "Dominion *status*" has been omitted, and is avoided by the spokesman of the Government. Either it meant something originally, or it meant nothing. If it is simply a name for what the Government intend, then why do not they refer to it in that way? The very fact that they avoid this expression is raising a certain amount of suspicion with regard to their intentions. Secondly, we visualise the masses in India, and we feel that the raising of their *status* is of paramount importance. We want to see an increase in labour representation. It is under-represented in the Legislative Provincial Chambers, and at the same time I think there are five bicameral Provincial Governments where a Second Chamber will still more weigh the balance against them. To use an expression from the Minority Report, we want to give special protection to those whose economic circumstances render them liable to exploitation. In an interesting speech from the noble Lord, Lord Hastings, he dwelt with great force on the question of the tillers of the soil in India, and we on this side of the House feel that their lot, which at present is so miserable, can be alleviated as time passes if they, as a mass and as individuals, have some voice in the Government of their great country.

We do not want the people of India to think that we are handing over to them a cut-and-dried water-tight project, a carefully adjusted form of Constitution, and that we are going to blame them if they do not work it properly at once. We desire rather to lay down the lines of a Constitution which they themselves can expand by testing its efficiency as time passes. Therefore we want to see open-handed generosity from the outset, so that there may be no suspicion that we are holding something back, and that we are going to blame them if things do not turn out as satisfactorily as they should.

The third approach is the cautious and conciliating approach of the Government. Caution is inevitable in a great problem of this sort, but it can be overdone, and over-caution may perhaps prevent the scheme from succeeding as it otherwise might. So far as they have been conciliating it has not been conciliating to the people and the differences in India, but it has been an attempt—an attempt that we consider has gone too far—to conciliate this so-called diehard opinion in the Conservative Party. And now I want to say a word with regard to that movement. I have given full credit to the individuals in it; their views are interesting, their views should be met, and their views should be fully expressed. But when it comes to this faction coming to your Lordships' House and voting and being treated as a political danger, then I think it is time that we put certain views before you. Whatever dangers there may be before us in this country, the prospect of a Government formed by Mr. Winston Churchill, Sir Henry Page Croft, the noble Lord, Lord Lloyd, and others, is not one of the dangers to which we have to look forward, but the Govern-

ment have gone out of their way to conciliate this faction. They have had to have Tory councils and Tory conferences; and now, in the great Tory Committee of your Lordships' House, they are finally voting to dispose of this. We consider that it would be as unjustifiable for us to intrude by voting on this occasion as if we had broken into the Bristol Conference or charged into Queen's Hall when the Council met.

Meanwhile, what of the references to the Labour Minority Report? There have been one or two. The noble Marquess who has just sat down referred to it in a passing sentence. The noble Viscount, Lord Halifax, who introduced this Motion, never referred to it at all. I quite understand, with this crowd round us, and half a dozen of us here on these Benches, that it seems obvious that what we think, and what we say, and what we want, and what we project, are entirely negligible; and yet what we desire, the projects that we lay down, are the projects of the next Government of this country. However much you may dislike it, that is inevitable sooner or later, and sooner more likely than later. Therefore we find ourselves here in this extremely unreal Assembly treating with enormous care and with great deliberation a movement that is entirely negligible, and neglecting as absolutely outside the pale the representatives of the future Government of this country on whose shoulders the responsibility is going to rest of guiding, of watching, of controlling, perhaps, in its initial stages this vast experiment.

The Bill that is going to come in and be passed into law when it has received the Royal Assent is not the end. That is only the beginning. This intricate business of which so few of us can foresee the full implications, this plunge into the future in which these millions of fellow subjects of ours are concerned, presenting them with a new form of government to which they are unaccustomed, hoping that they will have gained by our seven hundred years' experience—all that is problematic. We have to go forward. We have led them on and on, stage by stage, to expect this. We cannot draw back now. We have to go on; but it is not this Government or the next Government or the Government after that that has got to deal with this matter. It is Governments for a generation to come, and I only emphasise the fact that the opinion of the next Labour Government should be treated with a great deal more caution, a great deal more interest, a great deal more respect than we are likely to get so long as your Lordships' House is constituted as it is. This vote is going to be taken. We thirty or forty in this House who attend with great regularity your Lordships' debates see many strange faces here to-night. I want to say a word of commendation to the noble Earl, Lord Lucan, the Government Chief Whip, for the tactful, ingenious, and at the same time, I believe, firm way in which he has fitted into these four days speeches from the many who have desired to express themselves on this subject. I do not want to alarm him at all, but I am told another train is due before half-past seven.

The value and importance of our debates in this House depend on the voices of those who speak and not on the votes of those who happen to attend these debates. It has been an enormously important debate during these four days. I am perfectly certain that nowhere else in this country could you have got any body of men to debate this question in the way it has been debated here. Let this not be spoiled by a ridiculous Division. Noble Lords have been brought up from the country—they have been taking the Oath here at this Box during the last three days—and they could easily outvote the Government. There are 300 or 400 spare ones. How can this be taken seriously as a vote to-night? We refuse to participate in it. There does seem to be something ironical about an Assembly constituted as your Lordships' House is, giving a verdict with regard to constitutional reform in India. If anybody in the Joint Select Committee had come forward and suggested that the Constitution of your Lordships' House should be the Constitution of the Second Chamber in India, what would have happened? The noble Marquess, the Lord Chairman of that Committee, would have quietly and firmly asked that member to withdraw and would have sent him to Hanwell. And yet we are going by this amazing procedure, by these votes that are brought here in this way on particular occasions, to give some sort of decision with regard to this very grave matter. It would be a great deal more dignified for this House to-night to set aside this absurd Division and to ask the Government to proceed with the Bill in order

that all the differences of opinion may be fully discussed when the measure comes before us.

I do feel a great responsibility. I think it is difficult for Eastern countries to understand Parliamentary institutions. That part of Lord Lloyd's speech in which he dealt with that matter dealt with a point which I have always felt was one which must be very carefully considered. It is difficult for them to recognise that democracy involves the submission of the minority to the rule of the majority without violence, and that it depends on the full right of free expression of criticism and opposition as weapons of persuasion for that minority in their endeavour to take the place of the majority. For a majority to suppress a minority by violence or for a minority to attack a majority by force—both spell the breakdown of democratic institutions, and it is because there has been resort to these methods in so many countries in Europe and in Asia that the Parliamentary system has fallen.

I should like, if I may, very humbly to end by joining with my noble friend Lord Snell in begging the people of India to understand what the attitude of the people of Great Britain really is as we know it, because, after all, the spirit in which this reform is going to be worked is far more important than the letter. We want to appeal to India not to reject it, but to use it; not to magnify its possible faults, but to accept it as a foundation on which to build a full responsible form of government; not to pretend that by disorder you can improve it, but to test it by working it and improve it through experience. We in Great Britain want unity preserved with all the diversities of race and religion and language and habits carefully safeguarded. We want to prove to the world by this measure that, not by despotism, not by autocracy, not by benevolent bureaucracy, but by the corporate effort of a free people, the millions of Indian subjects of His Majesty may reach the high destiny to which they will be entitled by the cultivation of their great intellectual and moral qualities under a system of full responsible self-government.

VISCOUNT FITZALAN OF DERWENT: My Lords, I think there is one thing that all of us, no matter to what Party we belong, or to what section of any Party we belong, may congratulate ourselves upon as a result of the debates in both Houses of Parliament and that is the universal agreement as to the gravity of this great problem. I am going to say but a very few words because I must give time to my noble friend below me, Viscount Hailsham, to wind up the debate, but I should like to say that I am speaking to-night, and especially at this hour at the end of this debate, with the greatest possible reluctance and with a great sense of responsibility. I wish it could have so happened that I had not been left to speak on behalf of the noble Marquess who cannot be heard at the end of this debate.

I would like at the outset to allude shortly to one point to which the most reverend Primate referred. It was also alluded to to-day by my noble friend Lord Lloyd. I refer to the position of the Indian Christians. I will not say all I had intended to say upon that because of the short time at my disposal. The most reverend Primate referred to the All-India Christian Association, as I think it is called, which is representative of all denominations. I believe my own denomination happens to be the least numerous, being only about one-third of all the Indian Christians in India. I want to emphasise what happened during last summer when Mr. Rakia Ram, the honorary secretary of that Association, was in this country. He is not a co-religionist of mine, but, speaking on behalf of Indian Christians, he said that they had grave anxiety as to their future owing to being under, as they are under, the Government of the Province. He pointed out that it was not that they were anxious regarding anything in the shape of persecution or things of that kind, but that they did feel they were heavily handicapped by coming under the pin-pricking of those who have no sympathy with them and who would interfere with the administration of their religion in such matters as education and so on.

They therefore suggested that something might be done, that a Minority Bureau might be set up, with a view to acquainting the Viceroy and the Governors of their grievances if and when any danger arose. Whether that is practicable or not I do not pretend to say, but I want to urge this matter on the

Government so that when the Bill is framed they may endeavour to meet this point and give sympathetic consideration to these people's anxiety. We know that Congress has got very full power, or at least has a considerable number of votes, and that it is likely to increase its power in that way. Last night my noble friend Lord Lytton said that Congress did not count for anything much. I do not know about that, but I imagine they are very good pin-prickers, and that it is possible for them to interfere a good deal with the essential interests of India and this country. For example, they are to have full control over everything—the Army, tariffs, finance and all internal administration—and I doubt very much whether these so-called safeguards are going to be sufficient to help against the pin-pricking power which they undoubtedly possess.

Last night we had a very interesting speech from my noble friend Lord Linlithgow on the question of finance. I hesitate to mention finance in this House at this moment, because I have no doubt the noble Viscount who is going to follow me will shatter anything I say and will make out to his own satisfaction, but I hope not to your Lordships', that the finances of India were never better than they are now, and that there are huge surpluses awaiting dispersal. But he cannot get over the fact that my right honourable friend the Secretary of State for India has definitely stated in these words his opinion of the financial position:

"It is clear that there are financial difficulties to be overcome before the new autonomous Provinces can be started."

Before they are started! Nothing then can be done until the financial situation is rectified. My noble friend Lord Linlithgow made out, I believe absolutely accurately, that £5,000,000 would be required for working the new Provinces.

Allusion was made to Sir Malcolm Hailey. Sir Malcolm Hailey, I believe, is considered the pet witness of the Government. He is a man, as we all know, of high standing in that wonderful Indian Civil Service of which we are all so proud. He was brought over here, away from his duties in India, to help the Select Committee with his views and opinions. What did he say? He said:

"The creation of autonomous Provinces will not be possible until there has been a considerable betterment of Central revenues."

I understand that "considerable betterment" includes such things as the abolition of surcharges, provision for the Army Budget, the redemption of debt, the cuts and various other items. I am told that these sums added together amount to something like £17,000,000. I do not think they were mentioned by my noble friend. And before the financial position in India is put right the reforms cannot start.

My noble friend Lord Linlithgow, I suppose, drafted paragraphs 267 and 268 of the Report. I do not think he could have been very comfortable when he was doing so. They are involved, and he seems to be attempting to gloss over difficulties. It is a curious position. In one paragraph the hope is expressed that the financial problem is in process of solution. We do not want pious hopes in great State documents on financial questions. What we want are sterling economic facts and those are what we ought to have in a document of that character. My noble friend said last night that the financial situation was not comfortable. I do not know if I may recall to his memory—I am not certain that he is old enough to have the memory—that some years ago there was a song which those of us who belong to the Party which occupies these Benches enjoyed singing. I do not think noble Lords opposite enjoyed it quite so much. That song was "Wait till the clouds roll by." My noble friend may take consolation perhaps by singing that song to himself, only let me remind him that financial clouds are very slow movers.

Is it suggested anywhere that the financial situation can be put right without further taxation? If there is to be further taxation, sooner or later, some of it is bound to fall on the agricultural population of India. Remember, my Lords, that 89 per cent. of that vast population live in the villages and on the land. No less a medical authority than Sir John Meikle has stated that 60 per cent. of those people are ill-nourished. Is it proposed that, when the Government pass their Bill, it is going to remain hung up because they will not have sufficient money to make the start to which the Secretary of State for India alluded? If so, I venture to suggest that the position in India will be very difficult, very try-

ing. On the one hand you will have those who want these reforms clamouring for them to be put into execution. On the other hand you will have that great mass of the population, the eighty-nine per cent. living on the land, anxious and fearful of the taxation which is going to come upon them and their homes, and their ill-nourished families. Is that a good prospect? Can that tend to the peace and the comfort of that great country? I must not trepass on your Lordships' time much longer, but I would like to say that it appears to me that the financial situation alone justifies us in voting for the Amendment moved by the noble Marquess, simply in order to show that we do not intend to give a preliminary blessing to this coming Bill until we have it before us and are able to see exactly how the financial situation is proposed to be dealt with.

I regard this Motion of the Government as purely a tactical Motion. I do not blame them for that. I quite appreciate the fact that they would like to have this Motion passed for its effect on India, but I do not understand why it is necessary for this House to come in to help the tactical moves of the Government. I think it is much more dignified for us to take another attitude altogether, and to keep our hands perfectly free. Remember, our voting for this Resolution will be interpreted in India as a distinct blessing of the coming Bill, and I think we ought to avoid giving any premature blessing at all. May I say one thing more? I have had the question put to me, and so have many of my friends in a similar position: "What is the good of your taking part in this Indian debate? What experience have you got?" I do not think that is an unnatural question to ask, but I answer it by saying that I am a member of Parliament, and it is my duty to give an honest and straight vote which I think to be right, and that I cannot see that I am justified in allowing myself to be led by the opinions of a majority of those eminent and distinguished people on the Joint Select Committee without being satisfied myself that I think they are right.

In a few weeks—about a month—it will be fifty-nine years since I first went out to India. I stayed there then about two years. I went out again fifteen years later, and I stayed, I think, about a year. Those periods of residence in that country, according to some evidence, certainly entitle me to write a book, but I do not pretend for a single moment that those periods of residence there so long ago entitle me to express any opinion whatever on modern India from personal experience. But I do know this. I came back from my first visit to India imbued and impressed with two things—one an intense feeling of sympathy for the natives, and the other an intense sense of pride in my country for all it had done and was doing. I firmly and honestly believe that it is my duty here to-night, in what I conceive to be the true interests of the people of India and of this country, to give my vote for the Amendment of the noble Marquess.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (VISCOUNT HAILSHAM): My Lords, the matter which we have been discussing during the last four days has been truly said to be as important a topic as anything which anyone of us in this House has ever had to consider during our Parliamentary lives. The quality of the speeches which have been delivered on the one side and the other, I think has been not unworthy of the importance of that subject. Such speeches, if I may particularise only a few, as those of my noble friend Viscount Halifax and my noble friend, the Marquess of Salisbury on the first day, speeches like those of the most reverend Primate, the noble Lord, Lord Rankeillour, and the noble Marquess, Lord Zetland, on the second day, speeches like that great oration by my noble friend the Marquess of Linlithgow yesterday, and the series of addresses to which we have listened to-night, I think will linger long in the memories of most of us, even after our decision has passed into history. I am not competent to add any contribution with the authority of those who have previously taken part in this discussion.

It would be idle for me to attempt in the comparatively few moments at my disposal to deal with all the points which have been raised during the four days of debate, but it is a satisfaction to me to think that the great majority of them at any rate have been answered by one side or the other in the course of the discussion. I have thought that perhaps the most useful thing which I can do for your Lordships' House—and after all the most useful thing is what I believe every one

has tried to do in this debate—would be to point out what appeared to me to be the alternatives which lie before us and to indicate quite shortly a few of the arguments which point in the direction of the one alternative rather than the other.

There are as I see them four possible courses which have been suggested. There is first of all the course which is advocated by the Amendment upon which we are about to vote, that is, the course of saying that we cannot make up our minds, that we have not had enough time for the consideration of the matter and that we decline to express any judgment at all. There is secondly the alternative which was advocated from the Socialist Benches, of saying that our plain duty is, in a spirit of good will and confidence, to give to the Indians all which any of them ask for and to add to that gift some arrangement under which the Indian Army is to be completely Indianised by some approximately specific date. Then there is further the alternative of the adoption of the Report and the recommendations in that Report which comes with the authority of the Joint Select Committee. And there is, finally, the alternative which has been advocated by Lord Lloyd and others, of refusing to go so far as the Joint Select Committee recommends and of limiting the advance which we make to a modified concession in the Provinces and no alteration in any other part of the Constitution. I desire, if I may, to deal with those four which I think exhaust all the courses which have received any sort of support from any single member of your Lordships' House.

First of all, then, the proposal which is contained in the Amendment, that we shall ask for more time to consider this matter. "Why should we be rushed headlong" (such was the expression which the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, used) "into a decision? We have only had a month since the Report of the Joint Select Committee was put into our hands." If the Report of the Joint Select Committee was the first that any of us had heard of this problem I should have thought that there was very great force in that argument. But in truth it is not a month that we have had to consider this topic, it is something like seventeen years. In order to start at the genesis even within recent times, one has to go back—and a number of speakers on both sides had gone back—to the Declaration in 1917, which was embodied in the Preamble to the Government of India Act, 1919:

> ". . . it is the declared policy of Parliament to provide for the increasing association of Indians in every branch of Indian administration, and for the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in British India as an integral part of the Empire."

That is the pledge which was given by Parliament in 1919 and it is from that basis that the whole of our discussions must start.

It is no good saying, as my noble friend Lord Ampthill said yesterday, that the only proper form of government is a complete autocracy. We had committed ourselves to something completely different, and it does not help to ask your Lordships to approach this problem with the intention in view of dishonouring a pledge to which every Party in the State is fully committed. Pursuant to the programme laid down in the Government of India Act there was sent out to India the Simon Commission, and in 1928 we had the unanimous Report of that body. Both sides have referred to it, and I propose to say a word or two about it in a moment. At the instance of that Commission the Government of the day invited the meeting of the first Round Table Conference—it is useful to remember that it was at the suggestion of the Simon Commission—in order that we might ascertain the views of the Princes, into which they were unable to enquire.

At the first Round Table Conference there came that historic declaration of the possibility at least of their being willing to enter into an All-India Federation. That has been followed by two more Round Table Conferences. Those in turn were followed by the declaration of the present Prime Minister that:

> "The view of His Majesty's Government is that responsibility for the government of India should be placed upon Legislatures, Central and Provincial, with such provisions as may be necessary to guarantee, during a period of transition, the observance of certain obligations and to meet other special circumstances, and also with such guarantees as are required by minorities to protect their political liberties and rights."

That declaration was approved by both Houses of Parliament in December, 1931.

Pursuant to that plan, three Commissions were sent out to India in 1932 and they have reported. In 1933 there came the White Paper, with its concrete proposals for examination and consideration. For twenty months the Joint Select Committee, with the assistance of delegates from India, has investigated and discussed those proposals and now, finally, it has produced its considered opinion in the Report which is under discussion to-day. Of course nobody is bound by the opinion of the Joint Select Committee. Anybody, if he thinks he can find a better alternative, has a perfect right to advocate it. But it is idle to say that we have not had time to consider this matter when we have been continuously considering it for many years past.

Your Lordships will not have failed to observe that during the four days of this debate there has not been a single member of your Lordships' House who supports this Amendment who is able to do so on the ground that he has not been able to make up his mind. The only people who have supported that Amendment are those who have made up their minds, and have made them up against the Report. It is surely hardly worthy of the dignity of your Lordships' House that you should be asked to shirk a decision in that sort of way. And remember, my Lords, that although we are asked to say that we cannot make up our minds, everyone else charged with any responsibility has had no difficulty at all. The Government has made up its mind and has declared its mind. Each of the three Parties in the State have considered this matter.

We have heard from the Socialist Party that they do not think that the recommendations go far enough, but at any rate so far as they go they adopt them. We have heard from both sections of the Liberal Party that these recommendations have their support, and indeed their representatives were signatories of the Report. Our own Conservative Party, if I may speak for those behind me, has had a magnificent meeting of some 1,500 or 1,600 people, the chosen Council of the Party, which considered this matter and by a majority of three to one has declared that this is the policy of the Conservative Party. And, finally, the House of Commons, discussing this matter last week, was able to reach a decision by a majority of something like four to one in favour of the adoption of this Joint Select Committee's Report. We alone are to have it go forth that we, the House of Lords, cannot make up our minds because we have not had enough time to think about it. In this case, above all others, the policy of drift is not the policy of safety. It is the policy of the greatest danger, and it is fully time that this House, and this country, should be in a position to make up its mind on a matter to which so much thought, so much care, and so much attention, has been devoted.

I turn from that proposal to say a word or two—and I hope I shall be acquitted of discourtesy if it is only a word or two—about the proposal of noble Lords opposite. They wish first of all to declare that the Indianisation of the Indian Army shall proceed by approximately fixed times, and they wish us to give to the Indians practically all the self-Government they themselves would ask. With regard to the first Lord Middleton, in a helpful and thoughtful speech—though I did not agree with all that he had to say—was able to deal with the question as one familiar with the suggestion. You cannot lay down years ahead a time-table. It must depend on the circumstances of the case, and on developments which naturally and inevitably take place from time to time.

As to the proposal that we shall hand over to Indian politicians, or Indian statesmen if you will, the whole responsibility for the Government of India, I cannot help wondering how it is that noble Lords opposite have their judgment and their understanding so warped and obsessed by their extraordinary delusion that the whole world is engaged in a series of class wars. The reason why they objected to these safeguards, so we were told, was that these safeguards helped the possessing classes and did nothing to help what their shibboleth calls the toiling masses. Nothing can be more untrue, and demonstrably untrue. I will take one instance only—the special responsibility for the maintenance of peace and tranquillity. Who has benefited most by the peace and tranquillity which British rule has given? Who would suffer most if we allowed anarchy and chaos to take the place of law and order? It would be those toiling masses for whom noble Lords opposite

profess so much affection, but to whose real interest they are so strangely indifferent. That proposal seems to me one which cannot commend itself to your Lordships, and noble Lords opposite have had themselves to try and find excuses for not voting for it.

I pass to the alternatives presented by Lord Lloyd and Lord FitzAlan. There are two or three important distinctions between the policy which the Committee recommend, and the policy which those noble Lords recommend. The first is in regard to the Provinces. Everyone agrees that there is to be an advance in self-government in the Provinces, but the noble Lords who propose this alternative claim that the department of law and order should not be transferred, and indeed that it should be the only department not transferred in the Provinces. I would like to point out that that proposal has the condemnation of every single Commission or body which has ever investigated it. It is true, as Lord FitzAlan said, that none of us are bound to follow the advice of those who may have had more experience than ourselves, but it is worth noticing that no body of men has gone into the consideration of these problems without reaching the conclusion that the transfer of law and order is unavoidable. One has heard it said outside this House that what are called the dissentients have the support of the Simon Commission. Of course, that has not been said here, because it is contrary to the truth. The Members of the Simon Commission, when they dealt with this matter, after setting out most fairly and impartially the grave considerations on each side with regard to this transfer, went on to say: "We must face the fact that responsible Government in the Provinces cannot be achieved without this change." They then proceeded to recommend that the change should take place.

It is true, as Lord Reading said, that they suggested certain safeguards. The Joint Select Committee have suggested certain safeguards, but the moment you mention safeguards to Lord Lloyd he flies up and says every safeguard is valueless, and that we should pay no attention to them. Why is it that everybody thinks this transfer is essential? It is essential because if you transfer the rest of the responsibility and retain responsibility for law and order, you would, as has been pointed out, inevitably concentrate the whole attack of every politician in India upon the Police. It is in the interest of the Police that you should not make them the one target against which every dissatisfied politician would deliver his attack. You must also transfer this Department, because unless you transfer it you do not fix the responsibility where you seek to fit it, on the Indian politician. By these proposals you are going to transfer to the Indian politician all the responsibility for the control of economic policy, of expenditure, of agriculture, and of social policy, and you are going to transfer the whole of that administration with the assurance that, however much he mismanages that which you transfer, and however much disorder he can create, he will not be able to say that the trouble arose because the Governor or the Governor-General has mismanaged the Police. It is inevitable if you transfer the whole of the rest of Indian policy you must transfer also the responsibility of facing the results of the policy which they have initiated.

I ought to add that there are safeguards. The noble Lord, Lord Lloyd, does not like safeguards. At one time he said they were valueless, but at another time he said the unfortunate Indian people would not accept the transferred Services with the safeguards. I do not know which leg he is going to stand upon, but neither will support him for very long. The truth is that there are special safeguards resting upon the Governor in the Province and on the Governor-General at the Centre. Then there are special provisions designed to protect the Police. Your Lordships will remember that in paragraph 93 there is a provision that no alteration can be made either in the Acts with regard to the Police, or the regulations or rules which are promulgated, without the consent of the Governor. Paragraph 94 contains provisions which secure that the secret records of the Special Branch shall be inviolable and inviolate. Then there are provisions which ensure that if the ordinary methods of law and order are inadequate for combating terrorism there shall be special powers placed in the hands of the Governor as may be necessary. It seems to me—I hope it will seem to your Lordships—that those safeguards do not detract from the general responsibility of the Indian

politician in the provincial field, but that they do ensure that, if, unhappily, our confidence in him should be misplaced, or circumstances should be too strong for him, there would be adequate power with the Governor to prevent a serious mischief arising.

I pass to the next point of difference with regard to the responsibility at the Centre. The Joint Select Committee advise a responsible Centre on a federal basis. If you are going to have a responsible Centre, it must be on a federal basis, because everybody agrees that merely a British Indian responsible Centre will not work. And if it is to be an All-Indian Federation, there must be responsibility, because we have had from the Princes, over and over again, from 1931 down to the present day, the statement that they will not consider entering into any Federation which does not include responsibility. The words were:

"We can only federate with a British India which is self-governing, and not with a British-governed India as it is at present."

That was in 1931. We are agreed, I am glad to see, that when you have a provincial autonomy, you must have a strong Centre, otherwise the inevitable centrifugal force of these great autonomous Provinces will break India up into a series of separate units.

The difference between us is this, that the noble Lord, Lord Lloyd, and those who think with him wish to preserve the existing Centre under the delusion that it is a strong one, whereas the Joint Select Committee took the trouble not to assume that it would be strong or weak, but to investigate whether it was strong or weak; and in their Report they point out very clearly that in their judgment it is far too weak to be entrusted with any such duties. They say:

"As our inquiries have proceeded, we have been increasingly impressed, not by the strength of the Central Government as at present constituted, but by its weakness. It is confronted by a Legislature which can be *nothing but* (in Bagehot's words) 'a debating society adhering to an Executive.' The members of that Legislature are unrestrained by the knowledge that they themselves may be required to provide an alternative Government; their opinions have been uninformed by the experience of power, and they have shown themselves prone to regard support of Government policy as a betrayal of the national cause. It is no wonder that the criticism offered by the members of such a Legislature should have been mainly destructive; yet it is abundantly clear, from the political history of the last twelve years, that criticism by the Assembly has constantly influenced the policy of Government. As a result, the prestige of the Central Government has been lowered, and disharmony between Government and Legislature has tended to sap the efficiency of both. Indeed, the main problem which, in this sphere, Parliament has now to consider is how to strengthen an already weakened Central Executive."

What is the good of assuming, as my noble friend does, that the Central Government is strong, and on that basis, which is shown to be entirely false, arguing against the substitution of a responsible and Federal Centre?

In fact, a Federal Centre is inevitable if you want to retain a unitary India. It is essential for the safeguarding of our Imperial interests, but it is essential also in the interests of the good government of India itself and the protection of those 360,000,000 people who, as the noble Lord, Lord Lloyd, told us, are looking to us for our decision this evening—a number of people who, be it remarked, are affected much more by the existence of autonomy in the Provinces than they could possibly be by any change in the Centre. But then difficulties were raised. We were told that there never was a Federation with such disparate units, with sections which are self-governed and sections which are ruled over by Princes. Almost every federation is unique when it starts. There are different problems. When the system of federation started in the United States of America the problems they had to solve were novel, but that did not mean they were insoluble; and when I am told, as we have been told, that the thing will not work because some members are nominated and some are elected, I would remind your Lordships that that is the case in almost every Colonial Legislature in the Empire to-day. They have all got a nominated section and an elected section; but I have never heard yet that it makes the British Empire an unworkable unit.

It is said that indirect election will not do. Well, originally the plan was direct election. Lord Lloyd and Lord Salisbury came and persuaded the Committee that that was an impossible proposal, and that indirect election ought to take its place. Then indirect election is put in, and they come and ridicule that, and say you must not have it. What is the result? If they were right it would mean, not that

the method proposed by the Joint Select Committee is wrong, but that Federation itself is an impossibility: not that it is impossible now, but that it never will be possible. But nobody suggests either that the Provinces are to become autocratic or that the Princes will, within any measurable time, hand over their States to self-governing democracy. My noble friend indeed, as he often did in his speech, proves too much.

Then he said the Communal Award creates a difficulty. How does the Communal Award create a difficulty? It is perfectly true that there is in India this communal cleavage, which cuts right down to the roots and divides the population into wholly inconsistent sections, peoples with different traditions, and with different religions, and with different conceptions of society. That unhappily is the fact, and nothing that we do here will alter that fact. But that that involves that it is not possible for them to elect representatives seems to me a complete *non sequitur*. It is quite true that an elector who belongs to a Moslem constituency cannot vote in a Hindu constituency; but it is also true in England that somebody who votes in London cannot vote in South Wales, and *vice versa*. The only difference is that with us the division is geographical, and with them, unfortunately, it is religious and racial. But that that makes it impossible to hold an election I altogether deny, and I deny it with the more confidence because your Lordships realise that the Central Legislature at this moment is going on, not happily, because it has not responsibility, but it is going on with direct election quite consistently and quite regularly.

I would remind your Lordships, too, that in the Provincial Leigslatures which are meant to be made autonomous, and which will deal with far more of the intimate interests of the masses of the people, there is going to be this communal difficulty whether we have a Central Responsible Government or not. What is the good of saying that the communal difficulty makes an insuperable obstacle, and at the same time saying that we are going to have autonomy in the Provinces, where there will be the communal difficulty at its worst?

I had some other points to make, but I see that I have already made almost too great a draft on your Lordships' time. I only want to say one or two words about the possibility of safeguards. It is said—I have heard it often said—"Look at Ireland and that ought to frighten you from doing anything in India." There never could be a more false analogy than that. It is like saying that because in one particular case one particular form of safeguard has not worked, therefore it is impossible ever to find any safeguards that will work. In fact, in Ireland we made unfortunately every mistake which we are avoiding in India. In Ireland, unfortunately, these safeguards which were then created consisted in the promises of the authority to whom was handed over the government of the Irish Free State. I am sorry that they have not lived up to those promises, but that is not what we are relying on in the case of India.

In the case of India we have the great Departments of Defence, with the Army, of Foreign Affairs, and of Ecclesiastical Affairs reserved exclusively to the power of the Governor-General. We have an elaborate machinery set up under which the Governors and the Governor-General will not only have the right and the duty of interfering when minorities are threatened, when commercial discrimination is threatened, when the peace and tranquillity of the country or a Province are imperilled—not only have they that right of interfence but they are given a Secretariat, they are given a staff, they are given the right to call on the Civil Service, they are given the right to take over the administration of any Department which may be necessary for the effective discharge of that responsibility. We have not only in India set up safeguards resting on declarations, but we have put into the hands of those whom we are going to trust the power, if need be, to enforce those safeguards and to see that they are effective.

I would remind your Lordships that, after all, there is one big new factor which has arisen in the last month in the history of our relations with India, and that new factor is this Report. You cannot ignore it. You are not bound to follow it, but you have got to remember what the effect will be in India if you do ignore it and turn it down. For seventeen years India has been promised the gradual realisation of progressive self-

government. For seven years we have been engaged by successive stages investigating how best to give her that self-government. We have had Commissions, Round Tables, White Papers, Conferences, Joint Select Committees—every manner of investigation and inquiry, to which we invited India to send her representatives for discussion and colloboration.

We set up at last a Joint Select Committee whose authority and experience are probably unrivalled in the history of Select Committees in this country, and when we get their Report with an overwhelming majority in favour of certain recommendations, when we find that all Parties in the State accept these recommendations, when we find that the House of Commons by an overwhelming majority endorses them, when we find that the Government of the day accepts them, representing a National Government and therefore speaking, I hope, with peculiar authority for the country—when all that happens, India is not to be allowed to have the self-government that has been promised and offered because the House of Lords will not trust her to have anything of the kind. Not only so, but the reasons for which you are asked to refuse this self-government are reasons which will operate, not in favour of postponement, but in favour of never granting any such self-government as you have promised to award.

If safeguards are valueless, as is suggested, if it is impossible to devise a programme which gives the gradual realisation of Indian hopes, why, then, what follows? It follows either that you are going to wait before you take another step until you are able to hand over the whole Government of India—Army, administration, ecclesiastical, minorities, commercial, everything, lock, stock, and barrel—to an Indian Government, or else you are never going to hand it over to her at all. I do not know which of these alternatives your Lordships will regard as the more logical or more fair.

This has been said to be a grave question. I agree it is a grave question. The problem is as difficult a problem as we have ever been set to solve. We have chosen a Committee which has investigated that problem and which has spoken with an authority which probably no other Committee could ever claim to have possessed. I do not suggest that there will not be found difficulties and disappointments and set-backs. I do not suggest we are taking no risks. I do not suggest that in working out this Constitution human weaknesses will not display themselves and imperfections come to light. But what I do suggest is that this is a problem which has got to be solved, and that the worst way of solving it is to ignore its existence and to refuse to do anything at all. If anybody is satisfied—and my noble friend Lord FitzAlan is satisfied—that this solution is the wrong one, and if he is satisfied that he has a better alternative, then let him vote against the Government; but let no man vote against the Government unless he is prepared, honestly and sincerely, to say that he has thought this thing out, that he has studied the problem for himself, and that he has reached a solution which he is confident is a better one than the Joint Select Committee has been able to propose.

I hope that by your votes this evening your Lordships are going to reject the dilatory Amendment put forward, and are going to support the recommendations that the Joint Select Committee advised. I think it has approached the fulfilment of its task with infinite patience, with resolute courage, and with statesmanlike vision. I hope and trust that the solution which it has advised, and which the Government accepts, is a solution not unworthy of the genius of our race or of the traditions of our Empire.

On Question, Whether the words proposed to be left out shall stand part of the Motion?

Their Lordships divided: Contents, 239; Not-Contents, 62.

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Resolved in the affirmative, and Motion agreed to accordingly.

WRITTEN ANSWER.

MILK FOR SOMERSET SCHOOL CHILDREN.

LORD STRACHIE asked the President of the Board of Education if he will state how many children are attending elementary schools in the County of Somerset; how many of such children are receiving milk from the Milk Board, and whether only pasteurised milk or T.T. milk is supplied to them?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (VISCOUNT HALIFAX): The number of children on the registers of public elementary schools in the Administrative County of Somerset on the 30th September last (excluding areas which are autonomous for purposes of elementary education) was 41,353. I am informed by the Milk Marketing Board that it is at present impossible to give an estimate of the number of children who are receiving milk in this area under the Milk in Schools scheme. So far as I am aware the milk supplied is not limited to pasteurised or tuberculin tested milk.

House adjourned at three minutes before eight o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 5th February, 1935.

[OFFICIAL REPORT.]

[Continuation of Official Report, from col. 1096, Tuesday, 5th February, 1935.]

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

[Captain BOURNE in the Chair.]

CIVIL ESTIMATES, SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1934.

CLASS VI.

DEPARTMENT OF OVERSEAS TRADE.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £50,950, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1935, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Overseas Trade, including Grants in Aid of the Imperial Institute and the Travel and Industrial Development Association of Great Britain and Ireland."

11.26 p.m.

Lieut.-Colonel J. COLVILLE (Secretary, Overseas Trade Department): At this late hour the Committee will not expect me to keep them long on this supplementary Estimate. It is necessary for two reasons. First, on account of the decision of His Majesty's Government to participate in the international exhibition which is to be held at Brussels this year, and secondly, in order to give further assistance to horticulture in the form of a grant in aid to the Imperial Institute. Imperial trade and foreign trade are thus affected by the supplementary Estimate. During the time I have been Secretary to the Department of Overseas Trade I have never yet had to bring in a supplementary Estimate, nor indeed has the Estimate of my Department ever been challenged, and I am sure that this confidence would have continued but for the necessity of bringing in this supplementary Estimate. Let me explain the reasons for the two decisions—to participate in the Brussels international exhibition and to give a further grant in aid to the Imperial Institute. I will take the Brussels exhibition first. It is on a very large scale. When we were first asked in 1931 to participate in the exhibition the financial stringency then prevailing caused us to give the answer that we could not participate. The invitation was renewed in 1933 and on that occasion the Belgian Government were told that it was not possible for us to take part.

Last year, 1934, when the invitation was again renewed, it was decided to review our attitude; and for these reasons. In the first place there was an improvement in the financial and industrial position in this country, and, in the second place, there was the fact that no less than 18 or 20 important countries were taking part in the exhibition, including our neighbours France and Italy and other important European countries. Thirdly, in view of the recent accession of King Leopold to the throne of Belgium and the fact that the exhibition would be an outstanding event of his reign, the refusal of the British Government to participate in the exhibition might be regarded as specially ungracious. Fourthly, there are in our trade with Belgium questions of importance which arise and have to be discussed. That trade is a valuable one of £12,000,000 on either side, closely balanced. It was felt that to discuss these questions, difficult and troublesome questions as they are, in an atmosphere of having refused to participate in this important event, would not be a happy background for any such discussion. I can assure the House that there are signs that such discussions as we have had proceed on a happier basis when we are taking part in the exhibition.

I have given these four reasons why the Government decided to review their attitude. Before a decision was come to I called together a representative committee which we had for the purpose of advising the Department of Overseas Trade on questions of official participation in overseas exhibitions and fairs. That committee is composed of certain experienced business men and official representatives from various departments, and it advised that we should participate in the exhibition. The Treasury were approached for the purpose of supplying a grant. I have been in Belgium myself this last week and have satisfied myself that the arrangements ensure worthy participation by this country. But I

[Lieut.-Colonel Colville.]
want to impress on the Committee that, having reached the decision to participate, it would be worse than useless to take part on an unworthy scale. That is the reason why I have to include in this Estimate a sum of £44,000 for exhibitions, which is the amount that will fall due during the present financial year in respect of the Brussels Exhibition.

I turn to the other subject which has necessitated this Supplementary Estimate, and that is the grant-in-aid of the Imperial Institute. Ever since it was founded by the late King Edward, then Prince of Wales, as a memorial of Queen Victoria's first jubilee, it has provided a very valuable link between the producers of raw materials in all parts of the Empire overseas and manufacturers of all kinds in the United Kingdom, and through its intelligence and investigating laboratory it has instituted commercial trials and the necessary preliminaries to continuous markets. It has provided a valuable service which is appreciated in this country and in the Empire. There are two technical sections dealing with plants and animals on the one side and minerals on the other side. The Committee should be well aware of the work of the Institute. I can assure them that if they wish to make personal investigation into the work or to visit the Institute, they will be welcomed there and will be impressed with the work of the Institute in making the resources of the Empire known in this country.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: We had better not pursue that question on a Supplementary Estimate.

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: I need not describe the work further to explain the reason why the estimate is necessary. The finances of the Institute were in an unsatisfactory condition. I took advice on the subject from the Departments concerned and it was decided to issue an appeal to the Dominion Governments and the Governments of the Colonies to assist the work of the Institute by further donations. The response from the Colonial Governments has been most gratifying. In many cases increases of 100 per cent. on their former donations have been granted. The Treasury have now agreed, in turn, to provide an increased grant of £6,350 that being exactly the amount of the increases offered by the Colonial Governments. Those are the two items which necessitate this Supplementary Estimate.

Mr. PALING: I understand that the amount included in the Estimate in respect of the exhibition is merely a small sum by way of a beginning. Can the hon. and gallant Gentleman give us any idea of what the total cost under this head will be?

Lieut.-Colonel COLVILLE: In any case it will not be more than £80,000, but the balance which is not provided for in this Estimate will be borne on the normal Estimate of the Department for next year.

11.37 p.m.

Mr. DAVID MASON: Even at this late hour I would ask the indulgence of the Committee for a few moments to protest against this expenditure of public money. Because I do so, it might appear to some, that I am opposed to money being voted for exhibitions which are designed to help trade, but I should not like any such idea to prevail among hon. Members. I welcome any proposals for improving our trade but I would point out to the Committee that of the sum for which we are now being asked no less than £44,000 is in respect of an exhibition in Brussels—I suppose in the interests of our foreign trade—and that we are being asked to vote that sum at a time when the Government's trade policy of tariffs, quotas and embargoes is calculated to restrict and retard our foreign trade. It seems monstrous that the Government should ask for this grant in view of their general trade policy. Ministers have told us repeatedly that their eyes are on the home trade rather than on the export trade. If they were anxious for the interests of our oversea trade, they would give us a policy for the development of that oversea trade and not for its restriction. I pay my tribute to the Secretary of the Overseas Trade Department for his gallant conduct at that Box in trying to explain the Government's policy and to convince us that our trade with foreign countries and with the Dominions is advancing, to however small an extent. But if we are to vote sums for purposes like this, then in Heaven's name let us have a trade policy based on common sense; let us have an open, free flow of trade and not a policy which restricts and

retards. We are supposed to be an intelligent body. Are we to be asked to vote this grant while acquiescing in a policy of restricting trade?

Mr. HASLAM: Do we restrict our export trade?

Mr. MASON: Has the hon. Member ever studied the trade policy of which he is a supporter? Has he ever heard of tariffs and quotas and embargoes? This exhibition is to be held in Belgium. Belgian securities are held in high repute on the London market and one object of our participation in the exhibition is to bolster up our foreign trade and presumably to facilitate dealings in Belgian and other foreign securities in this country. Does the hon. Member know that there is an embargo, by a dictator at the Treasury, against foreign loans being floated in this country? Yet we are asked solemnly to vote £44,000 for an exhibition of this country's products in Belgium. Is it not the height of idiocy? I, for one, would vote willingly £50,000 to help our trade, but when we are solemnly asked to vote money for a particular exhibition to keep our overseas trade and we know that the policy of the Government is calculated to retard that very policy, I say that is an insult to our intelligence, and I hope some other hon. Members will support me in this protest.

11.41 p.m.

Mr. GRANVILLE GIBSON *rose.*

HON. MEMBERS: Divide.

Mr. GIBSON: I hear some hon. Members calling out "Divide," but this is the first time I shall have spoken in this House this year. Six hours have been taken up to-day in discussing a subject which might have been dealt with in 10 minutes, and at the fag end of the evening are we not to be allowed to spend a reasonable time in discussing the all-important subject of our export trade? I do not agree with my hon. Friend the Member for East Edinburgh (Mr. D. Mason) in what he said, because, as one who knows something about export trade and who exports goods to many of the markets of the world, I can speak in the highest terms of the work of the Overseas Trade Department, a Department which is more alive to-day than it has ever been in the past 10 or 15 years. I can speak in the highest terms of its work, and——

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: I must remind the hon. Member for Pudsey and Otley (Mr. Gibson) that the work of the Overseas Trade Department is not now before the Committee.

Mr. GIBSON: May I ask for your Ruling, Captain Bourne, on this point, namely, whether what I am saying with reference to the work of the Overseas Trade Department cannot be taken under this Vote dealing with the remuneration of Ministers, civil servants, and expenses of the Department of Overseas Trade?

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: No, certainly not, on a Supplementary Estimate.

Mr. GIBSON: That being the case, I bow to your Ruling, and I am exceedingly sorry that under it, apparently, I cannot deal with one or two points as to exports to Turkey and Rumania.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Perhaps the hon. Member will postpone his remarks on that subject till we discuss the main Estimate, on which occasion they will be more appropriate than now.

Mr. GIBSON: Thank you, Captain Bourne. I support whole-heartedly the Resolution before the Committee. I know that in connection with trade with Belgium there are serious difficulties at the present time, and I hope that as a result of this exhibition in Brussels the Belgian Government may take a more reasonable view of the trade position as between this country and Belgium. They have imposed very serious quotas against us in the past. We have a comparatively free market over here, but their mills are working overtime and on double shifts in producing goods for this country, and I hope that as a result of this exhibition the Belgian Government may find it more important in the future to influence the fostering of a freer interchange of commodities between this country and Belgium than they have done during the past year or two, when they have been restricting to a great extent the possibilities of trade by the imposition of quotas which have been very harmful to our exporters.

Question put, and agreed to.

CLASS II.

INDIA SERVICES.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £958, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1935, for a Contribution towards the Cost of the Department of His Majesty's Secretary of State for India in Council, including a Grant in Aid, and a Grant in Aid of the Defence of India."

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again," put, and agreed to.—[*Sir G. Penny.*]

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

[Captain BOURNE in the Chair.]

Resolved,

"That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1935, the sum of £8,659,450 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom."—[*Captain Margesson.*]

Resolution to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (AMENDMENT) BILL [*Lords*].

Considered in Committee.

[Captain BOURNE in the Chair.]

CLAUSE 1.—(*Amendment of* 15 *&* 16 *Geo.* 5. *c.* 49, *ss.* 4 *and* 11.)

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir Thomas Inskip): I beg to move, in page 2, line 27, to leave out Sub-section (4).

These words were included in another place in order to avoid a question of Privilege.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill," put, and agreed to.

Clauses 2 and 5 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Schedule agreed to.

Bill reported with an Amendment, as amended considered; read the Third time, and passed, with an Amendment.

HERRING INDUSTRY [MONEY].

Resolution reported,

"That, for the purposes of any Act of the present Session to provide for the establishment of a board with power to make, in consultation with the herring industry, a scheme with respect to the re-organisation, development, and regulation of the industry, for the variation or revocation of the scheme, for authorising the giving of financial assistance to and borrowing by the board, and to make other provision in connection with the matters aforesaid, it is expedient—

A.—To authorise the payment out of moneys provided by Parliament—

(1) during the period ending on the thirty-first day of March, nineteen hundred and thirty-eight, of such sums, not exceeding as respects general administrative expenses seventy-five thousand pounds, nor exceeding in all one hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds, as may be required to defray the expenses of any board established under the said Act in general administration and in the exercise of powers conferred on them under the said Act for promoting the sale of herrings or products thereof, promoting market development, or promoting or carrying out schemes of research or experiment;

(2) during the financial year ending on the thirty-first day of March, nineteen hundred and thirty-five, of such sums, not exceeding in the aggregate six hundred thousand pounds, as may be required for the purpose of making advances to the board during the period ending on the thirty-first day of March, nineteen hundred and forty, towards their expenses in the exercise of powers conferred on them under the said Act for—

(*a*) the making of loans for the re-conditioning and re-equipment of boats, the construction of new boats, and the purchase of nets and gear for boats;

(*b*) the purchase of redundant boats;

(*c*) the making of loans in connection with export;

(*d*) the undertaking of operations involving the outlay of working capital;

Provided that—

(i) any part of the money so paid out of moneys provided by Parliament which has not during the said period been applied in making such advances shall be paid into the Exchequer; and

(ii) all sums received by way of interest of any such advance, and all sums received by way of repayment of the principal of any such advance, shall be paid into the Exchequer so, however, that sums received by way of repayment of the principal of any advance made for either of the pur-

poses mentioned, respectively, in sub-paragraph (*c*) and sub-paragraph (*d*) of this paragraph shall not be payable into the Exchequer until after the thirty-first day of March, nineteen hundred and forty;

B.—To authorise the Treasury to remit any sum repayable by way of principal of any such advance as aforesaid as to which they are satisfied that it cannot be repaid."

Resolution agreed to.

The remaining Orders were read, and postponed.

It being after Half-past Eleven of the Clock, Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.*

Adjourned at Ten Minutes before Twelve o'Clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 6th February, 1935.

[OFFICIAL REPORT.]

The House met at a Quarter before Three of the Clock, MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair.*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Blackpool Improvement Bill (by Order),
Harrogate Corporation Bill (by Order),

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

London Midland and Scottish Railway Bill (by Order),

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

London Passenger Transport Board Bill (by Order),
Metropolitan Water Board Bill (by Order),

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

Reading Corporation Bill (by Order),
Rhyl Urban District Council Bill (by Order),
Southern Railway Bill (by Order),

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

CHINA AND MANCHURIA.

1. **Mr. McENTEE** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the gradual loss to the British market of Mongolia, the British Government is taking any action to protest against the extension of Japanese activity in the occupation of the Chahar district in Eastern Mongolia; and whether he will consult the Government of the United States to see whether any joint representations can be made to avert the gradual absorption of Northern China by Japan?

The SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir John Simon): For many years past, British trade with Mongolia has, for reasons in no way connected with Japanese activities, been inconsiderable. As regards the second part of the question, I would refer the hon. Member to the reply given on the 30th January to my hon. Friend the Member for Tottenham North (Mr. Doran).

RUMANIA (COMMERCIAL DEBTS).

38. **Mr. EADY** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he is in a position to make a statement regarding commercial debts outstanding in Rumania?

Lieut.-Colonel J. COLVILLE: Discussions are now proceeding with the Rumanian Minister of Commerce and Industry and the results will be announced as soon as possible.

46. **Sir JOHN HASLAM** asked the Secretary to the Overseas Trade Department whether the latest advices from His Majesty's commercial representatives in the Far East indicate that the recent extension of Japanese influence in Northern China has restricted the local market for British manufacturers; and how the British imports into Manchuria for 1934 compare with those when the country was under Chinese control?

Lieut.-Colonel J. COLVILLE (Secretary, Overseas Trade Department): Although recent advices from His Majesty's commercial representatives in the Far East indicate the existence of Japanese competition in North China, no restriction of the local market for United Kingdom manufacturers appears to have occurred. No figures of United Kingdom imports into Manchurian ports prior to the year 1931 are available from Chinese or other sources. According to statistics published by the Manchurian authorities, the value of United Kingdom imports into Manchurian ports during the years 1931 to 1934 was as follows. The figures are given in Manchurian Yuan:

1931	6,232,000
1932	8,015,000
1933	7,190,000
Ten months, January to October, 1934 ...	7,963,000

IMPORT DUTIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

59. **Mr. NORTH** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what length of time it is proposed that each member of the

present Import Duties Advisory Committee should hold office; and whether any plan is to be introduced whereby members should after a period retire by rotation?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Duff Cooper): Section 2 of the Import Duties Act, 1932, provides that members of the Advisory Committee shall hold office for a period of three years. My right hon. Friend sees no need for legislation amending this provision.

IMPORT DUTIES (BOOTS AND SHOES).

63. **Lieut.-Colonel Sir MERVYN MANNINGHAM-BULLER** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer the amount received from import duties on boots and shoes for 1933, 1934 and January, 1935, respectively?

Mr. COOPER: The net amount of duty collected under the Import Duties Act, 1932, on boots and shoes during 1933 and 1934 was as follows:

	£
1933	210,573
1934	101,188

Figures for January, 1935, are not yet available, but they will be sent to my hon. and gallant Friend as soon as possible.

Mr. MABANE: Do those figures include rubber footwear?

Mr. COOPER: I do not think so.

IRAQ (ANTI-SEMITISM).

2. **Colonel WEDGWOOD** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the growing anti-Semitism in Iraq, thereby affecting our position in Palestine; and will he make representations with a view to checking it?

Sir J. SIMON: I have seen reports in recent months of a development of anti-Jewish feeling in Iraq. I am sorry to say that these are confirmed to some extent by my own information, but I have no reason to believe that the Iraqi Government have taken any action of a nature to prejudice the position of His Majesty's Government in Palestine. The last part of the question does not therefore arise.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: Has the right hon. Gentleman had any reports from our Air Force there in regard to this matter? Is it possible to instruct our agents there to make representations to the Iraqi Government?

Mr. JANNER: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether he has any information with regard to the prohibition of the publication of certain Jewish newspapers?

Sir J. SIMON: I cannot answer the last supplementary question without notice. In reply to the question of the right hon. and gallant Member, I have not in mind information from the sources he suggests. As regards our own view of the matter, I think everyone will understand the feelings that are aroused by the matter to which he calls attention; but it is rather by unofficial than by official methods that information can be obtained.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: Will the right hon. Gentleman bear in mind the action of the Iraqi Government towards the Armenians and see that that is not repeated?

CHINA (PIRACY).

3. **Major-General Sir ALFRED KNOX** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has received a report from His Majesty's Minister in China on the recent recurrence of Communistic activities on the Yangtse River between Hankow and Nanking; and whether he can give any information as to the present position with regard to the security of British shipping and passengers from attack by Communist bands?

Sir J. SIMON: Reports of such activities involving a threat to Wuhu and the neighbouring part of the river were received in December. A telegram from Nanking of the 27th December, however, stated that all immediate danger was over. The main body of Communists (understood to be a band about 4,000 strong who were recently driven out of Kiangsi) had retreated into mountainous country in South Anhui pursued by a strong force of troops, and a small body had been disarmed. No further reports have been received and apprehension in regard to the security of

[Sir J. Simon.]
British shipping or passengers on that section of the Yangtse has accordingly been removed. The situation will, however, continue to receive the watchful attention of the British consular and naval authorities.

Sir A. KNOX: Will the right hon. Gentleman bear in mind that the two principal carriers on the Yangtse for trade with China are British companies, and will he also bear in mind the fact that possibly the Nanking Government would welcome co-operation?

8. **Sir A. KNOX** asked the First Lord of the Admiralty what protection is afforded to British shipping on the Yangtse between Hankow and Nanking; whether it is safe for vessels to tie up at moorings during the night; and whether, in view of the recent recurrence of Communist activities in this region, he will increase the number of His Majesty's ships patrolling that section of the river?

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Sir Bolton Eyres Monsell): A flotilla of 13 gunboats is maintained on the Yangtse for the protection of shipping. Arrangements also exist for the supply of armed guards to British ships trading in the river, these being supplied from naval or military sources. The movements of the gunboats are at the discretion of the Rear-Admiral, Yangtse, under the Commander-in-Chief, China Station, who will take any necessary steps to meet exceptional local conditions. I have received no indication that it is at present unsafe for vessels to make fast at moorings during the night.

Sir A. KNOX: Is 13 the normal number, or has it been decreased or increased?

Sir B. EYRES MONSELL: I think that is about the normal number.

Commander MARSDEN: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether this protection is afforded to all shipping and not only confined to British ships?

Sir B. EYRES MONSELL: I think the protection is given to all the shipping that requires it.

Mr. CHARLES WILLIAMS: Is the right hon. Gentleman satisfied that he has adequate forces there?

Sir B. EYRES MONSELL: I think the forces that we maintain there at the present moment are more or less adequate.

9. **Captain PETER MACDONALD** asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, in view of the recent piracy in Chinese waters on the Tungchow and the cost of providing naval assistance to deal with such emergencies, he will arrange for further consideration to be given to the adequacy of existing arrangements for preventing such piracies by having adequate guards and defences on board all vessels of any size operating in those waters?

Sir B. EYRES MONSELL: This matter is constantly in mind, and the Admiralty and the British naval authorities in China do their utmost to impress upon British shipping companies the necessity of providing adequate guards and defences in vessels employed in Chinese waters. The circumstances in which pirates obtained control of the Tungchow are not yet known in London. When they are known, the matter will be fully investigated.

Captain MACDONALD: Has the British Navy to protect the whole shipping of this area? Why should not the companies themselves provide ample guards for maintaining their shipping?

Sir B. EYRES MONSELL: That is a different case from the last question. Up the Yangtse the British naval or military authorities provide the guards, but in the case of the high sea the guards are there for the shipping companies to hire. We do not provide the guards always ourselves, but only in exceptional circumstances.

Captain MACDONALD: Is it not a fact that the British Navy always go to the rescue, and should not something be done to compensate the Navy for the work they do?

Sir B. EYRES MONSELL: Yes, but that is another matter. We always go to the rescue, and I hope we always shall.

5. **Lord APSLEY** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he

proposes to enter into negotiations with China for concerted action to be taken in Far Eastern waters for the suppression of piracy?

Sir J. SIMON: Concerted action is at present being taken by His Majesty's naval forces and Chinese naval and military forces for suppression of piracy in China, much useful work having already been accomplished by such co-operation. In view of the excellent relations and practical co-operation which exist between His Majesty's Navy and the Chinese Navy I do not feel that any further action is called for.

ABYSSINIA AND ITALY.

4. **Lord SCONE** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can make a statement on the Italo-Abyssinian boundary dispute?

Sir J. SIMON: As the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, East (Mr. Mander) was informed on the 29th January, the Italian and Ethiopian Governments have agreed to seek a settlement of their differences by direct negotiations in the spirit of the Italo-Ethiopian Treaty of Friendship of 1928. To this statement I have nothing at present to add except that it is anticipated that the direct negotiations in question, which may take some time to conclude, will be carried on in Addis Ababa between the Italian Legation and the Ethiopian Government.

MANCHURIA (OIL INTERESTS).

6. **Captain P. MACDONALD** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what is the present position with regard to the proposal to establish an oil monopoly in Manchukuo; and whether satisfactory arrangements have been made to safeguard the interests of British nationals adversely affected by such proposal?

Sir J. SIMON: It was arranged at the end of December that representatives of the oil interests affected should proceed to Tokyo to discuss the position with the Japanese authorities. These conversations which started early in January and which will, I understand, cover the field of the Manchukuo oil monopoly as well as of the Japanese Petroleum Law, are still in progress. I hope to be in a position to answer a further question as soon as they have reached a definite conclusion.

Captain MACDONALD: Is any representation being made on behalf of British nationals there?

Sir J. SIMON: I know that the interests of British nationals are not overlooked, but we are keeping in touch.

NAVAL ARMAMENTS (AIRCRAFT).

7. **Sir CHARLES CAYZER** asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he can state the number of carrier-borne and catapult-ship aircraft, respectively, now on the strength of the Fleet air-arms of the British, United States, and Japanese Navies?

Sir B. EYRES MONSELL: There are 128 carrier-borne aircraft and 27 catapult-ship aircraft on the strength of the Royal Navy. The corresponding figures for the United States Navy are 244 and 128. No figures are published for the Japanese Navy.

Sir C. CAYZER: Can the right hon. Gentleman say at what date he hopes to obtain the facts in this matter?

Sir B. EYRES MONSELL: No, Sir, I am afraid that I cannot say.

CROWN COLONIES (LOANS).

10. **Captain ARTHUR EVANS** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it is proposed to set up a commission to inquire into the outstanding Crown Colony loans amounting approximately to £100,000,000 and the general financial position of these Colonies; and whether he is in a position to make a statement to the House?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister): As I stated in a reply given on the 28th of November, the possibility of converting outstanding Colonial loans is under constant review and advantage is being taken where an option exists or is about to mature to convert or repay the loan. The best expert advice is constantly sought with regard to the practicability and conditions of any possible conversion; and I

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do not think that the appointment of a commission would serve any useful purpose.

Mr. LENNOX-BOYD: Will the right hon. Gentleman bear in mind the position of Kenya, which is paying an exceptionally heavy rate of interest on past loans?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: The difficulty is that there is no option for conversion in regard to these loans. If there was power of conversion advantage would be taken of such power immediately.

Captain P. MACDONALD: Can the right hon. Gentleman not get the power to convert?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: That would mean a complete breach of the contract on which the money was raised.

Captain MACDONALD: Other contracts have been broken and other conversions have been carried out.

Mr. CHORLTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman not overlook the possibility of greatly increasing these loans, because much trade for this country and employment for our people would result from them?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: In every case where under the contract there is a right to convert we are converting. I am sure my hon. and gallant Friend will appreciate that breaking contracts would have the worst possible effect on Colonial credit. As regards the other point where there is sound development to be done, there would be no hesitation in borrowing.

Mr. McENTEE: Can the right hon. Gentleman say why no right to convert obtains in regard to the Kenya loans, and whether there is any other way of meeting the situation?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: There is no present right to convert. When the loan was raised some years ago under the terms of issue the earliest power to convert was the year 1946. I am considering whether it is possible to make any offer which would not be unduly onerous on posterity and of which advantage might be taken by the holders.

KENYA (EXECUTIONS).

11. **Lord SCONE** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the appeal of the seven Kenya natives sentenced to death for the murder of Mr. Semini has been dismissed; and, if so, whether the executions have yet taken place?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: Yes, Sir. The appeal was dismissed, and I understand that the executions took place on 12th January.

KENYA AND UGANDA RAILWAYS (INDIAN EMPLOYÉS).

12. **Mr. McENTEE** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the cancellation of the agreements of a large number of Indian employés of the Kenya and Uganda railways, whereby they lose all their preferential terms of employment and are placed on a daily wage system with no advantages whatever; how many artisan employés have been subjected to this change of employment methods; and when it is proposed to revert to the more equitable system of engagement which has hitherto existed?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: As the reply is long, I propose with the hon. Member's permission to circulate it in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following is the answer:

I am informed by the High Commissioner for Transport that 165 artisans in the lowest paid grades were given due notice of termination of their agreements and were offered and accepted re-engagement at daily rates of pay, with privilege of travel concessions and free medical attention in case of injury sustained on duty or attributable to the nature or locality of their employment. All these 165 artisans were locally engaged except seven who were originally indentured from India; return passages to India for these seven will be granted when required. All these artisans before being re-engaged were granted all the benefits and privileges that had accrued to them under the terms of service previously applicable. In addition to the 165 artisans referred to, 387 artisans have been engaged for the first time on the same conditions as those mentioned above.

It is not intended to revert to the terms of service previously applicable to such servants because (*a*) such conditions cannot economically be justified, (*b*) all artisans required can now be engaged locally on the present terms, (*c*) the present conditions are in line with those extended to corresponding labour employed by the Government, (*d*) the principle of employing such labour on daily rates of pay is followed on other large colonial railways.

HONG KONG (MUI-TSAI COMMISSION).

13. **Captain CAZALET** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it has yet been decided to appoint a commission to inquire into the present position of the mui-tsai question in the Colony of Hong Kong; and, if so, what is to be the personnel and terms of reference of this commission?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: Yes, Sir. The Governor has appointed a commission to consider certain proposals sent to him from the Colonial Office on the subject of mui-tsai in Hong Kong and to report on these and kindred matters. With my hon. and gallant Friend's permission I will circulate the names of the commissioners in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following are the names:

Members of Commission.

Chairman:

F. H. Loseby (Solicitor, and officer of the Hong Kong Society for the Protection of Children).

Members:

Miss Dorothy Brazier (Salvation Army, in charge of Women's Industrial Home).

Tang Shiu Kin, M.B.E. (Justice of the Peace, and ex-Chairman of the Committee of the Po Leung Kuk).

J. M. Wong (Justice of the Peace, member of the Anglican Church, formerly Honorary Secretary of the Anti-Mui-tsai Society in Hong Kong).

PALESTINE.

MAYOR OF JERUSALEM.

14. **Colonel WEDGWOOD** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether and, if so, why an Arab has been appointed Mayor of Jerusalem seeing that the majority of the population is Jewish?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: An Arab, Dr. Hussein Fakhri Effendi al Khalidi, has been appointed Mayor of the Municipal Council of Jerusalem. The law gives the High Commissioner unfettered discretion to select any of the councillors for appointment as mayor, and I have complete confidence in his judgment.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: Seeing that it is six of one and half-a-dozen of the other so far as that communication is concerned, would it not have been possible for the right hon. Gentleman to have made an appointment of someone to fulfil these formal functions? Is it not a fact that the last mayor was an Arab who has left a reputation notoriously bad for corruption. Why should that be repeated?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: I do not know on what grounds the right hon. and gallant Gentleman makes charges against a particular gentleman, of which he has not given me notice, but it would certainly have been most improper for me to have interfered with the discretion of the High Commissioner. I am sure the whole House will agree that no one is better qualified to exercise that discretion than the present High Commissioner.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware of the truth of what I have stated?

ACHI MEIR (CITIZENSHIP).

15. **Colonel WEDGWOOD** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the proposal to deprive Achi Meir of his Palestinian citizenship and deport him has been decided upon; if so, why; and what precedent there is for such action in Great Britain or the Colonies?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: No such proposal has yet been submitted for my approval. With reference to the third part of the question, I may observe that in the Colonies there is a power of revocation of certificates of British naturalisation, subject to the approval of the Secretary of State, in various circumstances, e.g., when the holder of a certi-

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ficate of naturalisation has shown himself to be disaffected or disloyal to His Majesty, or has, within five years of the grant of the certificate, been sentenced by any Court in His Majesty's Dominions to imprisonment for a term of not less than 12 months, or to a term of penal servitude or to a fine of not less than £100.

PROPOSED AIRPORTS.

16. **Mr. JANNER** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is now in a position to make any detailed statement with regard to the proposal to construct two new airports on modern lines in Palestine; what will be the situation of these ports; and who will be called upon to bear the cost and in what proportion?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: I am not yet in a position to add anything to the reply which I gave to the hon. Member on the 30th January.

Mr. JANNER: Are there not some reports relating to the establishment of airports in Palestine? Will the right hon. Gentleman let me know, as soon as he gets information, what is happening?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: I am aware of the reports, and an expert inquiry. I will let the hon. Member know when I can make a definite statement on the subject.

YEMEN (FRONTIER).

17. **Captain CUNNINGHAM-REID** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies what progress has been made towards the settlement of the question of the southern frontier of the Yemen, as provided for in Article 3 of the treaty of February last between His Majesty and the King of the Yemen?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: Article 3 of the recent treaty with the King of the Yemen provides that the settlement of the question of the southern frontier of the Yemen is deferred pending the conclusion of negotiations which shall take place before the expiry of the period of the treaty, and that pending the conclusion of negotiations the high contracting parties agree to maintain the situation existing in regard to the frontier on the date of the signature of the treaty. I should explain that prior to the signing of the treaty the Yemeni forces evacuated certain areas belonging to the Aden Protectorate which they had occupied some years previously and that the situation in regard to the frontier thus ensured by the treaty is regarded as generally satisfactory from the point of view of His Majesty's Government. In these circumstances and in view of the fact that the treaty is not due to expire for 40 years, His Majesty's Government do not propose to press for the opening of the negotiations contemplated in the treaty.

AVIATION.

GLIDING.

18. **Commander OLIVER LOCKER-LAMPSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for Air whether the £5,000 which is to be set aside yearly for gliding is yet available; what clubs have so far benefited under it; and to whom claimants for support should apply?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for AIR (Sir Philip Sassoon): I am not yet in a position to add to the reply which I gave to my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Isle of Thanet (Captain Balfour) on 30th January.

AERO-DYNAMICAL RESEARCH (AIR TUNNEL).

19. **Rear-Admiral Sir MURRAY SUETER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for Air whether he will consider the construction of a full-sized air tunnel for aero-dynamical research work, as has been done by the United States at Langley Field and the French Government at Chalais-Meudon?

Sir P. SASSOON: A large wind tunnel, capable of taking a full size fuselage, complete with engine and airscrew but without wings, has just been completed at the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough.

CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT.

20. **Mr. CHORLTON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for Air whether the organisation and extension of the Civil Aviation Department under the Director-General has been completed; and can any details be supplied?

Sir P. SASSOON: The decision to raise the status of the Director of Civil Avia-

tion to that of Director-General was officially promulgated in December. This decision did not entail any consequential extension or reorganisation, but the Director-General's staff is in fact to be further strengthened to cope with the rapid growth of civil aviation activities, and in particular the urgent need for the development of the ground organisation of our Imperial air routes. The details are still under discussion.

Mr. CHORLTON: Can the right hon. Gentleman assure the House that the new officials taken into the Department will be the best that can be obtained?

Sir P. SASSOON: It is certainly desirable that they should be.

PILOTS' LICENCES (NIGHT-FLYING).

21. **Captain CUNNINGHAM - REID** asked the Under-Secretary of State for Air whether the Secretary of State has considered the recommendation of the Gorell Committee on civil aviation regarding the alteration of the night-flying requirements for a pilot's B.-licence; and whether he is proposing to take the necessary action to implement this recommendation?

Sir P. SASSOON: The recommendation in question has been the subject of correspondence with the representatives of commercial aviation, with a view to deciding the extent to which the present requirements can suitably be modified. As soon as the oustanding replies have been received it will be possible to take a decision.

CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME.

22. **Brigadier-General NATION** asked the Under-Secretary of State for Air whether he will consider adopting a policy of giving private firms which construct aircraft for the Air Ministry a three-year construction programme, in lieu of spasmodic orders as at present, in order that they may have regular full-time employment for their workmen throughout the year instead of periodical rushes of work separated by times of idleness during which highly-trained men of a specialist class have to be stood off or dismissed?

Sir P. SASSOON: I regret that, so long as the design of aircraft continues to advance at its present rapid rate, the general adoption of a three-year programme is impracticable, though the importance of the considerations raised by my hon. and gallant Friend is fully appreciated.

Mr. CHORLTON: Is not the fundamental difficulty in aircraft construction the fact that a short-term policy must be worked upon, but, despite this fact, is it not possible to do something more than is being done?

Sir P. SASSOON: As much as is possible is being done, but even when you are dealing with the same type of aircraft the modifications from year to year are so extensive that a long-term policy could not be adopted.

ROYAL AIR FORCE (FOREIGN OFFICERS).

23. **Mr. JOHN WILMOT** asked the Under-Secretary of State for Air how many officers belonging to the national air forces of foreign countries have been trained in the Royal Air Force since 1919; from what country have these officers come and how many officers from each country; how long is the term of their training; and what types of service machines they are allowed to use?

Sir P. SASSOON: About 200 foreign officers and cadets have undergone instruction in Air Force establishments since 1919; they have come from 29 countries, those most numerously represented being Egypt (35), Iraq (16), Greece (15), and Norway (11). The periods of training have ranged from a fortnight up to two years. The instruction is given on the normal types of aircraft in use at the units in which the training is carried out.

Mr. WILMOT: Can the right hon. Gentleman say what good purpose is served to the British people by training foreign service pilots in British machines, and whether this practice is continued with a view to expediting the sale of British-made service planes abroad?

Sir P. SASSOON: This is a diplomatic courtesy which has been practised for many years, and I think has worked well.

Mr. ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: Is it not a fact that we send British officers abroad for instruction in foreign countries.

Sir P. SASSOON: Yes.

TRANSPORT.

PARKING REGULATIONS.

25. **Sir M. SUETER** asked the Minister of Transport what progress has been made during the past two months to reduce in the London traffic area the obstructions caused by motor car drivers using public thoroughfares as storage places for their cars instead of placing them in garages; and will he ascertain and state the views of the police authorities on the subject?

The MINISTER of TRANSPORT (Mr. Hore-Belisha): I have repeatedly expressed my opinion that our highways ought not to be encumbered with standing vehicles, and, as the House has been informed, the police take action when danger or actual obstruction is caused by vehicles standing in the highway. The Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis has informed me that he shares my view that the provision of a much larger amount of garage or parking accommodation off the highway, if made available at strictly moderate charges, would be of very great assistance in reducing the congestion due to standing vehicles.

Captain Sir WILLIAM BRASS: Will the Minister of Transport consider the possibility of adopting a system which has obtained in foreign countries of alternative parking on different days in the week?

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: Will my hon. Friend consider the advisability of allowing motor cars to stay outside shops in order that people may go into the shops to make purchases? That would be a great advantage to business.

Mr. HOLFORD KNIGHT: Will my hon. Friend make inquiries as to the sites in the neighbourhood of Leicester Square, which are continually blocked up, on both sides of the road, by cars which are a source of danger?

Sir WILLIAM WAYLAND: Will my hon. Friend do his best to deter residents in the suburbs from taking their cars to town, letting them remain all day and then riding home in them? That would relieve traffic congestion enormously.

DARTFORD-PURFLEET TUNNEL SCHEME.

26. **Sir M. SUETER** asked the Minister of Transport whether the Kent and Essex County Councils and the London County Council are now willing to support the construction of the lower Thames tunnel between Dartford and Purfleet; and what is preventing the continuance of work on this tunnel scheme, as approved by Parliament, which will be helpful to the development of Kent and help the unemployed locally and in the steel and electrical trades, etc.?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I was recently given to understand that the Kent and Essex County Councils are willing to support the construction of the lower Thames tunnel, which was suspended in view of the financial crisis, and the whole subject is now before me.

MALDEN ROAD.

27. **Mr. THORNE** asked the Minister of Transport whether he is aware that the B-class road between the Kingston by-pass and Worcester Park station has been waiting for many months for the work of improvement by widening and resurfacing; that at present it is in a very dangerous condition owing to lack of kerbing in most places, and that in fog and wet weather it is even worse; that the Maldens and Coombe Urban District Council has accepted tenders for the work, but are unable to proceed owing to his Department withholding the grant until the next financial year; that the Surrey County Council are likewise unable to help; and whether he can give any indication that steps will be taken to enable the work to be entered upon without further delay?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I have received an application for a grant towards a scheme for widening and reconstructing this road, and also an application for my confirmation of an order for the compulsory purchase of certain land required for the scheme. Before I can make any promise of a grant, the question of confirmation of the order must be settled and there will be no avoidable delay on my part.

ROAD TRAFFIC SAFETY ADVISORY COUNCIL.

28. **Mr. ANSTRUTHER-GRAY** asked the Minister of Transport the number of meetings held to date by the Road Traffic Safety Advisory Council; whether he has received any specific recommendations from this body; and whether these recommendations are being followed?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: This committee is composed of gentlemen whom I asked to consult with me in a confidential capacity on matters connected with public safety. The responsibility for any action taken rests with me alone and I do not consider that it would be desirable, or fair to the committee, to publish any account of their proceedings.

Sir W. BRASS: Would the Minister give the House an assurance that before proceeding with these recommendations he will bring them before the House?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: No, Sir. Where the House has empowered me or instructed me to take certain action I shall proceed in accordance with the Statute.

Mr. ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: How many meetings has this committee held.

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: The committee has been extremely active, and I am very indebted to it. I do not know precisely how many meetings it has held. There is a number of sub-committees. I think that my main answer will receive the support of the House.

BUILT-UP AREAS (SPEED LIMIT).

29. **Sir W. BRASS** asked the Minister of Transport whether he has received any objections to the design of the traffic signs proposed under his provisional regulations with respect to the 30-miles-per-hour limit in built-up areas; and to what extent, if at all, the original proposals which were made last autumn have been modified to meet these objections?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: The proposed signs were placed in the tea room of the House some time ago, and no objections were received from hon. Members. The original proposals for the design of the signs have met with a large measure of approval, and I have decided not to modify them in the light of the criticisms received, which are not in my opinion justified.

Sir W. BRASS: Is the Minister aware that, although he may not have received any representations from Members of the House, great objection has been taken to the design of these signs, which are to be seen in the Tea Room of the House?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: Those signs were placed in the Tea Room soon after 7th November and I understand they are still there. I have received no representations whatever in the sense that my hon. and gallant Friend suggests, and I can assure him that if he had given me any considered observations on the matter I should have attached due weight to them.

Sir W. BRASS: Will the Minister consider any observations in the future?

30. **Sir W. BRASS** asked the Minister of Transport whether he can give the House an approximate estimate of the total number of signs which will have to be displayed on the roads of the United Kingdom at the entrances, exits, and in the course of restricted and de-restricted areas under the 30 miles per hour speed-limit provisions of the Road Traffic Act of 1934, and the approximate cost of their installation?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: The number of signs which will be necessary in connection with the provisions of Section 1 of the Road Traffic Act, 1934, will depend partly on the extent to which local authorities avail themselves of their powers to make orders under sub-section (4) of the section. My hon. and gallant Friend may wish to renew his question later on.

Sir W. BRASS: Do I understand that up to the present, although my hon. Friend proposes to bring in the speed limit on 18th March, he has no idea of the number of signs that will have to be put up in the country, and no idea of the cost of them?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I do not think that that would be a fair deduction from my answer. I was anxious to give my hon. and gallant Friend an accurate answer, and I therefore asked him to put the question on the Paper when I was in a position to reply.

Sir W. BRASS: When will my hon. Friend be in a position to give a reply?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I will tell my hon. Friend.

Mr. WILMOT: In considering the number of signs for this purpose, will the hon. Gentleman have regard to the dangers that are created on the road by the undue number of signs beside the road? They deflect the driver's vision from the course of his progress on to the kerb.

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I am aware that that criticism is very frequently made and there is much substance in it, but I ask the House to remember that in all these matters I am putting into operation the considered view of the House in an Act of Parliament, and I must carry out the intentions of Parliament.

Sir PERCY HARRIS: Does the hon. Gentleman not remember that since the Act was passed he has covered the provinces with beacons, and that there is very little room left for these signs?

Mr. WILMOT: Is the Minister correct in saying that the form of the signs was laid down in the Act?

ROAD IMPROVEMENTS (FIVE-YEAR PLAN).

31. **Sir JOHN PYBUS** asked the Minister of Transport what steps he is taking to inform local authorities of the new arrangements for the five-year programme of road improvements?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I have invited highway authorities to submit at once the schemes with which they are prepared to proceed immediately and also to submit as soon as they are in a position to do so further instalments of their proposals for a programme of improvements which they propose to undertake over the next five years. For the convenience of hon. Members I am arranging for a copy of a letter which I have addressed to all highway authorities to be circulated in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following is the letter:

5th February, 1935.

WORKS OF MAJOR IMPROVEMENT OF ROADS AND BRIDGES AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW ROADS AND BRIDGES: REGULATION OF TRAFFIC, &C.

Sir,

I am directed by the Minister of Transport to acquaint you, for the information of your Council, that he has had under consideration representations made by the County Councils' Association and other bodies to the effect that the existing arrangements under which grants are made from the Road Fund are inconvenient to them, rendering difficult the estimation of local expenditure and impeding or preventing the planning of road works in advance. At present, applications for improvement grants received from highway authorities can only be considered in relation to an allocation from the Road Fund for this purpose determined from year to year. The Minister has been asked to adopt a system which would enable him to provide highway authorities with knowledge of grant indications covering a longer period than is possible under present arrangements.

2. With the object of meeting these representations, the National Government has decided to make provision over the next five years for grants towards works of improvement and new construction. I am accordingly to invite highway authorities to submit at once the schemes with which they are prepared to proceed immediately and also to submit, so soon as they are in a position to do so, further instalments of their proposals for a programme of improvements which they propose to undertake over the next five years. Mr. Hore-Belisha trusts that these arrangements will be regarded as meeting the representations made to him that the present system of annual allocations from the Road Fund, announced after the highway authorities' own budgets have been prepared, has been unsatisfactory and has led to uncertainty and delay.

3. Proposals should be submitted through the Divisional Road Engineers of the Ministry of Transport, and it will no doubt be possible for each highway authority to put forward at a very early date the list of works of improvement on classified roads which they would be prepared to put in hand during the year 1935-36, with assistance from the Road Fund at the rates and on the conditions set out in the accompanying memorandum. It will facilitate consideration if county councils can arrange with claiming authorities for the inclusion in the county programme of any schemes relating to claimed county roads.

4. Similar but separate lists should be submitted in respect of improvements on unclassified roads.

5. In each case the works included in the programme should be arranged in order of priority, the general character of each work should be stated and the closest possible estimate of its cost should be given.

6. Highway authorities will be informed, as soon as possible after the receipt of their proposals, of the schemes to which grants will be made.

7. Mr. Hore-Belisha attaches particular importance to works directed to reducing the dangers of the road and to the reconstruction of weak bridges. He has already issued instructions to the Divisional Road Engineers that all approved schemes of reconstruction of weak or otherwise inadequate bridges, whether privately or publicly owned, on classified roads or on important unclassified roads and approved schemes for the elimination of level crossings on such roads will be accepted for grant at the appropriate rate if it can be shown that the schemes will be commenced during the financial year 1935-36. He hopes that those authorities whose priority lists of bridges requiring reconstruction have not yet been formulated will take immediate steps in consultation with the bridge owners

to complete the lists. Where priority lists have already been agreed, the Divisional Road Engineers should be furnished as soon as possible with particulars of bridges to be reconstructed in the coming financial year.

8. Mr. Hore-Belisha thinks that highway authorities may be assisted in framing their programmes if he calls attention to the following remarks which he recently made in a speech at Birmingham as to the kind of work which he desired to facilitate:—

"The National Government has decided on a Five Year Plan for the roads . . . . Henceforth highway authorities will be able to lay their plans in the knowledge that a comprehensive view will be taken of their requirements and that their projects are not likely to suffer from the disabilities inseparable from a hand to mouth policy, with all the uncertainty which that entails. Nor will they suffer from the disadvantage of being kept in suspense for decisions until too late in their own financial year.

Our Five Year Programme will make provision for the improvements which highway authorities, thinking ahead and arranging ahead, can reasonably be expected to carry out in the period.

Within five years the Government aims at eliminating all those weak bridges in the possession of railway and other statutory owners which most seriously limit the free flow of traffic, and wherever the traffic conditions require, at providing dual carriageways, footpaths and cycling tracks; at removing blind corners, circumventing the dangers of cross roads, reducing camber and effecting super-elevation . . . .

Grants will be made contingent on such approved works being undertaken on an adequate and modern scale.

We also intend to increase the allocations for unclassified rural roads for the benefit of the agricultural community.

There is, of course, a number of long term schemes such as the Mersey Tunnel, which, by reason of their high cost and of the complexities surrounding their execution, must necessarily be spread over some years. The Government feel that for such projects special provision is necessary on their merits as and when they arise . . . .

We do not propose to embark upon an undefined and unlimited expenditure without any clear idea as to the needs to be provided for, but to direct the resources of the Road Fund to the support of those schemes and classes of work the execution of which is demanded by considerations of safety and of traffic necessity whether it be to meet the requirements of industry or to facilitate convenient movement of the population."

9. Before determining the financial limits of the programme which he has announced, the Minister proposes to await some clearer indication than is at present available of the amount of work with which, subject to the principles he has laid down and the conditions of the memorandum, highway authorities are definitely in a position to proceed at an early date, or within the period of five years.

I am, Sir,
Your Obedient Servant,
CYRIL HURCOMB,
Secretary.

The Clerk of the Council.
The Town Clerk.

PENHILL ROAD, BEXLEY.

32. **Mr. CLARKE** asked the Minister of Transport whether he has approved a grant towards the cost of improving Penhill Road, Bexley?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I am glad to inform my hon. Friend that I have issued a grant towards the cost of widening and reconstructing Penhill Road between Blackfen Road and Harcourt Avenue.

EARL HAIG MEMORIAL STATUE.

33. **Lieut.-Colonel MOORE** asked the First Commissioner of Works the present position in regard to the Earl Haig memorial statue?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Ormsby-Gore): The full size clay model is now practically complete and it will, I hope, soon be possible for the sculptor to proceed with the plaster cast.

Lieut.-Colonel MOORE: Is the right hon. Gentleman satisfied with the progress that is being made; and can he say whether the ultimate result will be in accordance with his desires?

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE: I do not think I can answer that question. It will be some time before the ultimate result can be seen. A good deal of work has to be done on the plaster cast before there can be any question of casting in bronze, and I would not like to give an opinion upon it now.

REGENT'S PARK (ST. JOHN'S LODGE).

34. **Lieut.-Colonel MOORE** asked the First Commissioner of Works the present position in regard to the disposal of St. John's Lodge, Regent's Park?

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE: Negotiations with the University of London respecting the future use of this building are still proceeding, but I hope that a final decision will be arrived at before long.

Lieut.-Colonel MOORE: Will the right hon. Gentleman in the meantime consider having this building painted in accordance with normal requirements, so as to take away the somewhat squalid appearance which it is beginning to present?

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE: I fully agree that the time for doing so is rather overdue, but as it is hoped that the building will have to be adapted to the purposes of the university, it would be a waste of money to paint it now and then to have to make great changes. It is much better that the whole thing should be done at once.

ROYAL PARKS (SILVER JUBILEE GIFTS).

35. **Lieut.-Colonel MOORE** asked the First Commissioner of Works whether he has received any gifts for the decoration of the Royal parks in commemoration of the Silver Jubilee and from whom; and will he state the purpose to which he proposes allocating such gifts?

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE: Yes, Sir. Mr. Sigismund Goetze, the donor of the existing new gates on the east side of the gardens, allows me to make public the fact that he is contributing a sum of £3,600 towards the cost of a new main south entrance, with fine ornamental ironwork gates, to the Inner Circle Gardens. Mr. Goetze wishes the work to be considered as a commemoration of Their Majesties' Silver Jubilee. I am sure that hon. Members will share my gratitude to this well known artist for this further proof of his generosity.

Lieut.-Colonel MOORE: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it would be possible to convey to Mr. Goetze the thanks not only of the people of London but of this House for his generosity.

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE *indicated assent.*

HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT (PRESENTATION BUSTS).

36. **Mr. LLOYD** asked the First Commissioner of Works whether he proposes to accept the offer which has been made to present busts of Sir Robert Peel and Lord Palmerston for the adornment of this House?

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE: Yes, Sir. My hon. Friend the Member for the Moseley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Hannon) has generously offered to present two fine marble busts of these statesmen, executed by Matthew Noble. As no memorial of either exists in the Palace of Westminster, I have, with the consent of Mr. Speaker, and after obtaining the views of this House through the usual channels, and of the Royal Fine Art Commission, gladly accepted the offer. *It is proposed to place the busts at the* foot of the public stairs on either side of the statue of Sir Charles Barry. May I take this opportunity of publicly thanking my hon. Friend for his most welcome gift.

Lieut.-Commander AGNEW: Will this leave room for the busts of subsequent statesmen whose memory it may be desired to perpetuate?

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE: There are still various vacant plinths. I am bound to say that it would be rather more difficult to accommodate full-sized statues, but this particular place is very suitable for these busts.

Mr. SMEDLEY CROOKE: Does not the right hon. Gentleman consider it a very great tribute to the City of Birmingham that a Birmingham Member should have presented these most important memorials?

BRITISH SHIPS (FOREIGN BUNKERING).

37. **Mr. NORTH** asked the President of the Board of Trade how many British ships are now bunkering abroad, either with coal or with oil, which used to bunker in this country before the War?

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (Dr. Burgin): I regret that this information is not available.

QUEEN MARY'S HOSPITAL, ROEHAMPTON.

39. **Mr. THORNE** asked the Minister of Pensions whether he is aware that disabled ex-service men at Queen Mary's (Roehampton) Hospital for limbless men, are not allowed to visit their wives and families because Sunday leave has been

curtailed; the reason why this alteration has been made; and whether he intends taking any action in the matter?

The MINISTER of TRANSPORT (Major Tryon): Leave of absence from Roehampton, as from all other Ministry hospitals, has been limited by regulation for many years past to a maximum period of four hours in the day, except for special emergency, and the attention of every patient is called to the regulation on his admission. In the interests of patients themselves, as well as of the discipline of the hospital, it is necessary to enforce compliance with the rule in any hospital where breaches of it are found to have occurred.

Mr. THORNE: May I ask whether there has been any alteration made in the regulation recently?

Major TRYON: No, Sir; the orders stand exactly as they always have been but a great many exceptions have been made. The first consideration is of course the medical side of the question in each case and I would remind the hon. Member that in most civil hospitals no leave at all is given.

NAVAL AND MILITARY PENSIONS AND GRANTS.

40. **Mr. GUY** asked the Minister of Pensions whether he is aware that Mary O'Dwyer, whose father (late private, No. 6725, in the Royal Irish Regiment) died of wounds in October, 1914, is suffering from a bone disease of the right arm, and has been for many years unable to contribute in any way to her self-support; and whether he will have investigations made in this case with a view to authorising the re-issue of war orphan's allowance, which ceased on her attaining the age of 21?

Major TRYON: I should have no authority to grant a further extension of the allowance in the circumstances of this case for the reasons which I gave in my answer yesterday to the hon. Members for Deritend (Mr. Smedley Cooke) and Rhondda East (Mr. Mainwaring) of which I am sending the hon. Member a copy.

Mr. GUY: May I ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman if he has not discretion to continue the allowance after the age of 21 with the approval of the Treasury?

Major TRYON: No, Sir, I have no such *discretion.*

AGRICULTURE.

SUGAR-BEET INDUSTRY (STATE ASSISTANCE).

41. **Colonel Sir EDWARD RUGGLES-BRISE** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether he is yet in a position to make an announcement regarding the arrangements to be made in regard to the marketing of the sugar-beet crop for the forthcoming season?

The MINISTER of AGRICULTURE (Mr. Elliot): The Government understand that the report of the Committee of Inquiry into the United Kingdom sugar industry, which was appointed in April last under the chairmanship of Mr. Wilfrid Greene, K.C., is not likely to be presented before the end of February. The immediate weeks of early spring are, however, vital from the point of view of cultivation. Unless the beet sugar factories are able within that period to offer firm contracts, farmers will not be in a position to decide what crops to put in for the coming spring, and the whole position will be prejudiced before the Government or Parliament have had time to consider the committee's report and to determine on the future of the industry.

In order to prevent this, the Government propose to invite Parliament to make provision for a further interim measure of assistance to enable the existing factories to proceed with arrangements to secure contracts for the growing of a crop this year. The assistance will be limited to the produce of 375,000 acres of sugar beet. It will be based on the assumption that the growers will provide approximately this acreage at a price, in respect of each factory, of 1s. per ton below that offered in fixed-price contracts in 1934.

The rate of assistance which Parliament will be asked to provide will be 5s. per cwt. of white sugar related to a raw sugar price of 4s. 6d. per cwt., with appropriate adjustments either upwards or downwards if the average price of raw sugar should vary from that figure. This rate of assistance is based on the ascertained average costs of operation. The position

[Mr. Elliot.]
will be further considered on receipt of the Greene Committee's Report, and appropriate allowances will be made for capital services in so far as these may then be found to be necessary. But the Government reserve the right to make the grant of any such allowances conditional upon the acceptance by the industry of any measures of reform which may be proposed by the Government after consideration of the Committee's report.

Legislation will in due course be submitted to Parliament to give effect to these proposals, which, except in so far as they involve the continuance of State assistance to the industry for another year, will leave both the Government and Parliament free to decide without prejudice upon future policy. This legislation will not be brought forward until the report of the committee is available and Parliament has had a full opportunity of examining it.

Sir E. RUGGLES-BRISE: Is my right hon. Friend aware that the statement which he has just made will be received with satisfaction and relief by the agricultural community and that as a result of it, the farmers will now be able to proceed with their plans; and is he also aware that it will be received with relief by a very large number of agricultural and industrial workers in view of the effect upon employment?

Mr. DAVID GRENFELL: Arising out of the original reply, can the Minister inform the House what has been responsible for the delay in the presentation of the report; and is it not the case that if the report had been received it might have been possible to obviate the need for this House to pass legislation?

Mr. ELLIOT: No, Sir; I understand that the reason for the delay is the very close consideration which the committee is giving to this subject and the great necessity of making, if possible, a final report which will settle the matter one way or the other for all time.

Mr. GRENFELL: Was it not a condition of the appointment——

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think we can discuss the matter now.

FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE (SCOTLAND).

42. **Lord SCONE** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether he has any information regarding the origin of the recent outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease in Scotland?

Mr. ELLIOT: Since the 17th January last there have been four outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease in Scotland. The first of these outbreaks occurred among pigs at Provanmill, near Glasgow. These pigs were fed on kitchen refuse obtained from institutions in Glasgow, but inquiries have not revealed any purchase by these institutions of produce which would be a likely source of the disease. The second outbreak occurred at the Glasgow abattoirs, and started among pigs which had been consigned to the abattoirs from the farm on which the first outbreak occurred. The third outbreak was at Coatbridge among pigs which had come from the Glasgow abattoirs. The fourth outbreak was on a farm at Rutherglen, the owner of which had recently visited the Glasgow abattoirs. An Order has now been issued reducing the area of the present restrictions as from the 8th February.

MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS (MARKETING).

43. **Captain P. MACDONALD** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether any steps have been taken by the Milk Marketing Board to find an increased market for milk, cream, and other milk products by entering into arrangements with the hotel and catering industry for supply to such industry under special conditions; and, if not, whether he will suggest that the possibility of such an arrangement should be investigated?

Mr. ELLIOT: I understand that the Milk Marketing Board have informed the representatives of the hotel and restaurant trade that they are prepared to discuss the matter to which my hon. and gallant Friend refers.

Sir W. WAYLAND: Is there any reason why these trades should have special prices quoted to them, lower than those quoted to other people?

Mr. ELLIOT: It is an ordinary matter of business. They are customers and the other people are sellers, and the two sides are trying to make an arrangement which will be mutually advantageous.

SEALS (SCOTLAND).

44. **Sir BASIL PETO** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland whether he will arrange to have a record taken of the number of grey and common brown seals, respectively, known to be killed in response to the rewards offered by the different salmon fisheries district boards in Scotland for the destruction of seals, in order to obtain data as to the proportion of grey and brown seals which frequent the estuaries of salmon rivers?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for SCOTLAND (Mr. Skelton): I am doubtful whether reliable evidence as to the proportion of grey and brown seals in the estuaries can be obtained in the manner suggested, but district fishery boards will be consulted on the subject.

Sir B. PETO: If the hon. Gentleman does not approve of the method suggested in the question, will he consider in his Department some more reliable method of getting information on this important topic?

Mr. SKELTON: Yes, Sir.

BRITISH ARMY (TANK BRIGADE TRAINING).

45. **Sir B. PETO** asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether it is proposed to schedule any area on Dartmoor as a ground for the exercise of tanks; and, if so, the reason for the decision?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Douglas Hacking): It is hoped to include the Tank Brigade in the programme of training for this year, but no decision has yet been taken as to the area in which it will train.

Mr. ISAAC FOOT: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of the great concern which has been expressed in the West of England because of the announcement which appeared; and can he make any reassuring statement to the House?

Mr. HACKING: I do not know of any announcement which has been made. If the hon. Gentleman will tell me to what announcement he is referring, I may be able to answer him.

INDIA (TERRORISM).

48. **Mr. WISE** asked the Secretary of State for India whether he will give the number of terrorist conspiracies and outrages attempted or committed in each province or territory of British India subsequent to those mentioned in his memoranda on terrorism published in Volume 2 (Records) of the Joint Select Committee on India Constitutional Reform?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Butler): I would refer my hon. Friend to the answers given to the Noble Lady the Member for Kinross and West Perth (Duchess of Atholl) on the 9th July and 10th December last. I am circulating statements giving the latest available totals for 1934.

Following are the statements:

TERRORIST OFFENCES in Bengal from January to November, 1934.

Murders	1
Attempted murders	2
Assaults on private persons—murderous	2
Dacoities	6
Dacoities with murder	1
Attempted dacoities	2
Robberies	1
Bomb throwing	1
Recovery of explosives	1
Thefts	2
	19

TERRORIST OFFENCES in Provinces other than Bengal during 1934.

Province.	Number of offences.
Madras	Nil.
Bombay	9*
United Provinces	3
Punjab	Nil.
Burma	Nil.
Bihar and Orissa	1
Central Provinces	1
Assam	5
North-West Frontier Province	Nil.

* To 30th September, 1934, only.

49. **Mr. WISE** asked the Secretary of State for India how many members of the Indian Civil Service, officers of the Indian police, and judges and magistrates have instructions to carry revolvers when on duty; how many of these have armed personal guards and how many have

[Mr. Wise.]
armed guards on their homes; and in which provinces, excluding the North-West Frontier Province, have any of these precautions been found necessary?

Mr. BUTLER: I regret that I have not the information for which my hon. Friend asks.

Mr. WISE: Is it possible to acquire this information?

Mr. BUTLER: My hon. Friend will realise that detailed inquiries will be necessary to obtain it, but if he so desires, I will do my best to obtain information on the subject.

EDUCATION (NON-PROVIDED SCHOOLS).

47. **Sir J. HASLAM** asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education whether any decision has yet been arrived at regarding making grants to owners of non-provided schools in order to facilitate the bringing into operation of the Hadow scheme and the extension of the school age?

Major GEORGE DAVIES (Lord of the Treasury): I have been asked to reply. My Noble Friend regrets that he is not in a position to make any statement on this subject.

Sir J. HASLAM: Will my hon. and gallant Friend inform his Noble Friend that I have been asking this question for over two years and that I have had the same reply, and will he also inform his Noble Friend that it is this matter that is holding up the two improvements in education that are so desirable and necessary?

Major DAVIES: I will see that my hon. Friend's comments are conveyed to my Noble Friend.

LAND REGISTRY OFFICE.

50. **Sir NICHOLAS GRATTAN-DOYLE** asked the Attorney-General whether, in view of the proved usefulness of the Land Registry Office, he will consider extending its operations over an increased number of English counties?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir Thomas Inskip): It is proposed by my noble and learned Friend, the Lord Chancellor, to prepare an Order under Section 122 of the Act extending to the county of Middlesex. Only one such Order to come into effect before January, 1937, can be prepared by my noble and learned Friend except at the instance of a county council.

CANADA (MUNICIPAL BONDS).

51. **Sir N. GRATTAN-DOYLE** asked the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs whether he has now inquired of the Canadian Dominion authorities about the statements of the Premier of British Columbia and the mayor of Vancouver City as to the proposal by the Vancouver City Council to reduce by 50 per cent. the interest on Vancouver bonded debt, in view of such action affecting holders of Vancouver city securities floated in London; and will he say what is the decision of the Canadian Dominion authorities?

The SECRETARY of STATE for DOMINION AFFAIRS (Mr. J. H. Thomas): As my hon. Friend is, no doubt, aware, the control of municipal finance in Canada falls within provincial rather than federal jurisdiction. I have been informed that the Premier of British Columbia made a statement to the Press on the 11th January to the effect that if the city of Vancouver made arrangements with its bondholders for a reduction of interest rate, as had been done by the town of Prince Rupert, the provincial Government would be willing to legislate to validate such an arrangement, but that the Government would not legislate to cut interest rates in half without the approval of the bondholders.

Sir N. GRATTAN-DOYLE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of the intense anxiety that exists among the numerous investors in these bonds in this country, and is he aware of the fact that this decision adversely affects very many people who are vitally interested?

Mr. THOMAS: I have already indicated that I am aware of the natural anxiety that is felt. The answer I have given is the answer in which the Canadian Government informed me of their position, and that ought to do more than anything else to alleviate this anxiety.

Sir N. GRATTAN-DOYLE: With regard to an ultimate decision, can my right hon. Friend hold out any hope that those who have invested their money in these bonds will not be sacrificed?

Mr. THOMAS: My hon. Friend will be aware that I have no power to interfere with Dominion status in this matter, but I have been informed of the anxiety in many parts of this country, and I can only say that the answer I have given is that of the Canadian Government.

Sir PERCY HURD: Is it not a fact that arrangements have been made for a conference of bondholders on the 11th February?

Mr. THOMAS: I can only assume that my hon. Friend who asks that question and my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-on-Tyne, North (Sir N. Grattan-Doyle), who is equally anxious, will not pursue the matter but get on with the conference.

HOUSING (FLATS).

52. **Mr. LENNOX-BOYD** asked the Minister of Health when the report of the departmental committee on the design and construction of flats is to be published?

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the MINISTRY of HEALTH (Mr. Shakespeare): My right hon. Friend has not yet received a report from this committee, but he understands that they hope to submit an interim report before the end of the financial year.

Mr. LENNOX-BOYD: Is there any place where a Member of this House could inspect models of flats and other similar buildings?

Mr. SHAKESPEARE: Yes, there is an exhibition of working-class flats now open in the board room of the Ministry of Health, and it has been so popular that it is being extended until the 12th of this month inclusive, and, if my hon. Friend or any of his colleagues would like to come along, I would try to make myself available to show them round.

Mr. GROVES: Is this exhibition open only to Members of this House, or could the hon. Gentleman see his way to extend it to the chairmen of housing committees of local authorities?

Mr. SHAKESPEARE: Yes, it is open to the general public.

LIFT ACCIDENTS.

53. **Mr. THORNE** asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received a report from his factory inspector in connection with a youth who was trapped and killed in a lift at the premises of Messrs. Maple and Company, of Tottenham Court Road, London; and, in view of the increase of accidents to youths without experience of working lifts, whether it is his intention to issue an order that proper training under an experienced lift attendant should be given before they are allowed to work lifts alone?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir John Gilmour): I have obtained reports on this unfortunate accident. The boy's inexperience may have been a contributory cause, but I am advised that the real remedy for accidents such as this is the provision of up-to-date protective arrangements and efficient maintenance. A great deal has been done to render modern lifts safe, but old lifts present a difficult and costly problem. I will explore the situation further.

Mr. THORNE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the young boy in question was only 14 years of age, and does he think it advisable that a youth like that should be operating a lift in a hotel or anywhere else?

GAMBLING MACHINES.

54. **Lieut.-Colonel TODD** asked the Home Secretary why, as gambling machines are illegal, action is not taken in all cases instead of only in isolated cases?

Sir J. GILMOUR: The responsibility for enforcing the law relating to gambling machines rests with chief officers of police. I have no reason to believe that action is not taken in appropriate cases.

Lieut.-Colonel TODD: Does my right hon. Friend consider that a law which is flagrantly neglected is a satisfactory law and one that should remain on the Statute Book?

55. **Lieut.-Colonel TODD** asked the Home Secretary whether he is aware that there is no uniformity of punishment in dealing with the proprietors of gambling

[Lieut.-Colonel Todd.]
machines under the Gaming Houses Act, 1854; and whether he will take steps to ensure that the fines inflicted are in proportion to the offence?

Sir J. GILMOUR: It is for the court to decide what is the appropriate penalty having regard to the circumstances of each individual case which comes before them, and I could not interfere with their discretion in the matter.

Lieut.-Colonel TODD: Is my right hon. Friend aware that in a recent case the owner of a machine available to children was fined £2, while owners of machines in ex-service clubs were fined £147?

Sir WILLIAM DAVISON: Does not my right hon. Friend think it is about time this Act was repealed?

LICENSING LAW.

56. **Mr. HOWARD** asked the Home Secretary whether he is aware of the public dissatisfaction arising from the many variations in the permitted hours for the sale of liquor throughout the country; and will he consider the desirability of making the permitted hours uniform in all respect in regard to licensed premises and clubs in each police area and also taking steps for the prevention of supplies to club members for consumption off the premises?

Sir J. GILMOUR: Both these questions will no doubt be considered when the time comes to review the Acts. I can hold out no immediate prospect of any amending legislation.

62. **Mr. HOWARD** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will consider licensing clubs which register with no other aim than the supply and consumption of intoxicating liquor, often at hours when it is impossible to secure it on licensed premises, such licensing to be on the same footing as that of licensed premises or, alternatively, will he give consideration to the desirability of substituting the licence duty now paid by licensed victuallers by a registration fee of 5s. per annum, the amount now paid by such clubs, and thus enable the licensed trade to more effectually meet the competition of those clubs which are in fact unlicensed public-houses?

Mr. COOPER: My hon. Friend's suggestions will certainly be borne in mind in connection with a general revision of the licensing law. The Government has, however, frequently stated that it does not propose to deal piecemeal with this matter, and it is impossible to say when the opportunity for a general revision will arise.

CORONERS' INQUESTS (COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY).

57. **Mr. LECKIE** asked the Home Secretary whether he will include in the terms of reference to the committee he proposes to set up to consider the question of coroners' duties the desirability of limiting their powers to determining the cause of death, as is already the case in the inquiries in Scotland, and not to attempt to allocate responsibility?

Sir J. GILMOUR: The committee's terms of reference have not yet been finally determined, but I have no doubt that they will be sufficiently wide to admit of consideration being given to the scope of coroners' inquiries.

NATIONAL EXPENDITURE.

61. **Sir N. GRATTAN-DOYLE** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, following the recent publication of the Supplementary Estimates for increased expenditure, he will, without in any way anticipating his Budget statement, indicate the directions in which he has reduced expenditure so as to justify reliefs of taxation for the purpose of assisting trade recovery?

Mr. COOPER: I fear that I could not oblige my hon. Friend without anticipating my right hon. Friend's Budget statement.

NATIONAL AND TATE GALLERIES.

64. **Mr. ANSTRUTHER-GRAY** asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury how many pictures there are in the National Gallery and Tate Gallery which owing to lack of hanging space are not generally exhibited in these two galleries; and, if so, can he arrange for them to be placed on permanent exhibition in other public galleries or official buildings in London until they are required for the

temporary lending to provincial public buildings or to the Dominions and Colonies?

Mr. COOPER: At the National Gallery, there are approximately 600 pictures which, owing to lack of wall space, are not generally shown on the exhibition floor. About 150 pictures are regularly on loan to provincial galleries and official buildings in London. The remainder are hung on walls or screens in the ground floor rooms and can be seen by the public on application. At the Tate Gallery, of about 850 pictures which are not normally on exhibition, 350 are in store, including 250 water colour drawings. The balance of approximately 500 pictures is distributed on loan for exhibition in public buildings in London or the provinces. It will thus be seen that no substantial increase in the number of pictures temporarily loaned in this country is practicable: nor is there any reason to believe that the requests of bodies to whom loan is permissible under the National Gallery (Loan) Act, 1883, are not met under the existing arrangements.

Mr. GODFREY NICHOLSON: Could not my hon. Friend, at no great expense, arrange for all these pictures to be easily accessible to the public?

Mr. COOPER: If my hon. Friend will read my answer, he will see that they are quite accessible now.

Mr. NICHOLSON: But not in good condition?

Mr. COOPER: I do not think the question referred to the condition, but they are all in perfect condition.

Lieut.-Colonel MOORE: Is it not a fact that in the Tate and National Galleries and other places, there are some hundreds of Turner's works alone that might be made accessible to the general public in some other building?

UNEMPLOYMENT.

ASSISTANCE (ADJUSTMENT OF ALLOWANCES).

65. **Sir M. MANNINGHAM-BULLER** asked the Minister of Labour the total number of cases in which benefits have been increased and decreased, respectively, by the Unemployment Assistance Board in Northampton; and whether instructions have been given to area officers of the Unemployment Assistance Board to refuse to give such or similar information to Members of Parliament for the constituency which they represent?

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the MINISTRY of LABOUR (Mr. R. S. Hudson): As my right hon. Friend announced in the House last night, the board have undertaken to conduct an investigation into the effect so far of the regulations. This will inevitably result in a very heavy strain on the board's staff, who in addition have to carry on the day to day administration. In these circumstances I would venture to make an earnest appeal to Members, including those who have similar questions on the paper for subsequent days this week not to press, for the moment at all events, for this detailed information.

Sir M. MANNINGHAM-BULLER: May I have an answer to the latter part of my question?

Mr. HUDSON: I will make inquiries and let my hon. and gallant Friend know if such instructions are issued by the board.

Mr. LAWSON (*by Private Notice*) asked the Minister of Labour on what date the system of revised payments of unemployment assistance announced last night will be brought into operation?

Mr. HUDSON: I am informed by the Unemployment Assistance Board that immediate arrangements are being made for the adjustment of allowances in accordance with the decision of the board announced yesterday in the House by my right hon. Friend. The arrangements for the payments this week had already been completed and it will not be possible to make the necessary adjustments in time to affect those payments. All necessary adjustments, however, will be made as quickly as possible during the next few weeks and as stated by my right hon. Friend will be retrospective to the date of the reduction.

Mr. LAWSON: May I take it from that reply that arrangements for payments on the new scale, as stated by the Minister, are being urgently pressed forward, and that all these people will be paid when the arrangements are completed?

Mr. HUDSON: Yes, I will certainly give that assurance.

Sir P. HARRIS: Will these arrangements include supplementary allowances to cover the amounts which the applicants received from public assistance committees?

Mr. HUDSON: I dealt with that point in the Debate last night, and the hon. Gentleman will find a full explanation of it in my speech.

Mr. BUCHANAN: May I ask whether, in the meantime, there will be some relaxation on the part of the Poor Law authorities in assisting these poor people? As the Minister has set aside one part of the law, will he give the Poor Law authorities discretion in this matter of assistance?

Mr. HUDSON: That is a rather different point on which I should not like to express an opinion without notice.

Mr. BUCHANAN: I will raise the point on the Adjournment to-night.

DOMESTIC SERVANTS.

66. **Major HILLS** asked the Minister of Labour whether he will refer the question of the insurance of domestic servants against unemployment to the Unemployment Insurance Statutory Committee under Section 19 (6) of the Unemployment Act, 1934?

Mr. HUDSON: In accordance with the undertaking given during the Debates on the Unemployment Bill last year, the Statutory Committee will be asked to consider this matter as soon as they are in a position to do so.

CENTRAL ELECTRICITY BOARD.

24. **Captain CAZALET** (*for* **Sir A. KNOX**) asked the Minister of Transport the total sum guaranteed by the Government and expended by the Central Electricity Board?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: No sum at all has been so guaranteed.

ARMY ESTIMATES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE, 1934).

Estimate presented—of the further Amount which will be required during the year ending 31st March, 1935, to meet Expenditure not provided for in the Army Estimates of the year [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 35.]

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

POTTERY IMPORTS, SOUTH AND BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

Captain ERSKINE-BOLST asked the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs the figures for the imports of pottery into South Africa for the years 1933 and 1934; and what proportions are from the United Kingdom and from Japan?

Mr. THOMAS: The following are the figures for which my hon. and gallant Friend asks:

Pottery imports into the Union of South Africa (by value).

Year.	Total.	From United Kingdom.	From Japan.
	£	£	£
1933 ...	323,030	170,281	81,938
1934 ... 11 months (only.)	464,761	216,494	95,202

Captain ERSKINE-BOLST asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies the figures for the imports of pottery into the British East African territories for the years 1933 and 1934; and what proportions are from the United Kingdom and from Japan?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: I regret that the figures for 1934 are not yet available. The following are the figures for 1933:

—	Total Imports.	Imports from United Kingdom.		Import from Japan.	
	£	£	Per cent.	£	Per cent.
Kenya and Uganda	15,874	9,422	59·4	4,732	29·0
Northern Rhodesia	11,084	6,852	61·8	490	4·4
Nyasaland	1,312	881	67·1	149	11·3
Tanganyika Territory	6,493	2,817	43·4	2,341	36·1
Zanzibar	1,685	182	10·8	1,314	77·9

FLOUR MILLING INDUSTRY.

Sir A. KNOX asked the President of the Board of Trade how many country mills have been closed owing to the action of the Millers' Mutual; and what effect the closing of these mills has had on the supply of offals to the farmer?

Dr. BURGIN: I am informed by the National Association of British and Irish Millers that, since the scheme for the rationalisation of the flour milling industry under the Millers' Mutual Association came into operation in September, 1929, 21 country millers, representing a total capacity of less than 80 sacks per hour, which were members of that association, have ceased flour milling. It is stated that economic conditions would in any case have caused these millers to cease flour milling and that most of them have continued to mill provender. Since the first accounting period under the Wheat Act, 1932, 43 inland millers have ceased milling flour liable to quota payment, 19 of whom have continued to mill provender, and 40 inland millers have begun to mill such flour. Since the passing of the Wheat Act, 1932, exports of British-milled wheat offals except to the Channel Islands have practically ceased by virtue of an undertaking given by the millers, and the total available supply of wheat offals in the cereal years 1932-33 and 1933-34 was appreciably larger than was recorded in the Census of Production taken in respect of either of the calendar years 1924 or 1930.

BALANCE OF TRADE.

Mr. DIXEY asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the grave position with respect to trade in this country as revealed by recent figures, he is prepared to consider altering and enlarging the personnel of the Import Duties Advisory Committee?

Mr. COOPER: My right hon. Friend sees no necessity for such action as my hon. Friend suggests, and I would refer him to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade yesterday to the hon. Member for the Platting Division (Mr. Chorlton).

JUVENILE COURTS (POLICE, CIVILIAN CLOTHES).

Mr. LOVAT-FRASER asked the Home Secretary whether he is aware that the magistrates at Chedderton asked the superintendent of police to allow the police officers to attend the juvenile courts in civilian clothes and that he refused; and will he take steps to ensure that in any case where such a wish is expressed by the magistrates the police shall not have the power to refuse?

Sir J. GILMOUR: I have no information on the subject, but I will make inquiry.

TRANSPORT.

TRAFFIC REGULATIONS (CYCLISTS).

Mr. GROVES asked the Minister of Transport whether invitations were issued to representatives of the cyclists' touring clubs to attend and associate with the advisory body upon traffic problems; and, as cyclists are a considerable body of road users, will he consider consultation with them in respect to any future regulations?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: After consultation with the National Cyclists' Union and the Cyclists' Touring Club, my predecessor appointed Mr. W. P. Cook, a vice-president of the Cyclists' Touring Club, to represent the interests of pedal cyclists on the Transport Advisory Council. I have also appointed Mr. Watling, the director of the British Cycle and Motor Cycle Manufacturers' Union, to be a member of the Committee on Road Safety. With regard to the last part of the question, it is my practice to consult organisations representing cyclists with regard to any regulations which specially affect them.

ROAD MARGINS.

Mr. T. MORRIS asked the Minister of Transport whether, in view of the increasing traffic on the roads, he will cease to make any grants-in-aid of expenditure by highway authorities upon the conversion of margins to mere ornamental lawns as opposed to space available for pedestrians and riders; and whether he will advise highway authorities to use the maximum space available for highways for purposes of utility rather than ornament?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: It is the duty of highway authorities properly to maintain margins with due regard to the needs of all classes of road users, and it is not my practice to make grants from the Road Fund to the cost of converting margins to mere ornamental lawns.

CRINAN CANAL (LEAKAGE).

Mr. GUY asked the Minister of Transport what steps, if any, are being taken by his Department to stop the serious leakage of water from the Crinan Canal at or about No. 14 Lock?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: Extensive repairs are shortly to be undertaken in the neighbourhood of Crinan No. 14 Lock, and it is hoped to stop this leakage.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY.

RURAL DISTRICTS.

Brigadier-General CLIFTON BROWN asked the Minister of Transport whether he is aware that in many parts of rural England which have been disfigured by the electricity pylons, the local undertakers refuse to supply villages and farms with electricity, and that the Wokingham Rural District Council has repeatedly called the attention of the Thames Valley Electric Company to the necessity for a continuation cable to the Hurst village and neighbourhood without avail; and whether he will take steps to cancel the powers given to all those local electricity undertakers who show no enterprise in developing country districts?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I am informed by the Electricity Commissioners that a supply of electricity was actually made available by the Thames Valley Electric Supply Company, Limited, in the village of Hurst in February, 1932, and in other parts of the parish in the summer of 1933. If my hon. and gallant Friend will inform me of the particular cases in the parish where difficulty is experienced in obtaining a supply, I will make further inquiries. With regard to the latter part of the question, I am always ready to have examination made of any cases where there is ground for thinking that undertakers are failing to make reasonable development, and shall be glad if my hon. and gallant Friend will communicate to me any cases which he has in mind.

CHARGES.

Sir A. KNOX asked the Minister of Transport what was the average cost to the consumer per power and light unit of electricity in Great Britain in 1927; and what is the average price to-day?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: The latest available average figures are for the year 1932-33. In that year the average cost to the consumer per unit was .77d. as compared with .94d. in 1927-28 for power supplies, and 2.41d. as compared with 3.39d. for lighting and domestic supplies.

OLD AGE PENSIONS.

Mr. SMEDLEY CROOKE asked the Minister of Health the number who are receiving pensions under the 1925 to 1929 contributory Acts and also the number under the non-contributory Act; and, in each case, the number of these recipients who are still employed and the cost to the country of the pensions granted to them?

Sir H. YOUNG: As regards the first part of the question, the number of persons in receipt of pensions under or by virtue of the Contributory Pensions Acts on 31st December, 1934, was 2,382,543, and the number under the 1908 to 1924 Acts, independently of the Contributory Pensions Acts, was 717,821. The information asked for in the second part of the question is not available.

Mr. CROOKE asked the Minister of Health what the approximate Exchequer contribution to the 1925 to 1929 Pension Acts will be in 1944, assuming, as has been stated, that the whole of the present surpluses will be exhausted by 1943?

Sir H. YOUNG: I am afraid I must ask my hon. Friend to await the issue of the first report of the Government Actuary on the financial working of the Contributory Pensions Acts, which will contain the information he desires. The report is expected shortly.

DISTRESSED AREAS (GRANT).

Mr. LEONARD asked the Minister of Health whether he can state the allocation of the special grant to distressed areas for the financial year ended 5th April, 1934; and particulars for the year 1933-34 in respect of each such area, showing in a comparative way the average number of registered unemployed, the average number of such unemployed chargeable to the local authorities, the total amount disbursed as outdoor relief for the maintenance of able-bodied unemployed persons and their dependants, the amount of relief afforded to the local authority by the special grant expressed as a rate per £ of valuation, and the

amount of said relief expressed as a sum per head of the number of unemployed chargeable to the local authorities?

Sir H. YOUNG, *pursuant to his reply* [OFFICIAL REPORT, 31st January, 1935, col. 511, Vol. 297], *supplied the following statement:*

The returns made to my Department do not distinguish able-bodied persons in receipt of poor relief. The figures available relate to persons ordinarily engaged in some regular occupation and distinguish unemployed persons registered at Employment Exchanges. The figures in columns 5, 6 and 7 of the following statement include cases in which the primary cause of relief was sickness and not unemployment. The information asked for in the last part of the question cannot be given, as the numbers of unemployed persons in receipt of relief who are not registered at Employment Exchanges are not known.

Area.	Distressed Area Grant for 1933–34.		Average number in 1933–34 of unemployed persons registered at Employment Exchanges situated in the Administrative Area named in Col. 1.	Average number in 1933–34 of unemployed persons in receipt of out-relief who were registered at Employment Exchanges (excluding dependants).*	Amount of out-relief in money and kind in 1933–34.	
	Amount.	Equivalent rate in £.			In respect of persons in Col. 5 and their dependants.	In respect of other persons ordinarily engaged in some regular occupation and their dependants.†
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
Administrative Counties.	£	d.			£	£
Cumberland ...	3,786	1·3	15,413	683	27,635	18,504
Durham ...	94,815	8·0	93,005	5,329	223,289	230,068
Norfolk ...	6,512	1·5	4,359	717	32,687	35,049
Anglesey ...	1,547	2·7	2,110	174	7,177	513
Carmarthen ...	5,638	3·0	8,163	169	7,430	21,476
Glamorgan ...	66,751	6·7	88,023	2,418	79,539	217,508
Monmouth ...	16,222	3·7	31,588	1,464	42,667	49,154
Pembroke ...	1,316	1·4	3,929	110	4,994	1,900
County Boroughs.						
Barnsley ...	3,862	3·2	12,547	584	11,739	16,043
Bootle... ...	3,889	2·0	17,229	1,139	47,054	19,361
Gateshead ...	11,836	6·0	13,198	1,212	57,573	36,218
Grimsby ...	2,353	1·3	5,796	650	29,225	323
Kingston-upon-Hull.	20,792	3·3	18,200	2,908	134,265	12,845
Lincoln ...	7,726	4·8	6,004	1,011	27,283	5,207
Liverpool ...	57,328	2·4	74,372	13,376	579,637	170,958
Newcastle-upon-Tyne.	17,830	2·0	30,619	3,528	174,080	66,716
Norwich ...	9,678	3·8	6,080	1,993	98,875	984
Rotherham ...	2,276	1·8	10,200	850	18,399	14,981
St. Helens ...	4,378	2·7	9,728	750	26,832	23,986
Sheffield ...	58,558	5·6	47,293	13,272	405,539	106,869
Sunderland ...	10,098	3·1	26,468	1,963	81,037	7,990
Walsall ...	3,552	2·2	8,861	256	9,605	2,914
West Ham ...	19,297	3·4	17,773	2,796	138,294	12,960
Merthyr Tydfil	9,960	12·0	12,588	982	36,295	5,261

* Including persons in receipt of Unemployment Benefit (or Transitional Payment) concurrently with out-relief.

† An unascertained part of this expenditure relates to unemployed persons and their dependants.

BRITISH ARMY.

RESEARCH STATION, ST. HELENS (WORKERS' WAGES).

Mr. SPENCER asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether his attention has been called to the claim of certain workers in the Government Research Station at St. Helens for an improved scale of wages; and whether he can make any statement on this matter?

Mr. HACKING: A claim has been received from a trade union, and has been discussed with officers of my Department. The matter is still under consideration.

RIFLES.

Mr. DOBBIE asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office what is the present stock of rifles held by his Department; whether any supply has recently been made available to the National Rifle Association; if so, what quantity; what was the cost of production; and what is the price charged to this association?

Mr. HACKING: It would not be in the public interest to disclose the stocks of rifles which are held, nor is it consonant with general policy to disclose details of prices paid under contracts. Three hundred rifles have been sold recently to the National Rifle Association; the desire of the War Office being to assist competitors at the National Rifle Association's meetings so far as this can be done without loss to public funds.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA BILL.

Order for Second reading read.

3.47 p.m.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Sir Samuel Hoare): I beg to move, "That the Bill be now read a Second time."

Sir Philip Francis tells in his memoirs how once he was supping with Warren Hastings and the conversation turned upon Robinson Crusoe.

"While the rest of the company were talking"—

I quote his words—

"Hastings seemed lost in a reverie, in which I little expected that Robinson Crusoe could be concerned. At last he gravely declared that he had often read the book with singular satisfaction, but that no passage in it had ever struck him so much as where the hero is said to have built a monstrous boat at a distance from the sea, without knowing by what means he was to convey it to the water. 'And, by Jove,' said Hastings, 'the same thing has happened to myself a hundred times in my life'."

Has the same thing happened to us in building this gigantic Bill? Have we build a gigantic boat, and may we find it very difficult to launch? When it is launched will it be watertight and seaworthy? These are questions to which I am going to address my observations this afternoon. They are questions which, I believe, are in the minds of every hon. Member to-day. On the benches opposite right hon. and hon. Gentlemen state in their Amendment that our design is not bold enough. On the benches on my right some of my right hon. and hon. Friends—I hope in diminishing number—in their Amendment, for totally different reasons, damn the Bill by bell, book and candle. One of them, whose identity is easily recognised by his full-blooded vocabulary and his superabundance of metaphor, described the Bill as

"a gigantic quilt of jumbled crochet work. A monstrous monument of shame built by pygmies."

My right hon. Friend, who is otherwise engaged this afternoon, thinks of all of us—all the Members of the Government, the majority of the Joint Select Committee, all the surviving members of the Simon Commission, all the ex-Viceroys, the present Viceroy and all the Governors—as miserable Lilliputian pygmies, and he alone is the only Gulliver in the land. Be that as it may, being Secretary of State for India I once again follow the very wise injunction which was made by the directors of the Court of the East India Company to their clerical staff: "Humdrum is our style." I have seen so many fine phrases in Indian Debates come back, like boomerangs, on their makers, I have seen so many purple patches fade away under the glare of Indian suns or in the cold light of Parliamentary Debates, that even if I had the wings I should not attempt any rhetorical flights. Rather would I attempt to achieve three purposes this afternoon: first of all, to give the House a broad survey of the Bill itself; secondly, to suggest to the House the main issues of controversy between one section of us and another; and, thirdly, to describe to the House the object that the Government have in mind in asking the House to pass this Bill.

I will begin with the first chapter of the Bill, a chapter dealing with All-India Federation. Any Federal Government is bound to be more complicated than a unitary Government, and in the case of an All-India Federation there is the additional complication due to the fact that the units are as different as the Indian States are from the British India Provinces. Those complications react upon almost every clause in the Federal chapter. They react, for instance, upon the provisions as to how the federation is to be formed, for it is obvious that the Princes, being voluntary agents, can only enter of their own volition. They react, again, upon the kind of executive and the kind of legislature that is proposed, each side of the federation obviously demanding adequate representation both in the Government and in the Federal Legislature. They react, again, upon the relations between the two Federal Chambers, the Princes, from the first, attaching the greatest possible importance to the Chambers having equal powers. They react, further, upon the list of federal subjects, the Princes, again, rightly insisting that, apart from the functions of Government which they surrender to the Federation, there should be no interference in their internal sovereignty. These complications make a formidable list of difficulties, but I

[Sir S. Hoare.]
would ask the House to observe, first of all, that nine out of 10 Members in this House, indeed I believe 99 out of 100 Members, regard All-India Federation as our objective, whether immediate or ultimate; and, secondly, that all these difficulties which I have just enumerated are inherent in an All-India Federation, whether it come about under this Bill or whether it come about this year, or next year, or under another Bill in 20 years time.

That being so, I claim that the differences that will arise in our discussions on the federal chapter will be differences of method rather than differences of principle. For instance, should the Bill include a federal chapter as well as a Provincial chapter, that is to say, should the Federation come under the same Bill as Provincial Autonomy? That is a question of method and not a question of principle. Secondly, is the kind of federal machinery the best kind of federal machinery in the circumstances? Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite made alternative proposals. They were turned down by the Committee, and I think on very good grounds, but I imagine they will raise their alternatives again in our discussions. Thirdly, should the method of election for the Federal Legislature be direct or indirect election? That is a question which, I know, interests intensely a certain section in this House. The Committee weighed the arguments on both sides and found that there were very serious objections in either course. None the less they came to the view that in the circumstances indirect election was the wiser plan, and that indirect election, or any method of election, is bound to be in the nature of an experiment.

I have quoted those instances to show that the character of the Federation reacts upon all Federal organs. I have said a word about the Federal Legislature and the Federal Executive. Let me now say a word about one or two other Federal organs. I do not not think I need pause on the chapter dealing with the Federal Court. I think everybody admits that in a Federation there must be a Federal Court for the purpose of interpreting the Constitution, and I believe myself that when we come to that chapter we shall find little or no difference among any hon. Members on that point. There are, however, two other Federal organs upon which I might say a word by way of illustration, the Reserve Bank and the Railway Board. The proposals for a reserve bank and a railway board are in each case the result of a long and expert investigation, and on the whole I think they are workable proposals, and I believe myself that when we come to discuss them we shall find that the one issue between us is not whether there should be a reserve bank or a railway board but, rather, whether these institutions should be politically controlled or run upon independent business lines. That was the issue which was raised in Committee by right hon. and hon. Members opposite, and here again, no doubt, they will bring it to the attention of the House. My own view is very strongly on the side of the committee, and very strongly behind the proposals in the Bill, namely, that the Reserve Bank and the Railway Board, if they are to fulfil the purpose which we desire them to fulfil, must be kept as independent as possible from political management and political interference. I have quoted these instances from the Federal Chapter, not to suggest that the provisions of the Federation are either simple or uncontroversial—they are neither—but rather to suggest to hon. Members that the issues of major controversy are limited in number.

I pass to the next chapter—the Provincial Chapter. It is a long one comprising many Clauses, but if hon. Members will read it they will see that the greater part is little more than a repetition of the Federal Chapter. I think that the three Clauses are almost identical with the Clauses in the Federal Chapter. We might have dealt with this chapter by means of cross references to the Federal Chapter. On the whole, I think we were wise in taking the other course. We felt it was much fairer to the Provinces to receive their constitutions in this part of the Bill, so that they should see their constitutions set out in self-contained provisions at length. Similarly, I felt, from a good deal of experience in this House, that, though the large number of Clauses might look very formidable, hon. Members would greatly prefer to see the whole story set out simply and in detail, rather than have

to search about by cross references to other parts of the Bill.

So far as the substance of that Chapter is concerned, I do not believe that we shall find many issues to divide us. So far as I am aware, every Member in this House, wherever he sits, has admitted the need for provincial autonomy. The question that will divide some of us will be this: Is it possible to have provincial autonomy without the transfer of law and order? My friends and I—and we are supported by the overwhelming majority of the Joint Select Committee—take the very definite view that it is quite impossible to give further and real responsibility to the Provinces without making the transfer of law and order, and that being so, the question arises for the House to consider, assuming that law and order are transferred, is the plan set out in the Bill the best plan to safeguard the moral, the organisation and secret intelligence of the police?

There is another question which, no doubt, will be raised on this Chapter. It is a question which very much interests right hon. and hon. Members opposite—should there or should there not be second chambers in the Provinces? The House will observe that, in accordance with the Committee's recommendation, we are proposing an addition of second chambers, over and above what were proposed in the White Paper, in the Provinces of Madras and Bombay. I think we shall find, when we come to discuss the questions of second chambers in the Provinces, that there is good ground for that recommendation, and that the view of the Joint Select Committee is a wise view, namely, that wherever second chambers can be effectively set up in the Provinces, they should, generally speaking, be set up. Apart from those two question—I am coming later on to the question of special responsibilities—I myself do not see other major issues of controversy in the Provincial Chapter.

I pass now to a number of provisions which concern both the Federation and the Provinces, and I begin with the provision concerned with the reserved Departments and the special responsibilities of the Viceroy and the Provincial Governors. Here, at least, it might be thought that there would be wide difference in principle between one section of the House and another. Yet it is a significant fact that during all these last four or five years of discussion, first of all with Indians at the Round Table Conference, and, secondly, in the Joint Select Committee, there has been a surprising measure not of disagreement but of agreement. There has been, for instance, general agreement from the very beginning of our discussions that, in the circumstances of India, defence must be a reserved department. Upon the reservation of defence, it almost inevitably follows also that the Department of External Affairs, being so closely connected with defence, must also be reserved. The point of difference, therefore, has not been the reservation of the Department of Defence, but whether it is or is not possible to put a time limit to that reservation. Is it possible in a Bill to set out a time-table under which, in progressive stages, the Indian Army is Indianised? We have discussed that question over and over again. While we have every desire to help India along the road of responsibility, we see no means of including in any Bill conditions over which this House, and no other House, has really any control. But, no doubt, we shall hear more of that question when we come to discuss the Chapter of Defence.

Passing to the special responsibilities, there, again, we have behind our proposals a really remarkable measure of agreement. From the very start of our discussions there has been a general admission that over a certain field of government certain special powers of intervention are inevitable in the present condition of India. Indeed, there has been very little difference of opinion even over the extent of this special field of administration—special field of government, perhaps, I should rather say. The difference which has arisen has not been so much as to whether there should be this field of special responsibility or not, whether there should be a certain scope or not, but rather over the definition of the special responsibilities. Should they be defined more precisely in certain respects as we define them in the Bill? On the other hand, in certain circumstances should the special powers of intervention be dealt with by powers of a more general character?

[Sir S. Hoare.]

I will take one of these special responsibilities as an instance of what I am trying to explain to the House. I will take the special responsibility connected with the question which I know is in the minds of many hon. Members here, and in the minds of many of our friends in India, that is Commercial Discrimination. It has been admitted, I think, by everyone that some safeguard is necessary in the circumstances. The representatives of the Labour party on the Committee took the view that a general power in the Governor-General to refuse his sanction to the introduction of a Bill involving unfair discrimination was sufficient. The majority of the Committee held, however, that it was necessary to be more precise if the Governor-General and Indian Ministers were not to be left in a state of dangerous obscurity.

Accordingly, the Bill, following the recommendations of the Committee, defines the safeguards under two main headings, first of all, reciprocity of treatment for British and Indian traders and companies, and, secondly, the power of intervention if Indian tariffs were to be used, not in the economic interests of India, but with the object of injuring the interests of the United Kingdom. The spirit in which those provisions are to be applied will be fully explained in the Instrument of Instructions. All that I need say at present is that so far as tariffs are concerned, our intention is substantially to continue the same fiscal autonomy that has existed in India for the last 14 years. British imports into India will, I am convinced, receive the same consideration as under the present Convention. The powers taken in the Bill, if they ever have to be used, will, I am satisfied, be adequate. When we come to the detailed discussion of this very important question, we shall see whether there is any responsible Member in any part of the House who will propose the abrogation of fiscal autonomy. I can only say that every Government since the Montagu - Chelmsford Reforms has accepted the Fiscal Autonomy Convention, and that no Member of any of those Governments, so far as I know, has hitherto proposed its abrogation. I am not surprised. The surest way to destroy British trade in India is to attempt to impose upon India a tariff from Great Britain. It was this policy which lost us the American Colonies. Was not Chatham right in resisting North's attempts to impose a fiscal policy from Great Britain?

"If you conquer them, what then? You cannot make them respect you. You cannot make them wear your cloth."

My right hon. Friend the Lord President of the Council, equally true to the Tory tradition, a century and a-half later, was saying exactly the same thing when he told a Lancashire audience:

"You cannot sell cotton goods on the point of the bayonet."

I cannot to-day in the time at my disposal deal further with this question. I would only say that the great issues to be discussed seem to be: First, whether the provisions as to reciprocity and discrimination are satisfactory; and second, whether anyone seriously proposes the abrogation of the Indian Fiscal Autonomy Convention.

There are three more Chapters in the Bill connected both with the Federation and the Provinces, about which I want to make a few observations. There is the Chapter upon the Services, a very long Chapter of about 40 Clauses. This might seem a very formidable undertaking, but when hon. Members come to study it they will find that substantially it does no more than set out in statutory form the long series of rules connected with the Services which now only appear as administrative orders. There is scarcely a proposal in this long Chapter that is new; there is scarcely a proposal that is not already in those administrative orders. There will be two issues that the House will no doubt wish to discuss, and the first is whether the majority of the Committee and the Government in the provisions of the Bill are taking the wisest course as to recruitment. The Bill proposes very briefly to continue recruitment on its present lines. The Committee studied the question in very great detail and came to the conclusion, which I think was a very wise conclusion, that it was all-important in view of this very difficult task and with these great reforms coming into being, to do nothing to disturb the Services or to increase the anxiety of men, Indian as well as British—because this is not simply a British issue—upon whose shoulders will depend so much the success of the Bill.

Secondly, there is the further question connected with the Services that I know has interested, and rightly interested, many hon. Members; that is the question of pensions. Here again the Bill accepts the Committee's very careful conclusions. In their and our view, no pensioner need feel anxious as to the security in future of his pension. Moreover, so far as the family pension funds are concerned the Bill, following the Committee's recommendation, offers the beneficiaries the choice between letting the money stay in India or having it transferred to trustees in London in the near future. Apart from those two questions I do not believe that we shall find this long Chapter on the Services a controversial Chapter.

Then there is the very important Chapter upon the Judicature—the Chapter on the High Courts, the subordinate courts, and the subordinate judiciary. It is an all-important Chapter which I believe we shall find to be almost uncontroversial. It was the aim of the Committee, and it has been the aim of the Government in making the proposals dealing with this all-important question to achieve the objective of keeping the judicature, superior and subordinate, free and independent of political influence. I believe it will be found that we have been not unsuccessful in achieving that objective.

Lastly I come to a Chapter of the very greatest importance in its reactions both on the Federal Government and on the Provincial Governments, and that is the Chapter on Finance. It is a Chapter that is fundamental to the whole scheme. It is bound to be a very complicated Chapter. The financial relations between the Federal Government and the Provinces are bound to be complicated. Apart from the financial obligation which has grown up betwen India and Great Britain it will be seen that, however one may attempt to deal with finance, the attempt must give rise to a good many complex feelings. I imagine, however, that, apart from the technical issues, the main question will be this: Can India afford the proposed Reforms? Can it pay both for Federation and for Autonomy in the Provinces at the same time? These questions we must fully discuss, and I hope that we shall discuss them dispassionately and without exaggeration.

Let me at this stage make three preliminary observations. First of all, the actual cost or the new federal machinery is estimated at only £500,000 a year and the actual cost of the new Provincial machinery at a similar amount. Secondly, the rest of the burden will be thrown on the Central Budget, of about £4,000,000 a year; namely, about 4 per cent. of the Government of India revenue, does not represent new expenditure and is in no sense expenditure attributable to the constitutional proposals, but represents the transfer to the Centre of a burden which would otherwise have rested on the shoulders of Burma and certain of the Provinces. Thirdly, Indian finances react very quickly to more favourable conditions. No better instance can be found than our experience during the last three or four years in which we have seen Indian budgets and Indian credit rapidly improving in the most remarkable manner. With this experience behind us, and the fact that this sum amounts to only a small percentage of Indian revenues, we need not, I think, take a pessimistic view about the financial basis of the scheme.

Mr. MORGAN JONES: Is that 4 per cent. of the total revenues or of the central?

Sir S. HOARE: The total. I hope that I have made that absolutely clear. I must now say a word about Burma. It is not from any want of interest in Burma that I have left my allusions to the Burmese proposals to the end, but it is rather because almost the whole of the 150 Clauses dealing with Burma are a repetition of Clauses from either the Federal or Provincial Chapters in the Indian part of the Bill. I believe that when we come to discuss the Burma Clauses there will be a great majority in the House in favour of separation of Burma from India and that the main problem—I admit a very difficult problem—will be that of the economic relations between Burma and India and the reactions upon this country.

Lastly, there are certain proposals which concern equally all parts of the Bill, the Federal Chapter, the Provincial Chapter, and the Burma Chapter alike. They are connected with the Instruments of Instruction that will be issued to the Viceroy and the Governors as to the spirit

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in which they are to carry out their duties under the Act. Constitutional experts will remember the part the Instruments of Instruction played in other parts of the Empire. In the case of India they are of peculiar importance because, where the situation is as complicated as this situation is, it is essential that the Viceroy and the Governors should be given clear instructions as to the spirit in which they are to carry out their duties. It is equally important from the point of view of Indians, because in the nature of things this Constitution is a rigid Constitution, and it can only be amendd by future Acts of Parliament. It is rigid because of the peculiar conditions prevalent in India and because Parliament here would not be prepared to abandon its oversight of future changes. Into this Constitution it is still possible to introduce an element of growth and flexibility by means of the Instructions. The Instructions therefore will obviously play a very important part in the development of the Constitution. That being so, we are proposing to adopt the procedure recommended by the Committee that, for the first time in our history, the Draft Instructions should receive the Parliamentary sanction of both Houses. We feel that they will be of such importance, both from the British and from the Indian point of view, that there ought to be Parliamentary sanction behind them. We therefore propose, at about the time that the Committee stage begins, to circulate the Draft Instructions in the form of a White Paper. At the proper time we shall have to ask both Houses to discuss them, and we shall have to obtain the Parliamentary sanction of both Houses before they are issued to the Viceroy and to the Provincial Governors.

Brigadier-General Sir HENRY CROFT: Will the White Paper be published before the Committee stage?

Sir S. HOARE: I think I can undertake to tell my hon. and gallant Friend that it will be published in time for the Committee discussions. I agree with him that it is essential that the House should have before it, in discussing the letter of the Bill, a description of the spirit in which it is intended that the Bill should be carried out.

Sir WILLIAM DAVISON: Can the Draft Instructions be altered by the House, or will they be in the form of a treaty, and have to be taken as a whole? If they can be altered by the House, should they not be inserted in a Schedule to the Bill?

Sir S. HOARE: No, Sir; they will not be inserted in a Schedule to the Bill, for the obvious reason that, if they were, they would be interpretable by the Federal Court.

Sir HERBERT SAMUEL: Would any future Government be able to issue amended Instructions without the sanction of the House?

Sir S. HOARE: No; it would be necessary to have the sanction of both Houses.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Not for every Amendment?

Sir S. HOARE: Yes, for every future change. I have attempted, I hope not at undue length, to give a general survey of the Chapters of the Bill, and to suggest to hon. Members the major issues that are likely to arise between us. Let me sum up this part of my observations. I would venture to claim, first of all, that, big as the Bill appears—it has 450 Clauses in all—it is nothing like so big in substance as it appears. Secondly, practically every proposal in it is the result of four years', indeed, I might say of seven years', discussion, ending with the meticulous investigation of the Joint Select Committee, a Committee composed of Members of both Houses, who investigated every detail of it. Thirdly, the Bill follows substantially all the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee. Lastly, if my survey is a correct one, and I believe it to be correct, I think I may claim that the issues of major importance are strictly limited. This being so, I hope I am not over sanguine and optimistic when I express the hope that the House will be able to deal with it with reasonable expedition.

I come now to the third objective which, when I began my speech, I stated was in the mind of the Government. What is it that we hope to achieve when this Bill passes? When last I addressed the House I said I believed that the majority of Indians would work the Bill, and that British-Indian relations would improve when the Bill was worked. Nothing that

has happened since I spoke in December has altered my view. I am aware of the volume of criticism that has met the Bill in India. I am fully aware of the recent debates in the Indian Assembly. I noted in particular, and I noted with great regret, the debate upon the Supplementary Trade Agreement. I am genuinely sorry that so many Indians should seem to misunderstand our motives—[*Laughter*]—I do not think that that is any cause for laughter—and should look upon these proposals as if they were sudden tyrannical dictates from the Government in Great Britain, rather than the result of constant discussion with India, and, indeed, a result of the very large body of agreement between ourselves and India.

Attaching full importance to all this criticism, I ask the House to keep it in its proper perspective. I ask the House, first of all, to note the fact, that the main critics in India are the members of the Congress Party, the largest party in the Indian Assembly. The Congress Party has always made its position clear, namely, that it will accept no proposals from this House, whether these proposals or any other proposals, whether this Bill or a Bill on the lines of the Labour Amendment. They have made it quite clear that the only proposals they will accept are the proposals that might emerge from an Indian Constituent Assembly. It goes, therefore, without saying that Congress will be opposed to any proposals that this House is likely to make.

Secondly, outside the Assembly I note the fact that most of the Provincial Councils have now held discussions upon the proposals of the Committee, and I have been told that they have been very reasonable discussions on the whole. They have made one thing quite clear, namely, that Provincial politicians are prepared to work the Bill. Let us remember how great will be the part of the Provinces and the Provincial politicians in an All-India Federation. It is a very hopeful feature of the situation that the very men upon whom will depend so much the working of the future Federation are the men who seem to make it clear that the proposals are workable.

Thirdly, there is the significant fact that the Princes, in spite of the pressure upon them—not from me, not from the Government, but from other directions—have in no way recoiled from the position that they took up four years ago. Quite rightly, they claimed that they must see the final proposals before giving their final assent or dissent. The House may, however, rest assured that there is no evidence to show that the Princes, great and small and of medium position, have altered their general attitude towards the question of an All-India Federation.

These are significant facts. They confirm me further in the conviction, first of all, that the Bill will be worked; and, secondly, that neither now nor at any future time is it possible to hope for general agreement in India about any scheme. If Parliament waits for general agreement, it will wait for ever. Indeed, I go so far as to say that I do not believe that within our lifetime we shall ever get more agreement in India upon any scheme that Parliament is likely to pass than we have obtained for this scheme. The time has come for Parliament to act, and, the longer Parliament takes in acting, the greater will be the opposition in India, and the less will be the agreement that we shall have behind our proposals. Let us face realities. The real danger in India is not Congress, or Communism, or misgovernment; it is irresponsibility. As long as Indian Assemblies have no responsibility to govern, so we must expect negative criticism, and even mischievous obstruction. Has it not been the history of the British Empire that irresponsibility is the real danger to good relations between the Mother Country and its Overseas dependencies? It was this sense of irresponsibility, carrying with it the sense of inequality of status, that was at the bottom of the trouble with the American colonies in the 18th century. The American colonists, from George Washington downwards, were, speaking generally, Tory die-hard squires. They were men of a very Conservative type, with every inclination to remain friendly with the country of their birth, yet it was this divorce between legislative councils and the Government which embedded in their mind a feeling of inequality of status, and it was that, I am convinced, that led to the loss of our first Empire. It almost lost us the Dominion of Canada.

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Let the House remember what was the state of Canada. One hundred years ago Upper and Lower Canada were in a state of suppressed rebellion. The Nationalists in the two provinces—they were called the Reform Party—had the almost complete control of the two Canadian Legislatures. Having no responsibility for government, they used their power in obstructing the administration and concentrating upon it negative criticism whatever it might do. Eventually this state of affairs culminated in a rebellion in both provinces. It was in those conditions that Lord Durham was sent to Canada, first of all as Governor-General and then as High Commissioner. He had every temptation to adopt a policy of coercion and repression. There was no one of note in either province of Canada who was prepared to co-operate with him. Yet, in spite of the almost unanimous opinion of both the Canadian Legislatures mobilised against the Government, he put his finger on the real point of danger. He said the only solution to that state of affairs was to make the Legislatures responsible for their own actions. It was a very wise course of action. If we need an outward and visible illustration of Lord Durham's wisdom it is found in the fact that one of the greatest Canadian leaders of to-day, Mr. Mackenzie King, is the grandson of the Mackenzie who led the rebellion in Upper Canada a century ago.

So also, I believe, in India. I do not take the view that, while irresponsibility is bad for men and women of British stock, it is good for men and women of Asiatic stock. I believe that, unless we introduce this element of real responsibility, both into the Central Government and into the provincial Governments, we shall see the state of affairs going from bad to worse, we shall see these assemblies not becoming easier to deal with in the future than they have been in the past, but immensely more hostile, with a growing body of hostility from one end of the country to the other.

The fact is that irresponsibility is to most people the outward sign of inequality of status. We in Great Britain pay very little attention to questions of status. Our position has been so fully assured in the world for many generations that we have no need to bother at all about questions of status. Not so the other countries of the world. Not so Germany in Europe to-day, not so Japan in Asia, not so our Indian fellow subjects who, looking back over centuries of civilisation, feel as sensitive as any of the great peoples of the world to any charge of inequality of status. A move forward, therefore, on the road to responsible government is something much more to them than a mere political reform. It is the outward and visible sign of the recognition of their status.

Why, then, do we not make this clearer in the Bill? Why in particular do we not state it in a Preamble to the Bill? I will tell the House why, and tell them in words which have behind them the considered judgment and the full weight of a Government statement.

The House will observe that the Bill, like most modern Bills, contains no Preamble. There have, it is true, been important Acts in the past, among them the Government of India Act, 1919, to which a statement of policy and intentions was prefixed. There is, however, no need for a Preamble in this case as no new pronouncement of policy or intentions is required. The Preamble to the Act of 1919 was described by the joint committee in their report as having

"set out finally and definitely the ultimate aims of British rule in India."

The committee, after full consideration, further asserted that

"subsequent statements of policy have added nothing to the substance of this declaration,"

which they then proceed to quote in full in their report as, in their own words,

"settling once and for all the attitude of the British Parliament and people towards the political aspirations"

of India. If the committee were justified in their statements—and the Government consider that they were fully justified—there is surely nothing to be gained by reiterating words which have settled once and for all the attitude of Parliament to the Indian problem. Moreover, in government, and above all in the government of the Indian Empire, continuity of policy is of the first importance. No Government and no Parliament can treat lightly any statement issued under the authority of their predecessors. But, once the aim of a policy has been clearly determined and accepted, significance attaches not to its reiteration but to the

concrete measures taken in pursuance of it. The position of the Government, therefore, is this: They stand firmly by the pledge contained in the 1919 Preamble, which it is not part of their plan to repeal, and by the interpretation put by the Viceroy in 1929, on the authority of the Government of the day, on that Preamble that:

"The natural issue of India's progress as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion status."

The declaration of 1929 was made to remove doubts which had been felt as to the meaning of the Preamble of 1919. There is, therefore, no need to enshrine in an Act words and phrases which would add nothing new to the declaration of the Preamble. In saying that we stand by our pledges I include, of course, not only pledges given to British India, and to Burma as part of British India, but also our engagements with the Indian States.

Rightly understood, the Preamble of 1919, which I repeat will stand unrepealed, is a clear statement of the purpose of the British people, and this Bill is a definite step, indeed a great stride, forward towards the achievement of that purpose. It is by acts and not by words that we claim to be judged. It is clear that we can only reach the end we have plainly set before ourselves when India has succeeded in establishing the conditions upon which self-government rests, nor will its attainment be delayed by any reluctance on our part to recognise these conditions when they actually exist.

There are difficulties which she has to surmount, but they are difficulties inherent in the Indian problem and not of our creation. If I indicate by way of example two of them, it is not, therefore, through any desire to magnify them but because it is useless in matters of this kind to refuse to face facts or to assume that, if facts are avoided, they will dissolve. The first and most conspicuous problem which India has to solve is her cleavages of race, caste and religion. Again, until India can safely assume in much larger degree the responsibility for her own effective defence an Indian Government cannot be in the full sense of the word autonomous. These are examples of conditions which cannot be removed or altered by any provisions in any Act of Parliament or by any action on our part alone. Our policy, as will be seen from this Bill and the Instructions as to the manner in which these provisions which will accompany it are to be applied, is to do all that we can by sympathetic help and co-operation to enable India to overcome these difficulties and ultimately to take her place among the fully self-governing members of the British Commonwealth of Nations. It was in this spirit that we took upon ourselves the formidable burden and responsibility of removing one of the chief obstacles to further advance by providing a *modus vivendi* in regard to the removal of communal differences. Our desire is to lend our help in the spirit of partnership in a great enterprise which may enlist the best services which this country and India may have it in their power to give.

In Burke's well-known words:

"Plain good intentions is of no mean force in the government of mankind."

I have stated the intentions of the Government—plain, good intentions. They were the intentions of the Committee. They are, I believe, the intentions of the great majority of this House. If there are still those who impugn our motives, if there are still those who doubt our word, we are ready to be judged by our actions. And of our actions this Bill is the outward and visible sign—a Bill that has been hammered out in the face of almost overwhelming difficulties, a Bill that is the result of years of incessant inquiry, a Bill that offers to India a vast and fruitful field of self government, a Bill that holds the balance fairly and honourably between conflicting interests and competing parties, a Bill that comes in the direct line of succession to the great Imperial measures of the past. Let Indians, though they may wish for a longer and a swifter advance, mark the spirit in which we make these proposals. Let Parliament, realising the difficulties in any course of action, remembering the complexities of any scheme of Indian reform, admitting the many imperfections of any proposals, show by the majority for the Second Reading and its attitude in the subsequent stages of our discussions, that it intends to act, as it has acted upon great issues of the kind in the past, with resolution and expedition no less than with caution and wisdom.

5.1 p.m.

Mr. ATTLEE: I beg to move, to leave out from "That," to the end of the Question, and to add instead thereof:

"in the opinion of this House, no legislation for the better government of India will be satisfactory which does not secure the good will and co-operation of the Indian people by recognising explicitly India's right to Dominion status and by providing within it the means of its attainment, and which does not by its provisions as to franchise and representation secure to the workers and peasants of India the possibility of achieving by constitutional means their social and economic emancipation."

In rising to move the Amendment on the Paper in the name of the Leader of the Opposition and other hon. Members on these benches, I should like, in the first place, to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman upon the admirable and eloquent speech he has made in bringing before us this monumental Bill. It is not a very easy thing in such a bulky Bill to deal with specific provisions without straying into Committee points, and at the same time to put before the House the main issues. He endeavoured to put before the House what he thought were the main issues of the Bill, but I think that they were really the main issues between the various sections of Conservatives in this House. He certainly put some of the particular issues that divide us on this side from hon. Members on that side, but I think he left out the main issues. He did not come to the main issues until the latter part of his speech. I welcome very much the declaration which he made on behalf of the Government with regard to the object at which we are aiming in India, and that object includes Dominion status. But I cannot understand why, if that is the mind of the Government, the statement was not made long ago. No mention was made of the subject in the earlier discussions which we had either on the White Paper or on the report of the committee, and yet from one end of India to the other a complaint has gone out on this particular matter of the recognition of India's status. And to-day a statement is made, but the Secretary of State says: "This is just a continuation of a previous policy; we do not need to have anything in the Bill." Yet the right hon. Gentleman said, quite correctly, that Indians are very sensitive on the question of status, and that they do not take things for granted. I should have thought that it was not much use to have had long conferences with our Indian fellows if we had not grasped something of the way in which they look at things. Surely, it was a great mistake to introduce a Bill like this without any Preamble. The Bill starts off with just the words,

"To make further provision for the government of India."

It might be any little Bill. It does not strike the imagination in the slightest degree. To put it like that shows an utter disregard of Indian opinion. I am surprised that the Prime Minister did not appreciate this point. After all, the Prime Minister, when he was in our party, was a great authority on Indian affairs. He was mainly responsible for the declaration of Dominion status. I thought that he would have appreciated the Indian point of view. Perhaps later in the Debate—because I have no doubt that he will be speaking on this, the most important Measure of the Session—he will tell us exactly why he has so failed to meet the obvious desires of Indians. A very peculiar point was put by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State. He says, "This matter is so simple and so obvious, that we are just carrying on the Preamble of the 1929 Act, and there is no need for a Preamble." He then explained that the declaration of Dominion status was made in order to clear up doubts that had arisen. Everybody knows that doubts were cast on exactly what that Preamble meant by no less a man than the then Leader of the Government in the Assembly in India, and that most ingenious constructions have been put on these phrases by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill), and, surely, it would have been better to have inserted a Preamble. But it is not merely a matter of saying in a Preamble that Dominion status is the goal. Dominion status means much more than that. It means the recognition of the right of India to Dominion status. It means an admission that the Indians have the right to deal with their own constitutional affairs, and that is not done either by the declaration the right hon. Gentleman has made or in the deeds which are embodied in this Act. There is nowhere any recognition of

right. We on this side hold that you must recognise, as we recognise, the right of the Indian people to self-government, and that no constitution can possibly be worked which is not accepted by Indians, and which does not admit that claim. The whole object of the Round Table Conference was to bring Indians together so that we could get a settlement by Indians.

The right hon. Gentleman was extraordinarily optimistic with regard to the reception which this Measure had in India. I could not see that there had been any enthusiasm whatever for this Bill in India. There was, as a matter of fact, rejection by all the live movements in India, not only by Congress and the Liberals, but by Labour and by many people classed as Moderates. It is really useless to claim that this Bill is going to have some kind of support from silent opinion, or that there are a certain number of people who will probably acquiesce. You cannot make a constitution a success by mere acquiescence or by placid acceptance. Therefore, we say that a Bill which does not secure the good will, acceptance and co-operation of the Indian people is not a Bill that will make for the satisfactory government of India and does not deserve the support of this House. The right hon. Gentleman made the point that the constitution to be set up will be rigid. That is quite true, and that is a complaint against it. When I had to undertake some inquiry into a constitution for India with my colleagues on the Statutory Commission, we came to the conclusion that it was a mistake to have a rigid constitution, and that what was required was flexibility and growth. That does not exist in this Bill. There is no recognition of right, and there is no clear laying down of a goal and no provision of the means of attaining a goal. There is no laying down of rights because if you read the Bill, what strikes you mainly is the large number of reservations. The keynote of the Bill is mistrust. There is no trust at all. India is not to have control of her foreign affairs and of her finances. Indians in the Provinces are not fit to deal with terrorism. The whole note struck by the Bill throughout is not that here we start a constitution which is going to be worked by Indians, but some kind of a constitution with restrictions of every kind all the time. In fact, the one thing which seems to be left out of the Bill is the Indian people.

There is a most remarkable omission in the Bill, and I hope that the right hon. Gentleman will correct it soon. It is the total omission of anything to say who are to be the electors. It is suggested that this will be done by an order in Council. It is a most extraordinary thing to produce a Bill to make further provision for the government of India with no provision whatever showing who are the people who are to govern in India except the Upper House. To us this is vital. The right hon. Gentleman never mentioned the franchise, and that is most vital from our point of view. Our speakers have put that question of franchise over and over again. He said nothing with regard to the representation of capital in excess and of the under-representation of labour. All those provisions are left out. We want to have the franchise provisions fully before us because we wish to put down drastic Amendments, if the franchise proposals are anything like those which have been laid down by the Joint Select Committee. It is an extraordinary thing. It seems as if the political side of the whole business was something quite subordinate to the machinery. I get the idea that it must have been drafted by the Indian Government. The one thing which struck me when I was in India was the rulers of the country did not really think political matters important. Take a simple case. In the Provinces we asked whether they had anything like our Parliamentary companion that would show the returns of the last election. We did not get it. There was nothing published which in any way gave the information. The election took place a considerable time ago, but the Government of India are unable to give us the figures, or the candidates in that very important election.

The whole business on the political side is left out, and we have really a mass of machinery. In every Clause throughout the Bill we find a mistrust of the Indian people. The legislature is to be overloaded with Conservative interests, landlords, commerce and the like. Second chambers are to be set up. The conclusion to which one comes on looking at the Bill is that the definite

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decision has been that India is to be ruled by the wealthy and the privileged. The curious thing is, that even those people are not trusted. The second chambers are to represent Conservative interests, landlords, wealthy people and the like, but even they cannot be trusted with finance. Right through the Bill there is mistrust and inequality. We have heard of the idea that there is to be some kind of partnership in India. It is a one-sided partnership.

Let us take the first example of inequality. The constitution at the Centre depends entirely upon the adherence of the Princes. The Princes have the right to refuse to accept the Federal system, but the Indian representatives have no option. The Princes can say: "We are not coming in," but the Indian representatives may say that they dislike the constitution and may vote against it, but nothing will happen. They have no power at all. The Indians have put forward numerous proposals, but they have been turned down. Right through the Bill, with certain exceptions, there is no mutuality. I admit that there are certain provisions with regard to the protection of persons and so forth. There is mutuality in the protection of Englishmen in India and of Indians over here, but on the whole the general direction is against the Indians. The Governor-General is to prevent discrimination in India, but no one is given power in this country to step in over the heads of Parliament or anybody else and prevent discrimination against Indians. We control India's foreign policy, and it is said that that must be so because we contribute to her defence by the Navy. If that be true, seeing that India contributes to the defence of the country, she ought to have a word in regard to our foreign policy. It is, however, all one-sided. We ought to allow her a word of control in our foreign policy, because she actually provides for the defence of the most vulnerable land frontier in the whole Empire.

Take the question of constituent rights. Such as they are in the Bill, Indians may ask for alterations in 10 years. They may come to this House and ask for changes, and this House may or may not give them, but either before or after the 10 years the Government of this country, without having to ask for authority and after mere consultation, may change these constituent rights. Can one wonder, on reading the provisions of the Bill, that the Indians feel an inequality of status? It is Robinson Crusoe's ship. The hull is designed by Robinson Crusoe and at every point the Indians are very little better than Man Friday. There is inequality of status running right through the Bill. Without equality of status, I do not think that we are likely to get any real acceptance or real working of the Bill by the Indians.

I do not want to go through the Bill Clause by Clause. We shall do that for many weary weeks. I have spoken very often on this subject, and I would only point out certain of our major objections. We say that the Bill contains no power of advance. It does not deal with the difficulty of advance. We have suggested that there should be a time limit, and within that time India's advance should pass into India's hands. You will not get a time-table worked for if there is not a time-table in existence. I am quite certain that we shall have to lay down a time-table if we want to get a move made with regard to Indianisation. That is a very difficult obstacle to get over, and it is not really faced in the Bill. It is simply left, and that means that the Bill contains no seed of advance. It is recognised as only a temporary instalment given by this Government to India. I held the view when I was a member of the Simon Commission, and I still hold the view, that there are very great dangers in a merely temporary constitution. It has all the disadvantages and none of the advantages of a permanent Constitution.

As I held then, and as my colleagues held then, you must have the seeds of advance in the Bill. That is not provided for, and I do not see that it is possible to be provided for in the Instrument of Instructions, except in a very minor degree. I cannot discuss the question of representation, because the Bill does not give the basis of representation. It does not give us the franchise, but we know that the franchise is not as wide as we would wish it. We say that in the Bill undue representation is given to vested interests, to land and capital, and only in a very minor degree to labour. We say that land, capital, money will get its representation anyway. What we need is

that the weakest members of the community, the workers, the women, the depressed classes should be given political power. The whole basis of the representation in the Bill is wrong. The whole basis of the Bill is to make things safe for the present existing order of society.

The difference between the right hon. Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) and the regular supporters of the Government is only one of degree. The assumption on which all those hon. Members act is that things are fairly satisfactory in India, but that we are to take the very greatest care that they do not go wrong. I say that things are most unsatisfactory in India, and that we want very big changes. I have been refreshing my mind with the report of the commission which was presided over by our late colleague, Mr. Whitley, who did a very fine service for India and for the workers in his wonderful report on Indian labour conditions. It is a most striking commentary on our rule in India. Take industry in India. Industrial conditions there are worse than in this country. Hon. Members and Noble Ladies are always talking about the deterioration that will come about under Indian administration. Let us see what is happening in India. Industrialisation came fairly late into the field there. We knew, or should have known, what happened in regard to slums and factory conditions in this country, but all those rank growths of industrialism were allowed to grow up in India even worse than in this country. We have only to glance at the report of Mr. Whitley to see that.

Take the conditions of the slums. What do we find in regard to houses in the industrial areas? Narrow, winding lanes, pools of sewage and rotting garbage. People packed in wretched little rooms, with no windows, no ventilation. All the very worst features of industrialism have been reproduced in India. They have been reproduced under our rule. We are responsible for them. Take, again, the question of wages. There are deplorable wage conditions and deplorable conditions right through. Take the question of debt. The Royal Commission pointed out that the workers in India are generally steeped in debt, and that the interest charged by the usurer is generally 75 per cent. and sometimes 150 per cent. We know that that weighs not only upon the urban workers but upon the village workers. That has happened under our rule. Then there are the appalling conditions in the factories. We have had some factory legislation, but the Whitley Report shows that the major labour legislation was only passed in 1922, after the reforms.

We must not be complacent over our rule in India when we allow things like that to continue. What we have done in India was to go in and introduce an entire alien system. Mr. Whitley's Report deals with the question of money-lending. Money-lending is one of the major evils in India. The report says:

> "Laws against usury have been a prominent feature of various religions and national codes, and the leading religions of India affirm the principle underlying them. Unfortunately, as we think, the influence of economic thought in the 19th century led to the removal of all legal restrictions on usurious practices in India, and it is only within the last generation that there has been a tendency to reimpose them."

That is what has happened under capitalistic economics. We went into India and we broke up the old village economy and the old legal codes, hence the movement of Ghandi. We allowed the moneylender to have full scope. Are these conditions such as ought to be maintained? We say, "No," but the Bill says, "Yes." The Bill means the retention in India of the capitalist landlord system. Throughout in the Legislature, central and local, care is to be taken to see that private interests are protected. Special protection is given them so that if land is wanted for any reform you may be met with opposition.

Another terrible thing in India is the permanent settlement in Bengal. This is another of the things which we gave to India, and it is difficult under this Constitution to overthrow it. We are setting up in India a House of Lords more powerful than our own, and I think even more reactionary in its composition. We are leaving the power of the purse. We are setting up a bank much the same as the Bank of England, and this at a time when persons of all kinds of views say that capitalism is practically done, and that we must have a new system. We are introducing a rigid Constitution based on capitalist principles, which is intended to preserve the features of capitalism and landlordism. That is our second great objection to the Bill. You are handing

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over whatever power you are giving to certain interests, there is no provision for advance, and you are failing to meet the desires of the Indians themselves.

We shall be told that we on this side want to go too fast, that if you hand more to the Indians they will make a mess of it. India is in a terrible mess in any case, so is the rest of the world, and we think that it is quite impossible to get the real changes which are demanded in India by setting up a Constitution which is merely acquiesced in by a certain number of people, which may be worked by a privileged class but which will not be supported by any of the advanced parties in India or any of the people who really want a change. I can understand the attitude of hon. Members opposite. If they really believe that things are satisfactory in India they might want to fill in the Bill with every kind of provision. We do not believe they are satisfactory. We have done some good things for India, but we have done many bad things. The serious thing we have done is that we have maintained the Indian people in a position of irresponsibility. If they were irresponsible we were responsible; and they will never learn responsibility without being given responsibility. Indians must take the responsibility for the future government of their country. The Bill does not do that, and cannot do it, and, therefore, we oppose it.

5.35 p.m.

Sir H. SAMUEL: In these days many great events are happening in various countries of the world. Since the War we have seen remarkable developments in Russia, in Germany, in Italy and in the United States, and yet in this Bill the House of Commons in these days is undertaking a development on a scale as vast and of a character as remarkable as any which are now proceeding in any quarter of the world. We are framing a new Constitution for one-fifth of the whole of the human race, and we must approach the task with a very profound sense of our responsibility. The Bill has had a long period of preparation. To-day it reaches its decisive stage. At this moment someone who is not a member of the Joint Select Committee should, I think, express on behalf of the House of Commons our gratitude to those hon. Members who served on that committee. They were members of a Parliamentary body which had to hold no fewer than 150 meetings. The burden imposed on them was exceedingly heavy, the Secretary of State's the heaviest of all, and we should be remiss in our duty and false to our own inclinations if we did not say how grateful we are to them for the burden they undertook on our behalf. The inquiry was most careful and thorough, and although in some quarters there may be dissatisfaction on particular recommendations, there is a universal feeling that the report is an exceedingly fine piece of work, taken as a whole. Indeed, the work of that committee and the Bill as it is presented is, to my mind, a vindication of our Parliamentary institutions. There are many who say that no democratic or very little constructive work is done, that interminable debates take place and that it is a mere talking assembly; but the report of the committee and this monumental Bill are a sufficient refutation of accusations of that kind.

Viewing this Measure as a whole, those in this House and in the country who designate their politics by the word "Liberal" will unanimously give it a cordial reception. It is, in our view, based upon the best principles of the British political system. In the main, we regard it as the one sure means of maintaining the connection between Britain and India on conditions which may be made acceptable to both. Indeed, there was no passage in the interesting speech of the Secretary of State which appealed to me more strongly that that in which he referred to the past history and experience of the British Empire and dwelt upon events relating to the American Colonies, to Canada, and other portions of the British realm, and drew the conclusion that it is only through the grant of political liberty that you can maintain union. Those were expressions of opinion which were all the more agreeable to our ears. The Secretary of State might have added the instance of South Africa. When I recall the long controversies which have taken place on these matters between Conservative and Liberal forces in this country for 150 years it was of great interest to hear a Conservative statesman standing in the House of Commons on an occasion of great historical importance preaching the pure milk of the word "Liberalism" in matters of Imperial government. If any of those

from Chatham onwards who here and in America, or elsewhere, have striven for the cause of political and constitutional liberty from the days when the American colonists in those famous words—

> " The embattled farmers stood and fired a shot which was heard round the world "

could have listened to the Secretary of State they would have felt that time brings its revenges.

As regards the fundamental principles of the Bill, a very cogent sentence was uttered in a previous Debate on the Financial Resolution by my hon. Friend the Member for Bodmin (Mr. Isaac Foot), who has rendered constant and effective service in this matter through all the conference committees, when he said that the choice before us was between three courses—abdication, domination and co-operation. Clearly, the last is the course which wisdom indicates. We believe that the Bill will, in fact, lead to co-operation for the reasons which have been stated by the Secretary of State. It is, I believe, to be anticipated that Indians in general will not refuse to work this Constitution. Often when some project is brought under consideration, when it is being moulded and shaped, you hear many protests, couched in vehement language and strong pressure is brought to bear in order that the Bill may receive the impress which they desire to give it, but when all these considerations have been weighed and the Bill becomes law and on the Statute Book you find that these very persons will not, or at any rate the great majority will not, refuse to work it in the shape in which it has been enacted, no doubt pressing for further amendments, and eager for additional developments in the future. But still the Constitution may be expected to work.

We hold that the general scheme of the Bill is right, and by the general scheme I mean the establishment of Federation in India and dealing with the problems of the Constitution, the Provinces, the Centres and the States, at one and the same time. We fully concur with the hon. Member for Limehouse (Mr. Attlee) that the great questions before the Indian people in the future will be social and economic questions. They must be handled in the main by the people of the country themselves. Social reforms, particularly if they touch religious observances in any way, cannot be treated at the hands of some alien government. We anticipate that the passage of the Bill, placing as it does a large measure of responsibility for dealing with these questions upon Indians and giving them great opportunities for such legislative and administrative measures as they think right, will lead before long to a great improvement in the lamentable social conditions which now afflict the lives of so many millions of the population of India. There are certain defects and omissions in the Bill and we shall in Committee propose or endorse certain Amendments. On the Second Reading, in the Division which will take place and on the main issues throughout the long discussions which will necessarily take place during the forthcoming weeks, the Government can rely upon the Liberal benches to offer them steady and consistent support.

There are three questions to which I desire to refer, but before coming to them may I draw attention to a new point which arises out of the speech of the Secretary of State? He has informed us that the instructions to the Viceroy in the future are to be laid before Parliament, and are to be endorsed by Resolutions of both Houses of Parliament. I do not know whether there is any precedent for that in our constitutional arrangements. If I am wrong in thinking that there is no precedent, perhaps my right hon. Friend will correct me. But I think that it is quite new to make the instructions to a Viceroy a statutory document. I hope that the Government have considered very carefully what its effect will be upon the relations in future between His Majesty's Government here and the Government of India, particularly when it is a question of amending by instructions what has been given by a previous Government. It really means that each House, and therefore the House of Lords equally with the House of Commons, will have effective control over any Amendments which the Executive of the day desires to issue to the Viceroy, who represents His Majesty in India.

The first of the three questions to which I would refer is that of status, which undoubtedly at this moment is, in public opinion in India, the most important of all. A few days ago there was published

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in the "Times" a telegram from its Indian correspondent at Delhi, in which the following passage appeared:

"The Indian grievance against the projected reforms has been tending more and more lately to focus on the question of *future status*. Most Indian politicians, and nearly the whole Indian Press, are more concerned about the omission of a reference to Dominion status in the report than about any other feature of the reforms."

That, indeed, is not surprising, for, as the Secretary of State has said, this question of status does fill the minds of the people of India to a very great degree. It is really a question of national self-respect which is at issue here. When I ventured to address the House on this subject during the last Parliament I urged that this was really the essence of the whole matter. Indians of all classes and of all communities cannot bear to think that they are regarded by others, and must regard themselves, as a subject people under the rule of alien conquerors, and that the chief virtue to be expected of them is an Oriental submissiveness. They feel themselves to be the heirs of an ancient and a lofty civilisation, which is different from the Western civilisation, which has different views on spiritual and material values, and they are resolved that India shall develop in the centuries that are to come according to her own genius, and not according to some impress which has been stamped upon her. That is the essence of the whole situation. That is an honourable ambition for any people—not that they should adopt a policy of intransigence or antagonism to other nations, or reject what is good merely because it has originated from elsewhere. But they are determnied—quite rightly determined—to march into the future head high and self-reliant, and we should respect them less if that were not their ambition. If Members of this House had been Indians, that is precisely the course that they would have pursued. If my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) had been born an Indian he would have been a Nationalist; he would have been a Congress man of a type compared to which Mr. Ghandi would be as a dove to a tiger.

I regret that it has not been found possible to include in the Bill any reference to this question of Status. There is no doubt as to what Indian opinion is on the matter. The moderate opinion politicians, such as Sir Tej Sapru, have expressed, unanimously I think, grave disappointment. But here we should be guided also very greatly by the opinions of Europeans in India and of the British who have spent their lives in India. I shall venture to give two quotations from recent declarations of representative men. One is Sir Alfred Watson, who was for many years editor of the Indian "Statesman." He said in a recent article:

"The omission of any mention of Dominion Status from the report of the Joint Select Committee is a blunder of magnitude. In saying that I express a purely personal opinion, but one to which I believe that the majority of those with recent experience of India would subscribe. It required no special knowledge of Indian psychology to be certain that the absence of the phrase would arorse deep disquiet in quarters anxious to welcome the report, and would give a new point of attack for those who have persistently denied the good faith of the British Government. In the event, the failure to be explicit has disturbed the best friends that we have in India and become the main theme of those hostile forces who seize every opportunity of promoting a legend of British duplicity."

The other quotation is from a speech made two days ago in the Indian Assembly by Sir Leslie Hudson, who was speaking on behalf of the European community. These were his words:

"There is justification for the widespread resentment at the absence of any declaration of Dominion Stauts. Though this phrase has not yet appeared in any measure passed by Parliament, we hope that His Majesty's Government will find some method, whether in the Statute or not, of giving an unequivocal and authoritative assurance that the present proposals are intended to lead India towards a position of equal partnership with other Dominions."

With regard to this question of Dominion Status, there are two courses that might be pursued. One is to say that we are already pledged to it by the Viceroy's declaration and that it is unnecessary to repeat a declaration so made. The other is to say that Dominion Status is really dangerous, possibly impracticable, in any case remote, and that for that reason it would be most inadvisable to emphasise such a phrase. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for State has quite clearly chosen between those two courses and has taken the first. He has told us that what has been said has been said and that the Government stand by it, both by the Preamble to the Act of

1919 and the declaration of the Viceroy in 1929. The question arises whether the phrase ought to appear somewhere in the Statute. Of course it is rather a different thing putting a term in a Statute, which may have to be construed legally by some court on some occasion, and using it in a Ministerial or Viceregal declaration.

Dominion Status raises the question of the position of a country internationally, its position inter-Imperially and the question of internal Government—all three. It is certain that the Constitution of India, neither in the near future nor at any future time, can be absolutely identical with the Constitution of any one of the Dominions. All the Dominions differ in their Constitution between themselves, partly because of the question of communities, partly perhaps because of the effect that such constitutional arrangements might have with respect to our treaties with the Princes. I did not quite follow one sentence in the declaration of the Secretary of State to-day. He said that the Preamble to the Act of 1919 stands unrepealed. In what sense is he using the word "unrepealed"? Of course he is not meaning that it will be legislatively unrepealed, because the whole of the Act of 1919 is to be repealed by this Bill, and that will include the Preamble.

Sir S. HOARE: Constitutional experts have never been quite clear as to whether the repeal of an Act means the repeal of the Preamble. There seems to be some doubt. In order to put all doubts at rest, I shall move at the proper time, when we come to the Schedule under which the Government of India Act, 1919, is repealed, an Amendment to say "except the Preamble." It will be quite clear that the Preamble, whether it is susceptible to repeal or not, is not repealed.

Sir H. SAMUEL: That is an addition to the statement made this afternoon, because the Bill as presented to-day and as we have knowledge of it up to this moment, does specifically repeal the whole Act; and it is rather strange that on our Statute Book there do still remain the ghosts of all the Preambles of all the Statutes that have been passed by Parliament in all historic times.

Sir S. HOARE: It is just that kind of uncertainty that I wish to remove. When the Bill was drafted we were under the impression that there could be no doubt about it at all, that Preambles could not be repealed. Doubts were expressed, and to make assurance doubly sure we shall propose to exclude the Preamble from the repeal of that Measure.

Sir H. SAMUEL: What the effect of that will be upon the statement of the Viceroy in 1929, which includes the words "Dominion Status," will require a good deal of consideration, for the Secretary of State to-day has treated the term embodied in the Preamble of the Act of 1919, namely, "responsible Government as an integral part of the Empire," as being substantially the same as the declaration of the Viceroy using the words "Dominion Status." Now he gives assent to that doctrine, I understand. That action will be heard of in India with very great interest. But still I think that many will find it difficult to understand why it is that if the Preamble means the same as the declaration and the Preamble is to be continued by this Bill, Parliament should not specifically make any reference to the declaration in the Bill, and why a phrase which is suitable for employment in a Viceregal declaration and in a Ministerial statement made by the Secretary of State in Parliament, is not suitable for inclusion in any form in any Statute. There may be a reason. It may be because of the difficulty of legal interpretation. But when we come to the matter in Committee it will necessarily have to be considered further.

The second point is the method of election to the Lower House of the Central Legislature. At the present time the method of election is by a popular vote on a specified franchise. The Report of the Joint Select Committee and the Bill propose that that should be abolished and that for the future the members of the Lower House of the Central Legislature should be chosen by groups of members of the Lower Houses of the Provincial Legislatures—groups of members representing particular communities or interests. There have been most extraordinary differences of opinion among the various bodies that have examined this question throughout the history of these developments. In 1919 there was a com-

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mittee upon franchise presided over by Lord Southborough and that committee declared in favour of indirect election. However, when the matter came before a Joint Select Committee of the two Houses here in that year, they declared in favour of direct election and that advice was taken by Parliament and it was included in the Bill and in the Act which is now upon the Statute Book. The Simon Commission, on the other hand, declared unanimously in favour of indirect election, but when the matter was again considered by the committee specially appointed to advise the Joint Select Committee—the Franchise Committee under the chairmanship of Lord Lothian—they, equally unanimously, decided in favour of direct election.

The present Government accepted that advice and the White Paper included a provision for direct election, but the Joint Select Committee reversed that judgment and declared in favour of indirect election. The Government have accepted that and have so provided in the Bill. The Under-Secretary of State for India was a member of Lord Lothian's committee and then declared in favour of direct election. He was also a Member of the Joint Select Committee and then was converted to indirect election. My hon. Friend the Member for Limehouse was a member of the Simon Commission and declared in favour of indirect election. He adhered to that opinion on the Joint Select Committee, but all three of his colleagues representing the Labour party dissociated themselves from him on that question and declared in favour of direct election. So that there is, obviously, a most remarkable conflict of expert advice offered to this House.

The main objection to direct election, of course, is the size of the constituencies and of the electorates involved and that is, undoubtedly, a very real difficulty but, so far as the franchise proposed in the Bill is concerned, the number of voters in each constituency would not be much bigger than the numbers to which we are accustomed in this country. Of course if the number were greatly enlarged by some future changes in the franchise, the position would, so far, be altered. In respect of area, for a long time past constituencies of immense geographical area have been a feature of the constitutions of the United States, Canada and Australia and have not given rise to any insuperable difficulties. But, admitting that there are objections on the ground of the unwieldy nature of the constituencies, mark the objections on the other hand to the scheme now proposed, which goes absolutely to the other extreme. Under the scheme proposed by the Joint Select Committee individual members of the Lower House of the Central Legislature will each be elected by groups, of from five to eight persons —by four in some cases up to 10 in others but usually by five to eight persons.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: Elected persons.

Sir H. SAMUEL: Of course they will be persons who will have been elected by constituencies and who are members of the Lower Houses of the Provincial Assemblies, but these five to eight gentlemen or ladies will meet in a room and that group will choose a person who is to be a member of the Central Legislature of India. It will be instantly apparent how grave is the danger of personal influences being brought to bear, of favouritism, of hostilities which may influence people's judgment, of friendships which may influence them, when so small a handful of people have this immensely responsible duty imposed upon them of helping to constitute the Parliament of an Empire such as India. For my own part, I would rather face the difficulties of electorates of from 50,000 to 80,000 than the difficulties involved in conferring this power on constituencies of from five to eight persons.

The other objection to it is that this method of choosing members of the Central Legislature by members of the Provincial Assembly will immensely strengthen the provincialism, the provincial tendencies of the new Indian Constitution. It is of enormous importance to strengthen the Centre and to bind India together as one unity. If the whole or the greater part of the central body is made up of persons who represent, not the people of India but who directly represent the lower Houses of the Provincial Parliaments, you will have a certain fissiparous tendency which may be extremely detrimental. Furthermore, the Indian people have ben accustomed to a system of direct election. They have had it for the last 14 years and the

Joint Select Committee in their report said that it had worked, "on the whole, reasonably well enough." They pointed out it is true that this had been with a smaller electorate than that which is now contemplated and much smaller than the electorate may perhaps be in future years. They also said, however, that the present system had produced legislators of high quality. For all those reasons, it seems to us very doubtful whether the committee have issued the right recommendation in this respect.

If we are in a state of doubt, surely our final judgment should be swayed by Indian opinion. After all, it is their legislature that is to be constituted. They are the people who have to work it, and what Indian opinion is on this matter is not in doubt. The Joint Select Committee, while recommending a system of indirect election, declare in their report that direct election has the support of Indian opinion and that it is strongly advocated by the British India delegation in their joint memorandum. That is a factor which ought greatly to weigh with the Members of this House—that our own Joint Select Committee, although coming to the opposite opinion, tell us that Indian opinion is in favour of direct election and that British Indian opinion strongly advocates it. Furthermore, the Viceroy and the Government of India are known to be of the same opinion, and His Majesty's Government themselves were of that opinion when they drafted and presented the White Paper. It appears to me that the Joint Select Committee made a great mistake in their recommendation and I sincerely trust that, when the matter comes up in Committee, that decision will be changed.

The third question to which I would refer is the question of trade restrictions. I represent in this House a Lancashire constituency which is, and has been for some years, in a state of extreme depression mainly because the cotton trade, in which a large part of the population are engaged, was devoted to export to India, and that trade has been mainly lost. There are other causes of the distress from which my constituents suffer, but that is undoubtedly by far the most important. It is generally expected that some part of that trade cannot be recovered, though, so far as the trade is in the finer qualities of goods, it is hoped that it may be recovered, and indeed the process of recovery is now proceeding. One mill, I heard only the other day has changed from coarse counts to fine counts for the Indian market, and is now very busy and has recovered a great part of the market which it had lost. But I have made it clear in Lancashire, as I shall make it clear here, that, for my own part, I am profoundly convinced that it is useless to attempt to rely upon holding or acquiring trade by Act of Parliament. Nothing will be achieved along that line, and the only hope of securing any expansion or restoration of British trade with India must lie in the policy which is summed up in the words "good will." Coercion or attempted coercion, either legislative or military, is useless.

I know that in these Debates those who are opposed to the Bill will point to the refusal of the Indian Legislative Assembly to endorse the trade agreement which has recently been entered into, and to all of us that refusal is a great disappointment. But on reading the reports of the debates one sees that the action of the Assembly was prompted very largely by resentment against what they regarded as the failure of the Indian Government to consult the commercial interests of India before entering into that agreement. The agreement was not rejected by them—so far as they can reject it—on its merits, but out of a feeling of umbrage that the matter had been decided over their heads by the Indian Government without full consultation with the commercial opinion of the country.

Just as the Simon Commission was handicapped from the very beginning by the lamentable blunder of not simultaneously appointing a commission of Indians to co-operate with them and by allowing it to appear to India that their future fate was being settled over their heads by a purely British body, so a grave blunder seems to have been made in this case of the trade agreement through the absence of such consultation. However, that is the opinion apparently of Indians, but if you had an authoritative, responsible, legislative body which would have to intervene and play an effective part in measures of this character in the future, I believe their tendency would be to regard such proposals strictly upon their merits, and

[Sir H. Samuel.]
while no doubt putting Indian interests first, they would be ready, I believe, to accord full and reasonable rights to British commercial interests also.

The only alternative to proposals such as are embodied in the Bill is coercion, and I firmly believe that the general policy advocated by my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping and those associated with him, must inevitably lead to a regime of coercion in India. If this Bill is rejected, there must be a revival in India of the movement of civil disobedience. So far from assisting British trade, it would almost inevitably lead to a renewed commercial boycott. It would produce hostility, and the antagonism on the part of large sections of the Indian people towards this country would be immensely increased and embittered by the feeling that we had now definitely broken the pledges that we had given. All coercion is bad, but coercion to cover betrayal is the very worst of all. After all, you have in India 340,000,000 people, and concerned in the higher ranks of the Government of India only 800 British people with another 500 in the police forces. It is utterly impossible in such circumstances to maintain a stable, permanent, successful Government without a full measure of co-operation on the part of the Indians. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping and his friends plead for a strong Government at the Centre in India. But can any Government in any country be strong which has to work in the face of a hostile population? This Bill seems to me to be dictated by plain common sense. In fact, the mighty conflict which has been waged between my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping and the Secretary of State is really a conflict between rhetoric and common sense, and in this country and in this House, whatever may happen elsewhere, in the long run common sense can always be relied upon to beat rhetoric.

Mr. CHURCHILL: A very dispassionate method of stating the controversy.

Sir H. SAMUEL: Why should not one be dispassionate? Is passion always a virtue? One other virtue is accessibility to reason and to argument, but in all these matters the right hon. Gentleman has heard nothing except what he said himself. I think that this Bill is more open to criticism on the other side, and that there is in the Labour Amendment a very great deal with which we on these benches should be inclined to agree. At the same time, it is essential now to secure the greatest common measure of agreement that we can in order to get the Bill through Parliament, and this Bill appears to us to be calculated to achieve that end. The long experience of the British Empire shows that these constitutional developments must proceed step by step and that each step must be tested by its results.

Sir W. DAVISON: Hear, hear.

Sir H. SAMUEL: Well, we have delayed a good time since the last step, and it is fully time that we should take another. This Parliament has, in the course of its history, enacted many Constitutions for countries in different parts of the world, and no doubt each of those Constitutions has had some defect or other, but they have had the one great virtue that they have worked, and our task is not to create Constitutions on lines of theory which may have every virtue of symmetry and every beauty of facade, but to create Constitutions which will not in fact collapse; so that our conclusion is that the Bill in its main outlines should be enacted. But I will make a very earnest plea to the House not to yield in the later stages of the Bill to the temptation, which will be continually before it, to weaken its provisions and to insert more and more safeguards. No doubt, day after day and week after week, proposals will be made in that direction. We consider that the safeguards are, if anything, already excessive and that it is unnecessary to strengthen them further, and in our deliberations upon any proposals that may be made in that direction let us remember that we are sitting in judgment here in a case, and one of the parties to the case is not represented.

There are no Indians in this House today. I remember times, in previous Parliaments in which I have sat, when there were distinguished Indian gentlemen who had obtained places in the House of Commons. There were Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Sir M. Bhownagree, and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. [HON. MEMBERS: "And Mr. Saklatvala."] I was not in the House during the time

that Mr. Saklatvala sat here, but he was never regarded as a representative of Indian opinion, as the other gentlemen had been. But there is no one in this present Parliament who has that qualification. In earlier times, in the eighteenth century, the Colonies had their accredited agents in this House, who could speak on their behalf by instructions from the people of those Colonies, but now there is no one here who can state, on behalf of the Indians themselves, the case which they would desire to be submitted. The judges are here, the jury is here, and the counsel on one side is here, but the counsel on the other side is thousands of miles away, and I hope that that will be remembered always, on every occasion when Members of this House come to consider specific proposals.

This House in these matters is under a severe test. The Indian problem now, in our present generation, raises the question definitely, inescapably, which is one of the supreme issues in our politics: Can a democracy maintain an Empire? That and nothing less is the issue which is before us in these discussions, and I think the answer must be that, if the Empire is to be maintained merely by military force, democracy cannot do it. A great popular electorate will not carry through such a policy. The ideas which maintain a democracy at home will not maintain any form of tyranny abroad. Sooner or later, if such were attempted, it would lead either to a surrender of liberties here or else to an abandonment of the attempt to suppress liberties elsewhere. A free Britain and a coerced India cannot go together, but, if it is an Empire which treats with equal justice all its citizens, no matter of what race or country, and if it strives to establish among them equal liberties, such an Empire, and only such, is compatible with our democracy, and such an Empire, and only such, can and will endure.

6.21 p.m.

Major-General Sir ALFRED KNOX: I think the Secretary of State ought to be well satisfied with the speeches of the two hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who have followed him this evening. It is certain, at any rate, that this Bill, in its passage through the House, will get every possible support from the official Opposition, with only modified criticism, and whole-hearted support from hon. Members below the Gangway here. I think the opposition, which I hope will be strong, will come from the Conservative party itself. The right hon. Member for Darwen (Sir H. Samuel) has congratulated the Secretary of State for India on his conversion to Liberalism, and he was full of enthusiasm for that part of the right hon. Gentlemen's speech in which he quoted the parallel of the Durham Agreement with Canada. He forgot to mention such differences as caste and there being 2,300 different castes in India. He forgot to mention such a trifle as the Depressed Classes. He did not mention the fact that there are 234 religions in India, and that in Canada there are possibly only two.

The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State made light of the reception among the politicians in India of the Government's proposals, and he insinuated that the reception of the report of the Joint Select Committee was more or less bluff. I should like to quote some of the things that have been said by that small fraction of the vast population of India that is politically minded. First of all, there are the broad-minded Liberals about whom we have heard so much in these Indian Debates, and from whom the Secretary of State hopes to get some support for his measures. He knows that Congress is past praying for, and I am glad to hear it said to-day that we cannot hope to satisfy Congress. We all knew that long ago, but what do these broad-minded Liberals say? A conference was held, I think, in Poona, at the end of December, and they said there:

> "The Committee Report has justified our worst apprehensions. . . . It is much better for us to remain as we are."

There is a word of real truth at the end, in the presidential speech:

> "We claim to represent the people, but we have got to identify ourselves with their interests and, by devoting ourselves to their service, to earn the right to speak on their behalf."

That is the main fact, and I wish politicians in India would take it to heart more, that after they have served among the people and found out what the interests of the people are, they will obtain the right to speak on behalf of the people. Then we have Mr. Sastri, who proposes and carries a resolution at this Liberal conference to this effect:

[Sir A. Knox.]

"The Federation does not want any legislation based on the Joint Select Committee's Report."

What on earth are we to hope for from other people if our dear Liberal friends say things like this? Then there are the Depressed Classes, the leader of whom says:

"The interests of the Depressed Classes have been flagrantly neglected, and therefore it will not be possible for them to give their support to the present scheme."

In the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce they characterised the report as "entirely unacceptable to the Indian mercantile community." Last of all, Burma does not now want to be separated, because the Secretary of State has decided that it ought to be separated. It has changed, and will probably change again, but at present it does not want to be separated. Of course, Congress is hostile, and is it not a fact that in the recent elections Congress has swept the whole board? In the Legislative Assembly, at the Centre, we now have a majority of the elected members against the Government—57 Congress supporters out of a total elected membership, I believe, of 105 against the Government. Already this Assembly, which consists of 145 members, 40 of whom are nominated, has twice defeated the Government. If it had been elected under this new Constitution which we are discussing, the Viceroy would have been compelled to select his leading Minister from Congress. Of course, it will be retorted to that that under the new arrangement the Central Assembly would have 375 members, and that 125 of those would be representative of the Indian States, but can we depend on the Indian States to protect our interests? Is it fair to lay upon them the duty of protecing our inerests, which we have so ineffectually protected ourselves? If any interests are to be paramount, it must be the interests of Great Britain, the interests of good government and of order, and the avoidance of trade discrimination.

With regard to safety and order in India, we contend that they will be imperilled if the police are handed over to the elected ministers. I have heard the Secretary of State say in this House that the Joint Select Committee have followed the recommendations of the Simon Commission in this matter, and the Noble Lord who proposed the Motion in the other House said the same thing, but that is not true. The Simon Commission, in deciding on the whole to hand over the police to an elected minister, made very important reservations. It laid down that there should be one or more members of the Ministry nominated, either officially or unofficially, but not members of the elected Assembly, and that made a very great difference. Apart from that, the Simon Commission envisaged a strong central Government, not the Government that we shall have under this Bill. Then there is another point. The Indian Police Association published and distributed yesterday a pamphlet, in which they show that they are far from satisfied with the position of the police even under the improvements which are proposed to be introduced by the Joint Select Committee in their report.

I would like to say a word, and I do it nervously, about the welfare of the masses. This is an issue which the Secretary of State, in his broadcast address, said he has constantly in his mind, yet I read in the Press to-day extracts from correspondence that he had with a gentleman at Banbury, I think, in which he said that the question of the welfare of the masses is not a valid argument against this Bill. I consider—and in this I agree, strong Tory though I am, with the Socialists—that it is most important that we should look after the welfare of the masses when we are bringing in a new Constitution for the Government of India. The Secretary of State said he stood by the Preamble of the Government of India Act of 1919. He said that, of course, about Dominion status. It would be interesting for us to know whether the Dominion status is the kind of Dominion status we knew of before the Statute of Westminster was passed, or whether it is post-Statute of Westminster. I am not a lawyer, but one of the many lawyers on the other side of the House will perhaps enlighten us on that point. I am glad to see that in that Preamble, which is not to be repealed, it is laid down that Parliament is responsible for the welfare and advancement of the peoples of India. If that is not going to be repealed it is very important.

Again, I would like to draw the attention of the Secretary of State to the fact

that in Section I of the Government of India Act, 1919, it is possible to revoke all the transfers of certain subjects to the Legislature, that is, to Indian control. That will not exist in the present Bill. It is cut out. In other words, if we hand over complete control of education, irrigation, forests and agriculture, we shall have no power of interference in any way. Under the Government of India Act we had the power of revoking the transfer if we wished, but it was never exercised. The Simon Commission made very grave statements about the way in which education has been carried on in India and also about local government. Further, the Joint Select Committee heard some serious statements from gentlemen of the medical profession about the question of health.

Hon. Members below me think that the safety of the people and all their rights will be protected if only we give them the vote. They say, "If you have the vote, all things will be added unto you." The vote in India, when you have an utterly uneducated electorate, does not count for anything. The more the people are given the vote the more it means that the candidates will necessarily have to be very rich men. It will simply prevent poor men, no matter what their ability, from getting elected if you increase the vote. The question of the franchise is rather interesting as affording an example of how we have gone sliding on in this matter. When the Simon Commission went to India in 1927, as it consisted of gentlemen who had no previous knowledge of the country, it was proper that the Provincial Governments should furnish them with reports on certain subjects in order to afford them an idea of what they were going to look at. One report was about the franchise. The Simon Commission stated that eight Governments reported on that matter and that all of them reported against any increase of the franchise, which was then 7,000,000 for the Provincial Assemblies. The Simon Commission in its wisdom decided, as it was intended to give a great advance in self-government, that it ought to be broad based upon the people's will and that there must necessarily be an extension of the franchise, and they decided, as a means of education in political science, that the electorate should be increased from 7,000,000 to 25,000,000.

Then we had the Round Table Conferences, which swept away the two years' work carried out by the Statutory Commission. The first Round Table Conference appointed a committee consisting of seven Englishmen, one or two of whom had been to India before, and 19 Indians to consider the question of the franchise. After four days' discussion they recommended that the franchise should be settled by an expert committee to be sent out to India, and that the electorate should be increased from 25,000,000 to 63,000,000. Lord Lothian's Committee went to India and decided that it should be 36,000,000. I should like to give some quotations to show how the franchise was used in its limited form as granted in 1919. An Englishman said in a letter to the Press the other day that he had acted on several occasions as unpaid returning officer at several elections in the Indian Provinces, and that not 5 per cent. of the voters who went to the poll were capable of putting their cross against the name of the candidate for whom they wanted to vote. They had to go to the returning officer and ask him to do it for them. They were hustled into the polling booth by the agents of the candidates, and it was pathetic to see the poor cultivators forgetting, as they crossed the few yards of the entrance to the polling booth, the name of the candidate for whom they were told to vote. Only 5 per cent. were capable of putting their crosses on the voting paper. Mr. Acharya, a representative of Madras in the Legislative Assembly, described the same thing. Yet the commission recommended this enormous increase. One of the arguments is: "After all, the people who have the vote do not know much about it, and the people who have not the vote know about the same; so what does it matter? Let them all have it."

I want to explain to my hon. Friends below me that you will not get any protection for the poor by giving them the vote until them are sufficiently able to have some civic sense, and that will not occur for many generations. There is an organisation called the Union of Britain and India, of which hon. Members have heard. It is an organisation which has an obscure connection with the Conservative Central Office, something like the connection that the Commintern has with the Communist Government of Russia.

[Sir A. Knox.]

We do not know from where the Union of Britain and India get their funds. I have asked in letters to the "Times," but I cannot get any reply. They are very liberally supplied, and they go round the country saying that they are the only people who know anything about India. If you have left India only ten minutes ago you have forgotten about it, because it changes so rapidly. One of the Union of Britain and India speakers said the other day that people who left India five years ago knew nothing about it. He pointed out that there are Indian ladies who go out to dinner and play tennis, and the strangest thing of all was to find peasants waiting by the roadside for an omnibus to take them to the market town. Does that give them the power of voting? We shall have to go a great deal further than that before India has changed sufficiently to have the vote as is proposed now.

I would like to say a few words about the poverty of the people. There is no doubt that the peak of prosperity in India was in 1920, because we had a Government that had cut down taxation as much as possible and the improvements in communications in the country had enabled goods to be exchanged better than they were before. Then we introduced the so-called Montagu Reforms. There is one thing about democracy, whether you agree with it or not, it does increase expenditure. Expenditure has gone up in India a good deal since the reforms were introduced, and the burden falls on the poor. I calculate that the total revenue, Central and Provincial, in India is £117,000,000, and that of that £80,000,000 is paid by the poor ryot in salt tax, land revenue, excise and customs. The income tax-payer is a comparatively small class, numbering only 187,000 people, who pay tax on incomes of £225. The whole yield of the Income Tax is only £13,000,000.

If we increase taxation, therefore, we shall hit the poor man every time. The Secretary of State spoke of the expenditure, and thought that the extra taxation which this new Constitution involved was not really serious. I work it out at something like £5,600,000. Provincial Autonomy will account for £560,000, and the Federal Government £560,000; the loss of Burma means £2,200,000, which we shall have to make good out of Indian revenue. Then there are the subsidies to Sind £560,000, to Orissa £220,000, while the North West Province gets £750,000. We have what is euphemistically called adjustments with native States, which come to £750,000. I do not know what those adjustments are, but they will come out of the pockets of the ryots. The Committee think that:

> "The new Constitution can be inaugurated without thereby aggravating the financial difficulties to a dangerous extent."

The Secretary of State when he was presented by Sir Malcolm Hailey with the awkward financial facts, said, "We can only go on hoping that there will be a turn for the better in the world." Sir Alfred Watson said that India could not expect to get a brand new constitution in the bargain basement. Of course she cannot. Is there not a good deal more truth in what a gentleman who does not belong to the Union of Britain and India told the Joint Select Committee, that if the Indian ryots knew what this was going to cost them they would decide that the game was not worth the candle?

I would like to say a word about Safeguards. I notice that the Prime Minister does not believe in these. The Secretary of State and other Government speakers continually tell us that they hope that they will never be used. The candidate for the National Government in the Wavertree by-election goes further. He considers that no reasonable man in England will expect them ever to be used. Then what is the use of them? Are they so many bogies to frighten people? I wonder, because Safeguards have been legalised in other places and have not been used. People who have watched the course of affairs know that Southern Ireland have full right to worry about the validity of Safeguards. The treaty with the Irish Free State consisted of 18 Clauses, of which 11 were Safeguards either to protect the loyalists who remained in the Free State or the connection with the Imperial Government. Where have they gone now? I agree that no legislation has been passed against loyalists, but administratively they have not had a very good time. What about the oath of allegiance to His Majesty the King? What about the appeal to the Privy Council? What about the representative of the Crown in Ireland, who has been degraded to the position of a rubber stamp? All that

has been done where the population is 2,000,000 or 3,000,000 at our back door, as it were. Here we propose to give these Safeguards hundreds of miles away to a population of 390,000,000.

It has been more than once said that we have put no alternative forward. I should like to point out that two witnesses who spoke before the Joint Select Committee put forward an alternative scheme. The Secretary of State said it was not workable, but whether it be workable is a matter of opinion. At any rate, a scheme was put forward based very largely on the despatch to the Government of India of the 20th September, 1930, which spoke of partnership and reserved the most important services to the decision of Parliament. What he laid down was that the Provinces should become self-governing communities before they were invited to enter the Federation of their own free will, and that meanwhile there should be a Council of State, with representatives of the Princes, at the Centre. Meanwhile, the Government at the Centre should remain responsible to the Crown and Parliament for the most important services. He proposed adequate British representation in the Council and in the Provincial Legislatures and Executives, that a British element should be retained in all the important services, and that non-legislative control should be kept over the courts and police until they could be safely handed over to the Provinces. That is briefly what Sir Michael O'Dwyer put forward. I think the proposals of the right hon. Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) were more or less on the same lines, but he proposed a system of inspectorates, and I think such a control from the Centre, to watch the operation of Provincial Autonomy, and to see that no injustices are inflicted upon the poorer classes, is absolutely essential.

To sum up: We believe that the present Bill sacrifices the interests of the people of this country, of India, and of the Empire; and as the Bill has not been received with what can be regarded as any degree of acclamation or pleasure by the political classes in India for whom it is primarily designed, would it not be better to drop it at once? Certainly it is not designed to please the inarticulate peasantry, who have no idea of politics and never think of them—though that is a question over which there are arguments. The Union of Britain and India say that every village is becoming full of politicians. One can only put up against that the opinions of Indians. A gentleman who writes for the well-known Calcutta paper the "Stateman" spent his holidays the summer before last or last summer in his native village in Bengal, and heard the politicians. Here is what he wrote:

> "The people residing in the rural areas of the country do not care two straws for the political demands which are being pressed forward in their name. The power of the franchise is going to be the power of people who not only have no political education but of whom the vast majority are illiterate and completely ignorant of the first principles of democracy."

With that Indian witness, giving evidence regarding the political ambitions of the people who live in the rural areas, I think it is very hard to disagree. Then we believe that the handling over of the police will imperil law and order in India. We believe that the electors are so ignorant and so utterly apathetic that they will not be able to use the vote for their own protection and the advance of their own interests. They will be quite unable to select from the choice of politicians the man who will really work for their interests and not for his own. That is an essential thing in democracy; otherwise it is a sham and a farce. We believe that the cost of the scheme will be overwhelming for the people who have to foot the bill. We believe that the safeguards are largely illusory.

In conclusion, I have to say this: In the broadcast speech which the Lord President of the Council made on this subject last night, he asked his many hearers not to be

> "led astray by personal or partisan considerations or deflected from the pursuit of our declared object by prejudice or lack of faith and courage."

As regards personal considerations, I can say for myself and for all those associated with me, that in this matter personal considerations have no effect whatsoever with us. We are, at great inconvenience to ourselves, following out a line we believe in in our bones. We believe that the Government, in pushing through this Measure, are making a fatal mistake. They have the example of Ireland before them. They thought that by giving everything away they could make

[Sir A. Knox.]

things all right. They have not succeeded in Ireland, and they will not succeed in India. The Government of India will gradually go to the Congress party, who are implacably opposed to us. Mr. Patel, when over here, said after a visit to Dublin:

"When we get the same measure of freedom that the Irish have got, we will use our freedom in the same way as the Irish have."

We may be told that we have not either courage or faith. People had courage and faith in 1921. May I quote from a speech which the right hon. Member for Carnarvon Boroughs (Mr. Lloyd George) made at that time:

"By this agreement we win a deep, abiding and passionate loyalty. Our failure will be her defeat; our fears will be her anxiety; our victory will be her joy."

That was said of the Irish Free State. Is it right now to ask us to have courage and to have faith? I have not got sufficient faith for that, but I have sufficient courage to stand up for a people who, I believe, are not able to stand up for themselves. Who will pay the cost? The cost will be enormous in bloodshed and suffering among the helpless people of India, the ruin of her Empire and increased unemployment in Lancashire.

6.52 p.m.

Mr. KIRKPATRICK: I speak as a Member for one of the most important Lancashire constituencies, important because of the long period during which Preston, like other industrial centres of Lancashire, has been identified with the piece goods trade with India. Quite apart from any demerits or merits which it will be our purpose to adjust, amend and discuss during the Committee stage of this Bill, I do strongly deprecate the insistence of some hon. Members of this House, and some people outside, that we have implacable enemies in India. I deny that there are enemies—to any appreciable extent. There need not be any who count. If there are any why should we say anything to make more? Why gratuitously hurt the feelings of, it may be, sensitive but courteous inherently friendly and inherently loyal people? Various Members, it may be a very few, have during the Debates on India which I have heard in this House, and also in this Debate, talked disparagingly and slightingly of Indians. There have been thoughtless—which will be interpreted in India as bitter—references to disloyal vocal minorities, to unscrupulous politicians, to rack-renting landlords, to rapacious moneylenders, a Brahmin oligarchy, Vakils, Bengalis and Baboos. I remember, during the last Debate on India in this House, hearing a contemptuous remark about Banias, but with all humility I ask, do all Members of the House realise exactly who and what the Bania is?

How many realise the very great importance of and the honourable position that the community colloquially known as Banias hold, have always held and must continue to hold in the body commercial, social and politic in India? I affirm with respect that this community is indispensable to the internal and external trade, and the financing of trade, industry and agriculture in India. As every Member of the House knows, Hinduism, or Hindu polity, is divided into four vocational groups: Kshatrya, the princely, the Brahmin or priestly, the Vaishya or mercantile, and the Sudra or artisan. Bania is the colloquial generic term applied to the Vaishya class who, incidentally, I would suggest, are the most rigidly orthodox Hindus in the four classes of Hindus I have mentioned. Vaishyas engaged and occupied in finance and trade have until the last few years been generally more backward in English education than the Kshatrya and Brahmins. As a consequence, it may be they have been to some extent overlooked, even misunderstood, by officialdom in India, and thus relegated to an inferior political position, to a lower status than their practical intelligence, their wealth, their influence, usefulness and their importance deserves. The Bania classes——

Duchess of ATHOLL: May I ask whether the hon. Gentleman regards as indispensable and useful people who are able to charge interest of 40 or 50 per cent.?

Mr. KIRKPATRICK: I am very glad the Noble Lady made that interruption. I will come to that in a moment. The Bania classes, known variously as Sirafs or Shroffs, Mahajans, Sowkars, Seths, Agarwals, Modis, Sowdagars, Lalas and Marwaris, and analogous to the Chetties of Southern India, are almost to the

extent of a monopoly, wholesale and retail dealers and traders in and financers of indigenous products, foodstuffs and all staples and raw materials practically, with one or two exceptions—such as hides and skins—throughout India. There is hardly an item of trade in India, whether for local distribution or for export or import, which is not almost exclusively and at the most important stages handled by this Hindu mercantile or commercial community. No British exporter or other importer or exporter of Lancashire goods or any other British-made textile goods ever sold a bale of such in India except to or through members of that community. No British or other industrialist or exporter of Indian produce ever bought or buys a bag of cotton or seeds—and nowadays even jute—except through this community. They are the merchant bankers of India, whose ramifications spread throughout the whole country.

The village modi, the factory, bazaar-Bania, may and does earn exorbitant rates of interest from the indigent ryot or coolie. But the Marwari banker or Siraf will make legitimate banking advances and discount and deal in trade and finance acceptances and bills in competition with, and, in the remarkable *Hundi* business, in close co-operation with, British joint stock banks in India and the Imperial Bank of India. Every joint stock bank in India, at every branch, and every Government Treasury, employs a Siraf or Shroff as cashier-treasurer. And the Banian employed by most British piece-goods importing firms is the same Bania whose equivalent in China is the comprador. Every tea garden maintains kya or bania, so does every Indian regiment to whom he is indispensable, as the bania landlord in most cantonments—and as the Sowkar is to the lesser and often also to the greater zamindar. I suggest, as I hope it may be realised from what I have said, that a great part of the commercial and economic structure of India, and I would emphasise, Lancashire trade, would suffer inconveniences to say the least of it without the active co-operation and guidance and enterprise and good will of the Vaishya bania classes. May I just say this? The lending of money at high usurious rates of interest is not practised by all banias, though it is by the smaller, humbler members of the caste, that is, those who are the equivalent in standing and social status of the usurers or Shylocks in any other parts of the world. There are as many petty moneylenders, extortionists, usurers, in other classes and castes in India.

Duchess of ATHOLL: Is it not the case that because of the exaggerated interest of these usurers, Acts have had to be passed to protect the people against this particular caste?

Mr. KIRKPATRICK: The Government have always had to pass Acts to protect the people. In its most pernicious form, usury is carried on by Pathans from the North-West border, whose methods are accompanied by physical coercion—with a big stick. They are predatory nomads who wander all over Northern India and even into Bengal and Assam.

I suggest that neither here nor in India have we ever fully appreciated the great economic value and political potential value of this great Indian commercial community. As a digression, may I say that the greater number of the leading members of the Vaishya and allied Jain community who work with, as well as independently of, British business men in Calcutta, are Indian native States subjects, Bikaner, Marwar, hence Marwari. Sir David Yule, the great Bengal merchant, had a Marwari gentleman as his partner and other Indians as colleagues on the boards of his industrial companies. Incidentally, though not a Vaishya, the present head and senior partner for 20 years of the leading British firm in Calcutta is Sir Rajondra Nath Mubherji, a Bengali Brahmin. I have been talking only about the Hindu section of the people of India. I have heard it said several times in this House that because of Hinduism you cannot implant democracy on existing social systems in India. Members forget the 90,000,000 of Mussulmans in India, and Mohammedanism inculcates democracy. It is indeed the only true democratic religion in the world. While some of my best friends in India were Mussulmans, I do not claim or desire to claim to be either pro-Hindu or pro-Mussulman. If I have any predilections, they lean towards the Jat or Jut, Sikh, Jut Hindu and Jut Moslem and other casteless tribes. But that is an easy line to follow. Even if there are any in India who hate us—as there may be

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some, I suppose, who cannot feel full of affection for some of us—why let them or anyone else in India think that we on all sides of the House bear anything other than good will, or the will to understand, towards Indians of all classes, callings, castes and creeds.

May I remind the House of certain truisms which greatly impressed me as they disturbed those one would expect them to perturb. I refer to what my right hon. Friend the Lord President of the Council said in this House on 12th December, 1934:

"The Indian, wherever he may be, looks for advice rather to the men of his own blood, of his own religion, of his own language than he does to the best of our own race. That you cannot help. That is a hard, stubborn fact that you have to realise."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 12th December, 1934; col. 516, Vol. 296.]

That is a profound truth; and the most impressive, apposite, and opportune statement on the subject—the real psychological truth—I have heard since I have taken any part or interest in Indian politics. It is a blind, uncompromising, rabid refusal to recognise that fundamental fact that is responsible for much of the turgid, anti-Indian sentiment and intolerance of Indian aspirations which have stimulated, and, if I may say so, stultified a handful of Members in this House. Their exaggerations and apprehensions of the situation are born of or inspired by, a spurious, inverted, superiority complex. They are the modern Conquistadores.

Everyone in this House must know that the India Act of 1919, which incorporated the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms was brought in entirely relying upon the tried and splendid loyalty of British and Indian officials. The 1919 Montagu-Chelmsford reforms were imposed in the face of far less, though in my view easily far more justifiable, opposition than the reforms we are now debating are meeting with to-day. In my own case, if the House will permit a personal note, I violently opposed the Montagu scheme from its earliest conception, when the intentions and aspirations of the then Secretary of State for India were first audible in India. I was never reconciled to the proposals as a prudent policy which need have been propounded, in the manner and for the reasons then submitted—or least of all, the time chosen for their presentation.

I was, in 1918 and 1919, as strongly opposed, especially to the arguments then urged for their then need, as some Members on both sides of the House are to-day, who, for widely different reasons, would have rejected the Joint Select Committee's Report, and would have the House reject the broad principles of this Bill we are debating to-day. Convinced that Parliament had been misled and was wrong in propounding at that time what was then contemplated, faced with a surprising, almost revolutionary, issue, but without any anti-Indian bias myself, I was deeply concerned that many of the British non-official community in India colleagues in Calcutta were being converted. Early in 1922 I had an interview with the then Secretary of State for India, and I sat in the gallery of this House to hear the India Debate on 14th February, 1922. I was heartened by two remarks which I heard made by the right hon. Member for Carnarvon Boroughs (Mr. Lloyd George), then Prime Minister, in his famous steel-framework speech. He said first:

"Under no circumstances or conditions do we propose to withdraw from, or to impair, the full sovereignty of the King Emperor in India."

And then later he said:

"But the British Empire, although it has come out of a great, a terrible, and an exhausting war, is not so exhausted that it can discuss such a proposal."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 14th February, 1922; Cols. 963-4, Vol. 150.]

The proposal was abdication or some other such absurdity. These were brave and good words which were badly needed at that time in India, and the repetition of messages of that calibre from time to time does no harm; they are expected and appreciated. However all this may be, the case, the protests, of those who urged caution as to the speed at which the Montagu policy had been introduced and accelerated went unheeded. We were left to deal with and face facts as we found them, and to come to the only practical conclusion that there was no good to be got by jobbing back. The alternative I felt was to set about to clarify past prejudices, and to seek to discover what good could be found in the new circumstances which Parliament in all its wisdom had irrevocably decided was to be the new

outlook which was to govern our future relations with and governance of India. I frankly confess that in my new approach to the problem I was handicapped by considerable diehard bias, induced and imbibed from traditional elders of that particular caste of Zabberdasti Khans who have roved, raved and ranted around, and about India since the days of Annesley. I felt that the preferable alternative to going out into the wilderness of inhospitable atmospheres with a Colonel—and nowadays perhaps an occasional Admiral—Chillipods, was to concentrate on the cultivation of personal friendships and the exchanging of candid opinions with and at the same time listening to criticisms, from all classes of Indians, more especially the non-English speaking people, both Hindu and Mussulman.

I confess, again, I found in more than one conventional, hidebound, angular issue, that my previous allegiances were not infallible. On probing many of the traditional, superiority complex, rigid Totem poles, I found that many more of them than I at one time dared to suspect were white ant-eaters. The white ant, as the House may know, is a termite or insidious disintegrator of alternatively Socialistic or hard-dying habits. I am convinced, in the light of all we have or have not achieved, that there is one thing we cannot do—we cannot job back. For the past 10 years I have sought to disentangle the mesh of impressions woven into my mind during some part of the previous 20 years.

On the one hand by tradition, friendship and relationships with British soldiers and civilians in the real old up-the-country of India—in and around the Oudh and Agra, Delhi and the Punjaub, the old Indigo districts, among the aboriginals of Orissa, the Mundas and Oraons. The nomadic Kanjar-log Shikari people. In the cis-Sutleg feudal hill States and mediaeval kingdoms of Rajputana, and on the North-east Frontiers, where, Miris and Mishmis, Abors and Nagas are administered, cared for, by some of the finest representatives this country has ever sent out to work for, and care for, the people of India.

Seeing, and by contact with all this, I understood and appreciated not less than—in my enthusiasm I like to feel that it is more than—any other Member of this House the good work our people, both official and non-official, have done and are continuing to do in India. On the other hand, as one of the commercial community, whom, until Lord Curzon's time, the official hierarchy were not a little inclined to tolerate as box wallahs, I had, further, unique opportunities of real friendship with Indian business men, employés and Indian colleagues, and also friendships of a nature with individuals such as are not frequently, if at all, vouchsafed to officials. Those friendships I cultivated in a spirit of optimism. I sought for similarities, not for difficulties, in thought, sentiment and aspirations.

I can remember no instance of any Indian having wittingly or wilfully let me down in social or business relations. Throughout my close on 30 years' working life in India and the East, I suffered no discourtesy, was offered none, by any Indian, nor did I encounter any instance of purely racial hatred directed against me or against any other Englishman or towards this country. Isolated individual cases, perhaps, of religious fanaticism, but not racial. I did not look for trouble, and I found none. I found, indeed, Indians of all religions and races, in all walks of life, as capable, as trustworthy, and as loyal in friendshlp and service, as any Englishman in similar capacities and relationships. As to inevitable differences in outlook, prejudices, and so forth, I am under no illusions. Even among our own people, where and when any intolerances were evident, I could, for the most part, discover only impersonal prejudices borne of ignorance. Prejudices after all only engendered by pseudo-assumed superiority, and not inherent, but which, nevertheless, tended to create atmospheres and incidents which have done so much to exaggerate and exacerbate questions of superiority and inferiority and claims and complexes which have prevented closer understanding between Indians and those who represented the suzerain power.

I have followed the Indian question for the past 20 or 30 years. I dare to say without political or racial bias or ever any anti-Indian intolerance; I claim

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no more than that. Circumstances have perforce associated my career and life's work with India and her people of all classes and many stations in life. Especially have I followed—and I claim no monopoly for this—with some assiduity the developments of the past seven years, culminating in the chapter which we are discussing to-day. At long last we are within range of solving what I have often thought, and others so often appear to be at pains to believe, was an insoluble problem. The passing of this Bill will show India and the world, to the lasting honour of this Parliament, that we are taking right and resolute steps to implement repeated and unequivocal pledges given to our Indian fellow subjects for the 100 years past, and which, for their faith in us, we must and will carry out.

With no small and added pride as a Member of this Parliament, in whose hands lies the determination of the future and the welfare of the people of India, do I unhesitatingly welcome and support the general terms of the Bill which, after full discussion, constructive as it will be for the most part, will be passed by this House, and will give India an appropriate measure of autonomous government, finally incorporating and recognising that possession for all time, as an integral part—and I, for one, believe one of the most loyal—of our overseas Dominions.

7.22 p.m.

Mr. SLATER: I will not follow the hon. Gentleman for Preston (Mr. Kirkpatrick) in much of what he has said. We shall all be impressed, I am sure, with his knowledge of India, and we shall remember for a long time many of the words he inflicted upon this House. Hon. Members who are taking up a hostile attitude to the Bill have a duty to state their views fearlessly and frankly. They must, if they are to discharge their proper functions as Members of this honourable House, do that, and speak as they think from the bottom of their hearts and from the depths of their minds, and they must take whatever consequences accrue from that. I hope that hon. Members will give me a patient hearing. No one could complain that on this vast subject we have any lack of authority, and volumes exist to assist any honest and sincere investigator.

I think it was the Noble Lord the Member for Hastings (Lord Percy) who said in one of the earlier Debates on India that we had got into ruts in regard to the discussion of this great question. I agree with him. Great experts before the Joint Select Committee have disagreed as to the real problem in India. One says that the problem of India is not constitutional but administrative; another says that it was administrative but is now political, and yet another that it is none of these, but is an economic one. Those who take this point are divided into three. Hon. Members may well ask: If experts disagree, what guidance can they get to help them in regard to this matter?

The enormity of our task and the profound consequences of our decision appal me. We are told that only those who have lived in India can speak on this great question. It is further qualified by the hon. Member who just said that they must have lived in India during the last five years. I possess neither credential, but I have had 25 years' trading experience in a rather unique way with the East; not only with India but with China, the Dutch Indies, and Japan, and not only in connection with my own industry in England. I have still a unique position from which to judge this matter, especially as to how Continental manufacturers and industrialists judge the great question of our Eastern trade. As many hon. Members know, I am connected with important German concerns. I was reading only the other day a report of one of our travellers who has just visited the East and particularly India, and, if I could inflict upon the House verbatim the whole of that report, I think hon. Members would be astounded at how we are viewed by independent people who go out to India knowing that it is part of the British Empire, and how say a German who has his own ideas of what is right and what is wrong would view the question of trade there, if India were part of the German Empire.

It is very interesting. We are told by many people, including the Lord President of the Council, that great changes have come over the East. Let me give briefly a few facts. There are the rise of Japan as an industrial nation, and its consequences, and India's development of secondary industries. Can Western

Powers, and especially ourselves, stand up to a second Japan superimposing on our external trade, and that within the Empire and not outside? I think not. I have said in this House before that what we need more than anything else in the world is to resurrect the great purchasing power of the East. Can Western civilisation survive an entire annihilation of its trade in the East? I believe it can, but at great cost to the people in the East, and, may be, catastrophic failure. Do the portents indicate the likelihood that the East can produce the products of secondary industry which we have supplied from the West, and of sufficient quality and in sufficient volume to make her independent? I believe so. Further, can they be produced at a price less than we can produce them, say in Britain? Certainly they can.

Do these answers decide the matter? No. That is only one side of the question. International business is not a one-way traffic, and no country can take out of the international pool of trade anything more than she puts into it. To say otherwise is to admit a pirate on the highways and seas of the commerce of the world. How do these things affect us? Facts prove to me that the problem of India is an economic one and that India's politicians and industrialists are not able, from sheer lack of experience, and lacking our inherited guidance, to play the role of great international traders. They are lacking all guidance of a wise and proper kind as to where they fit in the body economic of this great British Empire. Let me quote the words of Sir George Schuster, speaking in the Legislature. He said, when dealing with the problem of how to increase the internal demand for India's products:

> "Dealing with the problem of how to increase the internal demand for India's products, the Finance Member referred to the measures which had been taken to stimulate Indian industry. He pointed out that, if India produced what other countries formerly exported to India, the world's purchasing power for Indian exports would diminish, unless it were possible to raise the general standard of living in India and provide an increased market, capable not only of absorbing the products of Indian industries, but also of continuing the use of imported commodities."

That shows that not only I but an authority of the calibre of Sir George Schuster recognises the difficulty of the present phase of thought among politicians and industrialists in India. His words are words of sound wisdom. Can the standard of living in India be raised by shutting out imports from Great Britain? I claim that the greatest asset that any nation with a low standard of life, such as India, can have, is a link of sentiment and interest with a nation such as our own, whose standard of life is equal, if not superior, to that of any other nation in the world. It is a great asset to India to have this Empire connection. It is obvious, for example, that if the secondary industries of India secured the whole market, and imports were entirely eliminated, the standard of life in primary and secondary industries would require adjustment. It is exactly the same in America. President Roosevelt is dealing with the same problem. His problem is to equalise the reward for services as between primary and secondary industries. Is not that a first-class classic lesson for India, that, if she pursues her present policy, some day she will come up against the same trouble by which America is beset to-day? Supposing that self-sufficiency were achieved, what about the power to produce the £37,500,000 or so that is required for external services? Surely a time will come when the people will not allow a disproportionate reward for services as between primary production and secondary production. The Lord President of the Council, speaking last night, said:

> "Must people who preach alarmist doctrines as to the future of our Indian trade do so in vague and general terms."

I am sorry that the right hon. Gentleman is not now in the House, for I should have liked to engage his attention for a few minutes in order to supply something a little more precise, and to give facts to show that his statement was another of his blunders in generalising about his critics. Are these facts correct? Did we not, in 1913 and 1914, send nearly 3,000,000,000 yards of Lancashire piece goods to India? In 1934, did we not send 583,000,000 yeards? Is there no need for alarm about this question? Will the Lord President of the Council go to Lancashire and tell them that there is no need for alarm, when everyone in Lancashire is full of apprehension about it, and when there is evidence of it at every street corner and in every idle mill? Is there any vagueness about that matter? No. Will the right hon. Gentleman also

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go to the iron and steel districts of this country, to the North-East coast, to South Wales, to the Midlands or the Clyde, and explain the fact that last year 83 per cent. of the pig iron imported into this country came from India? According to the latest figures published in the Ministry of Labour Gazette, 20 per cent. of our iron and steel workers are out of work, and yet we allow 83 per cent. of our imported pig iron to come into this country from India free of duty.

Mr. MOLSON: Are we to understand that my hon. Friend is in favour of putting on tariffs against imports from our own possessions?

Mr. SLATER: I answer that question willingly and proudly. Viewing the matter from a textile point of view, if we, who have been sending vast quantities of textiles to India, now send our goods there, we find that there is a 25 per cent. tariff against them. I would ask the present Government, upon what grounds do they consider that there is equity as between India and ourselves? It is that very point that I am trying to bring to the notice of the House.

Mr. KIRKPATRICK: Does my hon. Friend suggest that the cost of steel should be increased as a result of increasing the price of pig iron by putting a duty upon it?

Mr. SLATER: I assure my hon. Friend that none of the pig iron that comes from India is used in steel-making; it is foundry pig iron. There has been a great growth of the steel industry in India. In 1927, only 30 per cent. of the Indian requirements was provided by their own people; to-day, 72 per cent. of the total requirements of Indian consumption of iron and steel can be provided by that one country. As a Lancashire man, the question of the Lancashire textile industry is very near to my heart, and I consider that, whatever hon. Members in this House may think, Lancashire has had a " raw deal " for a great many years over this Indian question. I have already mentioned that our goods have to face a duty of 25 per cent.

Let me put another point, which will be much more vivid, much more real, much more impressive to any honest unbiased mind. In India to-day, there are, roughly speaking, 400,000 workers in the Indian mill industry; at the end of the recent Bombay strike there were 375,000. I have taken great pains to go through the report issued by the Labour Office of the Bombay Government with regard to that district, and I find that there were 375,000 people earning only 1 rupee per day—1s. 6d. per day. Let hon. Members get that figure well into their minds. What does it mean in the aggregate? It means that the whole of the wages paid in the mill industry in India come to roughly £169,000 weekly, taking them at 9s. per week. Let me give another figure which I think will impress hon. Members. Out of the 467,000 workers who constitute the insured population attributed to the textile trades of Lancashire, there are to-day 95,000 registered at the Employment Exchanges as out of work. What is that costing the Government? Supposing that we take it that these 95,000 people are each drawing 35s.—it may be more or it may be less—for unemployment benefit, transitional payments, or public assistance, it means that unemployment in Lancashire is costing almost as much as the whole of the wages paid in the Indian mill industry, and further, we are paying from four and a-half to five and a-half times the wages that are paid in Indian mills. We see those mills equipped with Lancashire machinery, and guided by Lancashire managers and experts. We know, of course, that a few of these people have their difficulties, where, in the capital structure of a cotton mill, costing something like £2 10s. a spindle is boosted up to £20. If they want advances from the banks, they have to sign bonds to pay in gold.

I am sure hon. Members must be impressed by the fact that Lancashire is up against a serious handicap within the body economic of the Empire. There is no guidance in this matter; there is no one really to raise the true picture, no one to point out what the odds are against Lancashire, and what a few mill-owners in India are getting out of this trade. We need not look very far for the reason for the decline of Lancashire exports to India. The facts are as clear as crystal. They can be distinctly associated with the date when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Sir A. Chamberlain) started and put on his modest tariff 4 per cent.

From that moment we have seen a new thought coming over the whole of the East. From that time onwards, and especially during the last six or seven years, we have seen Japan rising as an industrial nation. That has made a mighty impression upon Indian industrialists. They have seen for the first time that the day of the white man's industrial and commercial domination is past. They have seen that they can do just as well as he can. I am not for a moment arguing that the development of their industry is something that ought not to be done. I am all in favour of reasonable development. What I do not want to see is that in a few years' time our interest in India as regards trade has worn thinner and thinner.

The ryot in India has three items of expense apart from food, namely salt, kerosene and cotton piece goods. During the depression, his consumption of salt and kerosene has gone back, but he has kept up his consumption of cotton piece goods. The market is an expanding one. If we are truly partners in this great question of India, surely it is not a question of India entirely to the Indians; surely Lancashire must have a reasonable chance; surely we should be able to compete on equal terms. If Lancashire has to pay 25 per cent. to enter India, if in addition she has to pay four and a-half times the wages that are paid in India, if she has to bring her cotton from India and send it back as piece goods, surely there is a case for reconsideration of the matter. To-day the Secretary of State could strike a blow at this great question of unemployment in Lancashire; he could put 50,000 or 100,000 people back into work in no time if he would bring down these tariffs. Why should he not do so? I will tell him a very good reason why he should. Clause 5 of the recent Mody-Clare Lees agreement is one of the most astonishing things that have ever been put before the House of Commons. Clause 5 says:

"In so far as the Empire and other overseas markets for piece goods and yarns are concerned, it is agreed that any advantages which might be arranged for British goods should be extended to Indian goods and that India, in markets in which she has no independent quota, should participate in any quota that might be allocated to the United Kingdom. In respect of overseas markets in which Indian mills lack established connections, it is agreed that the Manchester Chamber of Commerce should use its good offices to bring about contacts between English manufacturers and British houses which are already established in those markets."

That means that the Bombay millowners, in exchange for the goodwill which they threw into the pot in co-operation with them in regard to this industry, demand a *quid pro quo* for the preference on British goods which they say we are getting owing to Ottawa. I say the preference is prohibitive and we cannot get in. It is very little use to us. What this Mody-Clare Lees agreement says is that the Indian textile industrialists are prepared to meet Lancashire in the whole Empire on an equal footing. It means that they are utterly and completely robbed of any argument for protection against the United Kingdom in India. It means that they can go to East Africa, as they are doing, and taking a tremendous amount of trade which hitherto the Lancashire mills have had at prices less than we can afford to take it. Where, therefore, does it come in that they require this protection? Where does it come in that we should grant them this protection? It only means that we are allowing these people to exploit the masses of India unmercifully. I have heard someone say, What about revenue? We know what that means. It has been a diminishing quantity, though this year we may see an upturn. I am strong for an Imperial Economic Committee to deal with these great questions, but we must retain the Centre in India. If the Centre goes away, we shall never get them back into the right state of mind to deal with these mighty questions. May I read what the Chancellor of the Exchequer said about the Ottawa Agreements referring to the whole members of the Empire:

"It will be found that in our aggreements with them they have given up the idea that their home markets are to be reserved entirely to the home manufacturer, and they have adopted three fresh principles which are of the utmost importance to this country. First of all, they undertake that they will not in future protect uneconomic industries, those industries which have not got a reasonable chance of making a success."

Surely this Indian textile business has been long enough established to prove whether it is a success or not.

"Secondly, that they will so adjust their existing tariffs, and so frame any new ones that in articles which they desire to make themselves the British manufacturer shall have a fair competitive chance with the

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Dominion manufacturer, and thirdly, that the decision, or rather that the investigation as to how that principle is to be applied shall be taken entirely out of politics."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 18th October, 1932; col. 34, Vol. 269.]

If this is taken out of politics, if the case of Lancashire *versus* the millowner in India is put before any impartial board, I am prepared to stand by their decision, but I am prepared to say to-day that on the basis of what I have quoted the Indian mills need no protection. We must get together on this point. It is mighty important, however, that we should keep the centre. There is no doubt that, in their present attitude, Indian industrialists and politicians think they can deal with these questions under the heading of discriminating protection. They are trying to do exactly what Canada and Australia have done. They fix a tariff against foreign countries and then tell us, We will give you a preference under that figure. But, if that preference leaves us utterly devoid of a chance of securing the trade, what use is it to us?

If we want to raise the standard of life, as Sir George Schuster said, of these great masses of people in India there are two ways of doing it. Looking round the world in which they have to sell their primary products at about half what they have been getting in the past, we see no chance of raising the reward of service but, if we cannot increase their income, at least we can reduce their expenses in getting cheaper cotton goods to them which they are not able to get to-day. We must have regard to the truculence of Japan. She cancels her signature to the Nine Power Pact, she wipes out her signature to the Kellogg Agreement, she enters Manchukuo and I think before long, if we leave this point where it is to-day, Japan will enter another great Continent. We cannot ignore facts which stand out clearly and indelibly. We must face up now to this great question, Shall we or shall we not advance? I am convinced by facts and figures and by reading about this question almost to exhaustion that the attitude of those in charge of the Government of India is not for co-operation with this country. I am convinced, above all things, that we need to act circumspective. I have nothing against the development of industries in India but I feel that under the recent textile agreement, for instance, there is room for an increased outlet for Lancashire goods, and we want to see to it that that position is maintained. If half-a-dozen people from this country and half-a-dozen from India sat round a table, I am sure they could come to an understanding that Lancashire could have a better chance of securing her trade in India.

7.54 p.m.

Mr. GORDON MACDONALD: Unlike most Members who have taken part in the Debate, I have not had the pleasure of visiting India. I am not quite sure whether that is not an advantage. It seems to me that many who have been there have made a rather short stay—not long enough to enable them to form any clear and definite opinion of what the Indian masses desire. When one remembers that India has a territory of nearly 2,000,000 square miles, one wonders what a few weeks there can teach anyone. When one remembers the conditions that prevail, one has some doubt whether a visit of a few months will enable a person to form any enlightened opinion as to what constitution would suit India best. I have not served on a commission or committee dealing with Indian problems. Such an experience would be very helpful, but it is very necessary that those who have not been to India and have not sat on committees should voice their feelings on the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Darwen (Sir H. Samuel) suggested that social and economic questions would fill the mind of the Indian masses in the future, and it is because of that that we have moved our Amendment.

There are one or two simple and direct questions that we put. To what extent is the Bill going to enable the peasants and workers of India to improve their conditions? To what extent is it going to provide facilities to carry on propaganda in any direction that they desire and to bring about a change in the Government of India? After all, we are a Socialist party. I am not at all surprised that a Tory Government tries to safeguard Tory interests, but surely we cannot be blamed because we object to safeguarding the interests of capitalists in India. It is very necessary that we should fully appreciate the present position of the workers and peasants who

realise the need for a substantial change in an upward direction. I find that conditions there are most deplorable. There are less than 20,000,000 men and women engaged in industry and something like 120,000,000 engaged in agriculture. It is they who bear the burden of the cost of government, as they are the producers of the wealth and also the bulk of the consumers of necessity goods which are subject to indirect taxation. It is well worth realising the type of house, if it can be called a house, in which the Indian worker and peasant, especially the miner, lives. The average number of persons per room is over four which, judged even by Indian standards of city life, must be called bad. Thirty-three per cent. of the population live in rooms occupied by more than five people and 1 per cent. live in rooms occupied by over 20. The number of persons living in rooms containing from six to nine each is over 250,000, and the number of persons living in rooms occupied by from 10 to 19 in each room is over 80,000. Those are the housing conditions prevailing as given in the Whitley Report. We ask, Is this Constitution going to enable the Indian worker and peasant to improve that housing? Take again the 1931 census:

> "A statement in the 1931 census report of the Cities of the Bombay Presidency by H. T. Sorley, I.C.S., emphasises that some of the conditions of housing in Bombay City must be more reminiscent of the Black Hole of historical memory than of any modern city pretending to sanitary living conditions."

There is a vast amount of child labour. In many agricultural areas 5d. per day is the wage. Children of five, six and seven years of age are working in tea plantations or cigarette making for eight, ten or eleven hours a day for a wage of 3s. 6d. a month, which is sometimes paid to the children, but more often to the parents who have borrowed loans, for which they have pledged their children's labour. As regards the employment of miners in India, here is an extract from an official report, which shows that in India to-day there are over 12,000 women working underground. These women work alongside the menfolk getting and hauling coal, and their wages are despicably low. I should like the Under-Secretary to try and show us on this side of the House how this Constitution will improve the position of the worker. We have to ask ourselves what the Constitution must do in order to enable the worker to improve his position? It must do three things. It must invest him with more political power, satisfy him that he is being given all the power to which he is entitled, and must remove any suspicion that may exist that it is merely a slight alteration of the present legislation in order to safeguard the interests of the wealthy and owning classes. Does this Bill do that?

The Secretary of State spent much time in dealing with the Federal Legislature. Can the right hon. Gentleman get up at that Box and say that the constitution of the Federal Legislature puts more power into the hands of the peasant and the worker and enables them to bring any influence to bear on that assembly. Can he suggest that the functions of the Governor-General are not large functions? In fact, I sometimes feel when reading the Bill that the Governor-General will be as big a dictator as either Hitler or Mussolini. He can question the right of both Assemblies. Is that going to enable the peasant and the worker to bring their influence to bear on the Legislature? Take the franchise. Does anyone suggest that the franchise which is suggested and outlined will enable the worker to exercise his influence? In whatever way we look at the Bill, we find that the millions of the masses in India will have no influence on the Legislature or on economic or social conditions, and, naturally, in that case we object to it.

I know that a price has to be paid in order to get the Princes inside the Federation. I do not expect them to come in without a price being paid, but I suggest that the price which is being paid both in the Legislative Assembly and in the Federal Assembly is too high. They are being given a determining influence in both bodies. It was suggested in an earlier Debate in December that there was the possibility of bribes being accepted in India. I do not know whether Indians are more likely than Britishers to accept bribes but I know that if the Princes can use a form of bribery in either assembly, they can, with the power they already possess, influence and determine legislation. Does anyone think they will allow the Federal Assembly to improve conditions in British India to such an extent as to compel them to improve conditions

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in their own States? That tremendous sweep of power is an indication that there is no hope of progressive legislation either in the Federal or Provincial Assemblies. We have said before, and we say again, that we object to a Second Chamber because of our experience in this country of a Second Chamber, where it has always stood as a bulwark to safeguard vested interests. If in this enlightened country a Second Chamber does that, how can we expect a Second Chamber in India to do other than the same thing? However we look at the Bill, we find that it is weighted very heavily in favour of vested interests.

Sir FRANCIS FREMANTLE: Was that so when the House of Lords introduced the medical inspection of school children, for instance?

Mr. MACDONALD: The House of Lords may on some occasions pass a fairly good piece of legislation, but the history of the House of Lords in this country is such that it has always stood in favour of vested interests as against working-class interests. Judged from that point of view, we say that the same thing will happen in India, and therefore we object to a Second Chamber and the principle of Conservative and reactionary influence. A Second Chamber is intended to be so, and I suggest to the Secretary of State that that is the reason why it has been put into this Bill. I would not expect the Princes to come in without a Second Chamber because they know that a Second Chamber safeguards their interests. Eighty million people will be disfranchised and the power of nomination in the States will be entirely in favour of the rulers. Can anyone say that that is fair and just? It was suggested by an hon. Member that democracy was a very expensive thing. It may be expensive occasionally, but I have yet to learn that dictatorships of this kind are not more expensive, if not financially, in human misery.

Who wants this Constitution? I have not met any Indian who wants it. I have received messages from friends in India and not one of them wants it. It is no use the Secretary of State saying that it is only the Congress men who are against the Constitution. I have a document here, not from Congress, but from the National Liberal Federation of India which,

"records its profound regret at finding that the Joint Select Committee's report, instead of removing the glaring defects and shortcomings of the White Paper proposals that were pointed out by the Federation at its two previous sessions, has, in utter disregard of almost the entire body of Indian opinion of all shades including the British Indian delegation to the Joint Select Committee, introduced further highly objectionable and reactionary features, rendering responsible government in the Provinces and the centre which the British Government profess to give to India wholly illusory. The Federation is convinced that any Constitution based on the lines of the Joint Select Committee's report will be wholly unacceptable to all shades of Indian political opinion and will, far from allaying, very much intensify the present deep political discontent in the country. This Federation, therefore, does not want any legislation based upon the Joint Select Committee's report."

That is not from the Congress, but from the National Liberal Federation of India. I notice the National Liberal Federation here, speaking in the person of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Darwen (Sir H. Samuel), accepted it. It is nothing new to have divisions among Liberals and Conservatives. Our Amendment makes it clear why we object to the Bill. First, because it does not recognise in an explicit manner India's right to Dominion status. I was astounded to-day that in reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Darwen, the Secretary of State told us that they have not included a Pramble in the Bill because there is is a Preamble in the Act of 1919. It is true that we are revoking that Act, but we are carrying on the Preamble although it is not in the Bill. The Secretary of State says that on the Committee Stage he will be prepared to draft an Amendment which will make it clear that they will still accept that Preamble. I understand why it is not in the Bill. It cannot be if it is revoked. The Government say that the Preamble is being safeguarded. Therefore, why did not they put it in the Bill. It may be that other parties do not accept the question of Dominion status, but the party to which I belong have their policy on India. We have no desire to make party points. The Indian masses are not a set of people to be used as pawns in the political game. We have declared our policy quite definitely. It is one of self-government for India. The

second reason why we object to the Bill is because the provisions of the franchise and representation do not enable the worker to secure his own emancipation by the methods he selects. There may be left wing activities in India. I should be surprised if there were not. If there were not workers as left wing agitators in India, it would show that they had lost all the soul they had ever had. Does anyone think that the Great Powers to be entrusted to the Governor are to be used in favour of the working classes as India is at present constituted? We know that these powers are to be invested in the Governor because it is the price to pay in order to get certain elements in India in favour of the scheme.

I say frankly that we in Lancashire desire good Indian relations with Lancashire, but I do not for a moment think that the outline suggested by the hon. Member for Eastbourne (Mr. Slater) is the right way for Lancashire. The Lancashire textile workers in my division have no desire to secure prosperity at the expense of the Indian cotton workers. They realise that ultimately their standard of life is determined by that of the Indian cotton worker. They know that British money is invested in India and that British machinery and engineering skill are there and that the same set of employers as deal with them in Lancashire also deal with India. They are suspicious. They say that goodwill is the only hope, and this Measure does not make any contribution towards creating goodwill in India. We want a constitution in India which will give to the Indian worker the status to which he is entitled. Goodwill is impossible where there is a grievance. You have to remove the grievance. Rightly or wrongly —rightly in my opinion—the Indian worker feels that he is not getting a straight deal from this Government. There can be no hope of goodwill and improvement of trade in Lancashire—and Lancashire needs it. I do not think that if you empowered the Governor to deal with the question of trade as he desired he could get goodwill. We say that self-government in India is the only hope of getting India satisfied and a working partner inside the Empire. So long as the Indian worker is crushed down, whether under the present regime or the new arrangement under this Bill, he will of necessity always protest against that attempt to govern him. If India chances to speak for herself she will tell you that this type of constitution is not what she wants. It is an insult to the intelligence of the Indians and does not enable them to take the active part which they ought to take in their own economic emancipation.

8.13 p.m.

Mr. BOULTON: I hope that the hon. Member for Ince (Mr. G. Macdonald) will forgive me if I do not follow him in the arguments which he has presented to us. They cover rather a wide field and a good deal of detail, but I have so far not intervened in the Debates we have had in this House on this great issue before and I want to deal with the broad issue of whether this House is really justified in giving India a further and a more real measure of self-government, and whether India is really ready to undertake it. We are hearing a good deal, perhaps a small minority, on that question to-day. It is my experience that I have had in India, limited though it may be, that is my excuse for intervening in this Debate to-day. I found that experience of considerable value in coming to a conclusion, and I should like to give the House a short story of what my experience was. In doing so I hope that the House will not think that I am in any way being egotistical because I believe it is this sort of experience which will lead us to a sound ujdgment. It is some 14 years since I first went to India, but I spent two-and-a-half years there which gave me an opportunity, and perhaps a unique opportunity, of meeting the Indians of various races and religions, rulers of States, judicial officials and Indian merchants, with many of whom I had opportunities of having quiet discussions as to the political future of India and on the very question that we are discussing to-day.

I was one of those who was opposed to the Act of 1919 before I went to India. I confess to knowing very little about the subject then, but as the picture there was gradually unfolded to me I began to realise what an immense and complicated subject it was, how ignorant I had been of the developments and the conditions as they were at that time, and how difficult it must be for any persons who have not seen for themselves India

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in its everyday life, to visualise it. Even those who have spent many years, say, in one province but who left India a few years ago would find it difficult to visualise present day conditions over the whole of that vast country. I think it was Lord Morley who said:

"It cannot be easy for any man to wake up to new times after a generation of good, honest labour in old times."

I do not think that it is sufficiently realised in this country by many people how much power has already been given into the hands of Indians. In coming in contact with Indian Ministers at the heads of their departments, judges, merchants, Indian business men of various descriptions, men who were alongside ourselves helping to create modern India, highly educated and intelligent men, with a natural and jealous pride in the part they were playing, I began to alter my views and to realise that, rightly or wrongly, and I now think rightly, we had taken a step in 1919 in fulfilment of declarations that were almost inevitable if we were to retain our good name, and to some extent satisfy the natural aspirations of educated Indians. The Act of 1919 did not satisfy Indian aspirations; but we cannot hope even to-day to introduce reforms in the real interests of India and of this country that would satisfy all sections of the Indian community.

I should like to quote a conversation that I had with a Bombay merchant of high standing which much impressed me at the time, because I believed that it reflected then, and I believe that it reflects to-day, what is in the real mind of educated Indians. He said:

"What we wish the English to understand is that we do not want you to leave India, far from it, but we want to be alongside you out here, and not out there."

Those views were also expressed to me, in other words, by one of India's most loyal Princes who unfortunately is now dead but whose friendship I had the privilege to enjoy. That is surely not an extravagant or an unnatural desire for educated Indians to hold. At the same time, one was very much alive to the necessity for prudence and caution in whatever other steps we might be called upon to take in order to give a further measure of self-government. That must have been in the minds of Ministers in 1919. We were then told that the Act of that year was only provisional, and I assume that it was on that account that a time limit of 10 years was inserted. I have always thought that the mentioning of a time limit then was a great mistake and that it has been one of the greatest factors in preventing the reforms at that time working as well as they might have done. That mistake must never be repeated.

We cannot say that the reforms of 1919 were a failure, far from it. They went far in educating Indians to a greater sense of responsibility and giving them an insight into the working of government. Can anyone believe that the minds of Ministers in 1919 were so dull and cloudy that they did not realise that they were putting their hands to a Measure the policy and practice of which prevented the retracing of our steps, and which clearly indicated to India the road which we had definitely set ourselves to tread. That was the time, in 1919, when this House took the greater risk, and that is why it is so difficult for so many of us now to understand the attitude of my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill), who was then a Member of the Government. I do not doubt his sincerity, far from it, but I have searched the official records of the Debates that took place in the House at that time and I cannot find any record of his having raised his voice to express the fears and anxieties which he now so strongly entertains.

All reforms until they are proved to work successfully must be a risk and cause anxiety. Anxiety is not the monopoly of those who are opposing this Bill. Those of us who have studied the position of India and who realise the magnitude of what we are called upon to decide, must feel a great sense of responsibility and anxiety, for whichever method we may adopt, whether it be the proposals in this Bill or whether it be a restricted form of provincial autonomy, such as I understand is favoured by my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) there is a risk from which we cannot free ourselves, but I contend that the greater risk lies in the restricted and more dangerous proposals which the right hon. Member for Epping would prefer to see.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: Why not leave it to the Indians to decide?

Mr. BOULTON: I think that the attitude of my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping to-day has caused some astonishment to those who have some knowledge of India. Fear and anxiety are engendered by extreme views, whether from the right or the left, and when these views play on the feelings of very many who are necessarily ignorant of Indian conditions the effect is immeasurably greater. The Indian Congress? Well, the Congress is not India, any more, shall I say, than the right hon. Member opposite is England.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: I was returned by 30,000 Englishmen.

Mr. BOULTON: When I referred to the right hon. and gallant Gentlemen opposite as not being England I was referring really to extremes of view. When extremes obtain power they threaten darkly and sometimes quite frankly how they will do us in.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: I am not an extremist. I am supported by all parties.

Mr. BOULTON: An atmosphere for calm consideration is not improved by these extreme factions. Those who reserved their judgment until the committee had reported and the Bill was before them were right in doing so. I am satisfied that the additional and improved safeguards embodied in the Bill have to a great extent removed many of the anxieties which some of us have felt. I have always understood that our policy was to educate Indians to take a larger share in the government of their country. And this education has not always been in India; it has largely been in our own universities. How can you educate a governing class if you do not give them some share of responsibility? To do so would be a negation of all that we have done and promised India for years past; it would be courting failure, create untold difficulties and the dislocation of those friendly trade relations which are so vital to India and ourselves. It would be impracticable to expect Indian Ministers to act with real responsibility without responsibility for the results of their actions, and I welcome the recommendations made and the conditions which are now embodied in the Bill. I realise how important it is that the question of the police should be removed from political influences, and, if I am not mistaken, nobody will be more relieved than Indian Ministers themselves.

With regard to the question of Safeguards, discrimination is extremely important and requires careful consideration. I fully appreciate what a thorny question it is and the difficulty of inserting definite conditions in the Bill. But we are entering upon a great business transaction. We are proposing to bring India into partnership with ourselves. That really is the true meaning of the Bill as I understand it. In arriving at the conditions it is a matter of give and take, seeing how much we are proposing to give. After all that we have done for India in the past I had hoped that what we really mean and wish to achieve would have been expressed in clearer and more definite language; that we should have clearly indicated what our intentions are, if not in the Bill, then in the terms of the trade agreement which has been concluded. So vital is the smooth working of the partnership, not only for the next few weeks, but maybe for generations to come, that I urge the Government to reflect again and see if they cannot agree to clearer and more precise language so as to avoid all misunderstanding in the future. I am sure that this would be to the benefit of both parties.

An All-India Federation is the most important recommendation in the Bill. To give a restricted form of Provincial Autonomy without responsibility at the Centre, even in a British India Federation, would surely be as dangerous as it is unworkable. But a British India Federation will not solve the problem, as the Simon Report clearly pointed out, and anyone who knows India must realise it also. I believe that an All-India Federation is essential for the satisfactory and smooth working of the constitution, and I say that because of economic and political reasons. That point has already been dealt with somewhat fully in our previous Debates and I will not labour it, but I do say that if we are to take a risk—and which ever method we may adopt we shall have to take a risk whether we like it or not—I prefer to take a risk with our friends rather than without them. That is not a cowardly attitude, it is a matter of common sense and prudence. Who are our friends in India? I look upon the Princes as our backbone in India. Apart

[Mr. Boulton.]

from their undoubted loyalty it is in their own selfish interests that our presence in India should be strongly felt. I would far rather go forward with strength than with weakness, with an emasculated form of government which might lead only to friction and muddle and which would deny, perhaps for all time, having at our side, a great solid block of conservative opinion which when necessary could act with salutary effect.

The Bill is nothing more or less than a partnership, and in arranging a partnership, in defining the conditions, we must endeavour to make the clauses simple and clear to avoid misunderstanding. The Bill goes a long way to accomplish that, but I hope that when the Bill has been through Committee I for one shall be able to read the final Act and understand it without the assistance of great lawyers; that we shall feel that the Act is what we intended it to be and what we clearly intend India to understand it to be—a real partnership. The constitution must necessarily ever be a real working partnership with England and the Empire. If that is the final result of the immense work of the Joint Select Committee, to whom we are so much indebted and whose work was indeed monumental, and not least of the Secretary of State himself, then I think we shall go far towards obtaining the practically unanimous acceptance by this House of a great measure in the consolidation of the Empire.

8.34 p.m.

Mr. LEVY: I do not propose to roam over the whole of the Bill but to confine myself shortly to one or two observations on the question of trade discrimination. I listened with great interest to what the Secretary of State said and properly said, that the question of trade discriminations was of paramount importance. I have listened to every speaker, I have sat here for four and a-half hours. Nearly the whole of the speeches have been based on the words "good will." Without good will the Bill will not work. That is the interpretation I have put upon all the speeches. I have listened to the Debate with a genuine desire for conviction that the Bill is as wise, as safe and as reasonable as it is claimed to be by those who support it; but my fears have not been allayed. On the contrary they have been strengthened.

In a matter of this nature, so complex and so vast, we have, of course, to a large extent to consult experts in Indian affairs. I am not one of them. But, having spent a lifetime in business, I have some qualifications for stressing certain economic aspects of the Bill. I submit, and I think it will be generally agreed, that they are all-important. It is no use beguiling ourselves with reassuring phrases, hopes about making India, through the grant of self-government, a loyal unit of the Empire, if we are doubtful about the attitude to trade with this country of the Indian Governments and Ministers that we are about to set up. There can be no progress in Imperial unity, no good will, no strengthening of the ties between this country and India or the forging of new ties, if Indian politicians and administrators are going to use their new powers in order to hamper and reduce our trade with India.

We have heard good will mentioned always. It was one of the stock phrases with regard to Ireland. It was used with regard to Egypt. It was also used with regard to Ceylon. It is being used now with regard to India. The plank upon which my right hon. Friend the Lord President of the Council said quite definitely that this Bill should be based was good will between the peoples. That, I submit, is the determining factor of the policy embodied in this Bill. Of the present bitter hostility to this country of Congress, which is the all-powerful political organisation in India, there can be no doubt. It has been expressed again and again, and as recently as a few days ago, when the Legislative Assembly passed a hostile vote on the Anglo-Indian Trade Agreement. But I am not concerned with whether that vote has any effect on the agreement or not. I am concerned with the implications of that vote and with the implications of many other exhibitions of hatred to this country afforded by the Indian politicians.

I speak for a great body of commercial opinion which must be patiently heard and carefully weighed. I have consulted many merchants' organisations and many individual merchants who have very important trading connections with India, and I have not found one who regards the future under this Bill with anything but very grave misgivings. These people are not politicians. They are not given to unwarranted optimism or pessimism.

They are realists, and they see developing in India, after the passage of this Bill, a situation which will have a disastrous effect upon our Indian trade, and therefore on the employment in this country of those who depend upon that trade. They see Congress hatred transformed by devious methods to injure that trade, despite the alleged safeguards in the Bill. It has been said that even Indian politicians who are actuated by hatred of us are not likely to indulge in the foolish practice of cutting their noses to spite their faces, that Indians cannot afford to pursue such a course with a country which takes so large a proportion of Indian products as we do. But Indian fanaticism takes no count of common sense. It is blind and unreasonable and driven by emotions of strength and intensity which Western people cannot understand. If fanatical hatred drives the Indian to extreme courses against us, it is very little comfort or consolation to British industry and the workpeople in this country to know that if they suffer so also do the workers in India.

The safeguards in the Bill are supposed to prevent trade discrimination against Great Britain. It is said that the Governor-General can step in. In Clause 12 we find these words:

> "In the exercise of his functions the Governor-General shall have the following special responsibilities, that is to say, the prevention of action which would subject goods of United Kingdom or Burmese origin imported into India to discriminatory or penal treatment."

I cannot see how any Governor-General can possibly keep an effective check on all the administrative actions, often, no doubt, of a very subtle character, that it will be possible to take against British trade. British trade can be half strangled, if hostility is sufficiently determined, by means of Customs regulations, factory and labour regulations, fomenting labour troubles at the ports, and the disclosure by subterranean methods of confidential information to Indian trade rivals.

Another loophole is the imposition of tariffs. It may be said that there is the safeguard that the Governor-General can step in to prevent the imposition of tariffs if he has reason to believe that they are being imposed to the detriment of Great Britain and are of no benefit to India. For the last two years we have had 25 per cent. imposed on textile goods imported into India. That is to the detriment of Great Britain and it is of no benefit to India. The Indians who desire to buy our goods cannot afford to buy them. It is not in the interests of the Indian consumers. How is any Governor-General going to keep an effective check on all the intrigues that he will have ranged against him? He will have ranged against him all the effective machinery of day-to-day government, by means of which every possible obstacle can be put in the way of investigation and exposure. In other words the British trade front could be subjected in a concentrated form to sniping of the most vicious and damaging kind. I have no desire to deprive the people of India of the exercise of democratic freedom, always provided that there is reasonable assurance that it will not be abused, and that it will not be used to injure the Commonwealth and to inflict additional hardships on the helpless millions of India, merely for the purpose of serving a fanatical hatred of this country. The Congress Party which has always distinguished itself by hatred of this country is only about 100,000, I believe, and to that vicious caucus is to be given the wide powers at the Centre and in the Provinces proposed in the Bill.

May I be allowed to add this? We who oppose the Bill are not one whit less concerned with India and the Empire than those who support it. This is not a party question but a great Imperial issue, which closely affects the employment and the happiness of thousands of our workpeople. Once this Bill has been passed it will be too late to draw back. I ask the House, does anyone imagine that if Indian politicians abuse this measure of self-government and if we have to use the special powers placed in the hands of the Governor-General and the Provincial Governors, we shall be able to reverse the engines without enormous disturbance and loss? The time for caution is now, and I submit that it can best be exercised by amending this Bill so as to keep the Central Government of India in our own hands for the present. That would still leave Indian Ministers and administrators a much wider field than they have now, in the Provincial Governments to which, I sug-

[Mr. Levy.]

gest, they should be confined until they have proved themselves competent for the equitable discharge of their responsibilities as loyal subjects of the Crown.

8.48 p.m.

Mr. MUNRO: Once in a way I feel inclined to sympathise with those whom I have so often attacked, namely, the people who make long speeches. But let no hon. Member fear that I am going to translate my sympathy into action. I have been emboldened to intervene in this Debate because in the first place I realise that when convictions sincerely held are expressed in this House, they are always treated with the respect which they deserve. I have, too, considerable experience in working with men of other races, admittedly not in India but at the same time I feel that that has given me an opportunity of appreciating the difficulties and dangers which have had to be considered by every one of us in studying this problem. It is true that on a previous occasion I stated my general agreement with the policy of the Government. It is also true that ever since that occasion, some two years ago, I have done my utmost to weigh up the arguments and statements of those who have criticised that policy. I feel that it is worth while to say that because we must all realise how complex, difficult and grave this question is. I am very glad to say that I find that the critics and the supporters of the Bill have some common ground. Certainly we have all come to the realisation that there must be some advance, especially in view of the pledge which we gave in 1919.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: This is not an advance.

Mr. MUNRO: I disagree. In my opinion it is an advance. I also feel very definitely in my own conscience—whether or not one puts aside subsequent proclamations and bases oneself only on the actual pledge in that Bill—that the intention of the British people was to make an advance in gradually giving responsible self-government to India. I was very glad to see in the Minority Report of the Joint Select Committee that that intention was admitted. Therefore, I believe I can fairly claim that there is the common ground stated in the Minority Report, namely, that we should now proceed, in any case, to undertake the establishment of constitutions in the Provinces. That is a very distinct advance on common ground, and the more common ground we can get the better pleased I and everyone else will be.

Having established the existence of that common ground I would like to say a few words as to the two sections who in this House and in the country are opposing some parts of the Bill. They represent two completely separate bodies of opinion. There is the left wing represented by hon. and right hon. Members of the official Opposition, and there is also a right wing. They criticise the principles of the Bill from different angles. I have referred to them as the left wing and the right wing respectively, and, to continue the sporting metaphor, I may say that they have a very formidable centre forward in the person of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill). He can use his head, can shoot with both feet, and requires careful watching because he is a thoroughly good exponent of passing. I am sure that if any verbal dispute arose with the referee or with the opposite side, the right hon. Gentleman would be a very formidable protagonist in that dispute because of his great oratorical ability, his magnificent choice of adjectives and what one might almost call his predetermined spontaneity. These are all dangerous weapons which he well knows how to use.

I should like now to refer to the attitude of hon. and right hon. Members of the official Opposition. I have looked with great care at the draft which the hon. Member for Limehouse (Mr. Attlee) presented. It is indeed a fine bit of writing and in it there are many fine phrases. At the beginning many things are said with which, I think, we all agree. I took note of some that I specially wanted to mention. He said in the Draft Report:

> "In handing over power to other hands, we must ensure that the weaker sections of the community are safeguarded."

That, I am sure everyone will agree, is a most laudable sentiment but when, after listening to the speeches and examining the draft, you ask what are the safeguards proposed, it comes down to a problematical and remote extension of

the franchise. Now whether or not one considers that that is a wonderful remedy when it does occur, there is no doubt in the mind of anyone present that it is a remote contingency to have the widest extension of the franchise in India. Another remark that is in the draft is:

"Any constitution must satisfy Indian public opinion."

There again I think there is nothing harder to define than Indian public opinion. I daresay that that is true of public opinion in any country, but in India especially it is a very difficult thing to define, and if we were to have to satisfy Indian public opinion before we took any steps in advance, we should be endangering any advance in India for many years. Again they say in the draft:

"Nor would it be right for us to subordinate entirely our greater and longer experience of the working of Parliamentary institutions to the views of Indian politicians."

If we delete the word "entirely," I would agree with that statement. I feel that it is certainly not our duty to subordinate our great experience to the views of Indian politicians in these matters. I feel that the responsibility for the decisions that we have to take now and have taken in the past must be on us, and, therefore, I entirely agree that we should not subordinate our own judgment in these matters to that of Indian politicians. The fourth point they make in the draft is that defence must be for many years reserved. There again I feel there is common ground. We all know and realise, and all reasonable Indians know and realise, that defence both for external and internal reasons, must remain reserved at the present time, and I feel that it is no use at all, and indeed entirely futile, to suggest that we should put a limit of so many years for the transference of defence, because any statement of a time limit in such a Bill or in such discussions as these has never led to anything but friction and disaster. It is like a continuous running sore, and I hope that that idea will not be put forward by the Opposition, because I am sure it will only do harm.

Turning to the other wing of the critics of these proposals, I realise that there are two great points of difference between those who support the Bill and those who are against it. I have stated before the common ground, but there is a great division on the question of the transfer of law and order. Again on a previous occasion I have said to this House that in my view it was necessary to transfer law and order. I said too at that time that I was speaking with considerable experience and appreciation of the full dangers and risks of such a transfer. I have not changed my opinion in that respect in any way, but my real reason for advocating the transfer is much more my belief that you cannot really try out responsibility without the transfer of law and order in the Provinces. That reason influences me much more than the idea that you would concentrate on to the police all the political hostility were the transfer denied. My own great reason for advocating transfer is, as I say, that I believe you must try out responsibility to the full.

I am, too, very glad indeed to welcome the extra Safeguards which are in the Bill and which were advocated by the Joint Select Committee. It is not now the moment to go into all those separate Safeguards, but I feel I might usefully say that as regards the "secret intelligence" new Safeguard, the withholding of information, I am convinced that there is nothing derogatory to the Indians or to anyone else in that. I am sure that everyone here who has had any experience of getting and giving secret intelligence must have had the experience, either as a subordinate or as a superior, both of giving and receiving definite secret information without disclosing and without knowing the source of the information. It is a very ordinary practice, not only at home, but certainly abroad, in such services, the reason, of course, being that the fewer people who know the source of the information in such circumstances as sedition, the less likely is harm to come to the informer; and I hope it will be thoroughly realised by the Indian police that there is nothing derogatory at all in that Safeguard.

As regards the other main point of difference, it is, of course, the composition of the Centre. I do not want to repeat in my own words arguments that have been used so much more ably by others, but I would like to try to put as simply as I can the position as I see it. If we grant, on common ground, Provincial Autonomy, we have then to face three possibilities at the Centre. We

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can, first, keep the Centre as it is, and I know of few people who advocate that. Hon. Members will remember that the Statutory Commission pointed out the very great weakness of the Centre and the very strong effect which the Legislative Assembly, which was irresponsible, had on the programme of the Government at the Centre. That weakness was fully endorsed when the Joint Select Committee inquired into the matter, and I am glad to say also that in the Minority recommendations put in by the Noble Marquess and his friends the words occur, speaking from memory, that the weakness of the Centre is a very serious blemish as things are at present. Therefore, nobody really advocates retention of the Centre exactly as it is. The critics say, "Let us help the Centre by adding to it an advisory council." There is, in my view, one very great objection to that proposal, and that is the attitude of the States, which dislike—in fact, would not enter—a council which would be purely advisory. That is a great fault in the proposal made by the critics.

Duchess of ATHOLL: Will the hon. Member say when the Princes said they would never enter such a council?

Mr. MUNRO: I am afraid I cannot give the Noble Lady the exact date, but I think she will see it stated in the report of the Joint Select Committee. It was certainly stated to be so from the Front Government Bench in the Debate we had a short time ago. The third alternative is the Federation as proposed in the Bill. I believe that some measure of responsibility has to be given to the new centre. The Noble Lord the Member for Hastings (Lord E. Percy) pointed out what, in my opinion, was the great over-riding argument in favour of that. It is that any examination of the finances of India shows that the whole centre and interests of the Provinces must lie for many years to come in the financial and economic policy at the Centre. It would seem, therefore, a very dangerous thing to leave no nexus, no chain at all between the Centre and the Provinces.

I feel, too, that the other great argument in favour of Federation is the attitude of the Princes as declared. I am glad to see that they have recently declared that their attitude remains the same as before, and that they hold to themselves, perfectly rightly, the right to reserve their final judgment until they see the Bill, the accession treaties and the instrument of instructions. They made a most wise and statesmanlike pronouncement on the point. Therefore, I believe that of the three alternatives I have mentioned, the Federation as outlined in the Bill is the best. In my view, thoroughly realising the gravity of the decision and the full responsibility upon every member, the questions we have to ask ourselves are, Do we really want to try out Parliamentary Government institutions in India? Do we really believe in a united All-India Federation within the Empire as the goal and objective of our policy? If the answer to these two questions is in the affirmative, which it is in my case, I believe that this Bill is in the true line of progress. The history of England is the history of progress, and I support the Bill.

9.9 p.m.

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: My hon. Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Kirkpatrick), in the speech which he made earlier to-day, rather suggested that the opposition of those who were against the measures contained in this Bill was due to a superiority complex and an anti-Indian bias. Such a suggestion is totally unjustified. We are opposed to the Bill because we do not consider that the peoples of India to-day are ready for this tremendous advance in self-government. We do not in any way wish to restrict the measure of self-government which should be given to the peoples of India, but we desire that the stages of advance shall be in accordance with the abilities of the peoples of India to shoulder the responsibility of further self-government. I wish to criticise the proposals in the Bill from the point of view of the Simon Commission's Report, which is the greatest historical document in existence dealing with political and other conditions of India. I have not had the benefit of having been in India or of any practical experience of the conditions in that country. Therefore, I am forced to base my opinion on the report of the Simon Commission, upon the evidence that has been given, and on the various speeches and Debates which have taken place.

I have been led to the inevitable conclusion that the measure of self-government which is now proposed, if one takes the Simon Commission's Report as one's basis, is totally unjustified. We are not bound by any pledges which have been given, other than the promises which have been made on the part of the Sovereigns of this country, and what is contained in the 1919 Act. We are committed to try out self-government in India. That is the policy which we have carried out in every other part of the world, where we have had the opportunity. There is nothing new in that at all, but we do desire that the measure of self-government which shall be given to the peoples of India shall only be by stages, and such stages as the people have shown themselves fitted for. The 1919 Act says that the progress towards self-government is to be gradual by stages only, that Parliament alone is to decide what the stages must be, and that the decision of Parliament must depend upon the co-operation and sense of responsibility shown by those upon whom the Act conferred new powers.

The instructions given to the Simon Commission were that they were to report

"whether and to what extent it is desirable to establish the principle of responsible government, or to extend, modify or restrict the degree of responsible government then existing."

We are told to-day that there can be no restriction. That may be perfectly true, but it must have been equally obvious when these instructions were given to the Simon Commission, and it seems to me a great pity and a great blunder that it was given instructions to consider whether we should restrict the measures which were in the 1919 Act. We are told that we cannot stand still. That is true. It is also argued that we must go forward with a greater measure of self-government. That may be true, but the difference of opinion in this House and in the country is based upon what the advance shall be and the rate at which advance shall take place. The changes now contemplated in this Bill have reached the stage where they can no longer be treated as an experiment. They have gone long past that stage, and they are far too comprehensive to be regarded as an experiment. If an experiment fails in its nature as an experiment, it cannot do any particular harm, and it may do good, but this proposed Constitution is too great to be considered as an experiment. If it fails, the disaster will be on such a scale that it will be a disaster to India, to this country and the Empire alike. The Simon Commission, speaking of the first experiment in self-government, that is, the Act of 1919, reported:

"In any case the time is too short for any real judgment to be formed, and it is difficult, therefore, to decide how far success or failure is due to the new or the old elements in the Government. The prestige and experience of those who had worked the former system were still available. The experience gained did not provide sufficient data to plot with confidence the curve of future progress."

That is a definite statement by the Simon Commission that this first step in self-government had not been tried out for a sufficient length of time to guide us to any decision as to whether that particular form of government was either suited to the Indian mentality or Indian needs, or whether it had been successful or a failure. The last phrase:

"The experience gained did not provide sufficient data to plot with confidence the curve of future progress."

is, in my opinion, of very great importance. To-day we have a very comprehensive Bill providing for self-government in the Provinces, responsibility at the Centre and a Federation of All-India. In view of the report of the Simon Commission, I ask the Government on what they have based this tremendous change in the constitution of India? Is it suggested that the Simon Commission did not take sufficient evidence before reporting? Is it suggested that these proposals are based upon the experience of the Act of 1919? Is it suggested that this advance is gradual or by stages only? I think there can be no doubt that the answer to all those questions must be in the negative, and I ask the Government on what it is they have based this tremendous change in the constitution proposed for India?

Again, we have been told by speaker after speaker, and quite rightly so, that we must rely upon the good will and the co-operation of the people in India in order to make this proposed Constitution a success. Have we had that loyal co-operation and good will so far? It is notorious that the only well organised political party in India, the Congress

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party, did their utmost to make that Act a failure, and they succeeded to a very great extent. They were opposed to the White Paper proposals, they were opposed to the Joint Select Committee's Report, they are more than ever opposed to this Bill, and there will be no possibility of relying upon their co-operation and good will to make this Constitution a success. I quite agree that no Constitution given to India, other than complete independence, would satisfy the Congress party, but we have to remember that they are the majority party in India, and therefore we set off with this Constitution knowing that we can place no reliance on the good will and co-operation of the strongest party in India. The Government, I believe, rely upon the mass of moderate Liberal opinion in order to work the Constitution; but what are the facts? The National Liberal Federation held a conference at Poona in December, 1934, and an important resolution was passed unanimously. The "Times" of 31st December, 1934, published a short report of the proceedings. Mr. Sastri, who is a man of great political standing, a very important political figure in India, a man who must have the complete confidence of the Government—certainly he has had the complete confidence of the Government of India in the past—moved a resolution which was carried unanimously. I will read that resolution, because from my point of view it is of the utmost importance:

"The National Liberal Federation of India records its profound regret at finding that the Select Committee's Report, instead of removing the glaring defects and shortcomings of the White Paper proposals, pointed out by the Federation at its two previous sessions, has, in utter disregard of almost the entire body of Indian opinion of all shades, including the British Indian Delegation to the Joint Select Committee, introduced further highly objectionable reactionary features rendering the responsible Government in the Provinces and at the Centre which the British Government professes to give India wholly illusory. The Federation is convinced that any constitution based on the lines of the Select Committee's Report will be wholly unacceptable to all shades of Indian political opinion, and will, far from allaying, very much intensify the present deep political discontent in the country. The Federation therefore does not want any legislation based on the Select Committee's Report."

That Resolution was carried unanimously. In moving the Resolution Mr. Sastri said it depicted the general feeling of the Federation. It was impossible to contemplate with peace the enactment of the Constitution proposed in the Select Committee's Report. The President of the Conference, in concluding the session, said he hoped the British Government would have the wisdom not to resist the united wishes of the nation. In my opinion that is the most damning resolution which could possibly have been moved. The Government cannot say that this is of no moment, that such a resolution does not matter. They cannot suggest that Mr. Sastri is a politician of no account, that what he says does not matter. Mr. Sastri is a man of great importance in India. He is a Privy Counsellor; a Companion of Honour; he has been given the freedom of the City of London; he has been employed on many most important duties in connection with India. He was deputed to represent India at the Imperial Conference in 1921 and at the League of Nations at Geneva in 1921. He was deputed by the Government of India to the Governments of Australia, New Zealand and Canada to represent the disabilities of Indians in those Dominions. He was agent of the Government of India to South Africa from 1927 to 1929. He was at the Washington Conference which considered the limitation of armaments. I mention these facts to the House in order that no doubt whatever may be in the minds of hon. Members that Mr. Sastri's opinion is one that has to be listened to, that cannot be swept on one side as of no account, for he is, obviously, a political leader in India who has the complete confidence of this country.

Mr. ISAAC FOOT: Is the hon. Member desirous of following the lines laid down by Mr. Sastri?

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: No, my case is that the Government are dependent on the good will and co-operation of moderate Liberal opinion in India for the working of this Bill. As the Government cannot rely on the largest political party in power in the Central Legislature, cannot rely on the mass of Liberal opinion, upon whom do they rely? I think the House is entitled to an answer to that question. The Government have based the whole of this Constitution on obtaining good will. It seems to me that if they are going to rely on good will for

the working of this Constitution they are backing the wrong horse, for it will not run. It was clearly shown in the evidence before the Simon Commission that where British control had been relaxed or taken away altogether, that communal troubles had been intensified, that the services themselves had suffered, and that bribery and corruption had increased, as a result of the 1919 Act. There was no question about that whatever. I would ask the House to consider, when this tremendous advance in self-government is given, what will be the further extent of these evils which came about as a result of the 1919 Act. I would refer to the transfer of law and order in the Provinces, which is a matter on which Members who disagree with this Bill hold very strong views. It is not only Members in this House who feel keenly on this matter, but those who are responsible for working it in India. Police officials are extremely uneasy about it. Every line of evidence before the Joint Select Committee betrays the great uneasiness at this transfer of law and order. The Simon Commission were fully aware of the gravity of the situation if this transfer took place, and gave arguments condemning the transfer, which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs described as apparently unanswerable. However, he is quite capable of making out a case on the opposite side.

Notwithstanding the very strong arguments which were contained in the Simon Commission report against transfer, it did recommend that transfer should take place, because they said that if it did not then responsible government in the Provinces would be a farce. In my humble opinion I do not agree with that. We are going to give to the Provinces a tremendous advance. If the Ministers who will take charge when there is autonomy in the Provinces are not satisfied with the administration of other departments over enormous areas involving a population of between 30,000,000 and 40,000,000, then I should be very sorry for the future of India. The whole of their ability—and many of them will be inexperienced—will be severely taxed, quite apart from the transference of law and order. The Simon Commission did not recommend this transfer without any qualification. On the contrary, there were two qualifications, and very important ones, neither of which appears in this Bill. First of all, there were to be one or more Ministers who could be nominated by the Government.

Mr. ATTLEE: I did not say there should be one, but that there might be one.

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: "Might be." Does the hon. Member suggest that "might be" means nothing? If it means nothing, they had no right to put it in their report.

Mr. GODFREY NICHOLSON: Why does the hon. and gallant Member confine himself to the Simon Commission instead of dealing with the Joint Select Committee?

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: Because the Simon Commission's Report is the most historical document about India.

Mr. NICHOLSON: Why does the hon. and gallant Member confine himself to one document, when there is another one of at least equal authority?

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: I do not at all agree that the report of the Joint Select Committee is of equal authority. The Simon Commission was completely unbiased in this matter, and spent three years in India and on its report.

Miss RATHBONE: And all the survivors have now changed their mind.

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: The Joint Select Committee was composed of a majority of those in favour of the Government proposals. That is why there is an enormous difference in the significance of the Simon Commission's Report and that of the Joint Select Committee.

Mr. NICHOLSON: Does the hon. Member say that people were honest in 1929 and dishonest in 1934?

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: I have not brought honesty or dishonesty into it. I never do. I give everybody full credit for their own convictions, and I trust that hon. Members will give me it also. Let me get back to this Simon Commission's Report. There was to be, in addition, a unitary central government and a strengthened government. The Simon Commission when they reported did not visualise a system of governments at the Centre such as is proposed in this Bill, but that there was to be a unitary

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system of government at the Centre, the same as then existing. That is not in this Bill. These are two vital differences between transfer of law and order in the Simon Commission and in this Bill. I entirely agree that there are Safeguards for the police, special powers in the hands of the Governors and the Governor-General, but I would remind the House with regard to the question of Safeguards that they are anathema to every shade of political opinion in India. It is quite obvious that those who are opposed to Safeguards will do their very utmost to make these Safeguards of no use, and at the first available opportunity do away with them altogether. Another point is that when the Simon Commission reported the regrettable terrorist campaign had not taken place.

Mr. NICHOLSON: Does the hon. and gallant Gentleman contend——

Mr. WISE: Is it not possible in any way to prevent the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Nicholson) from making these mechanical jumpings up?

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: I do not think that it will be argued that the terrorist campaign which has taken place had taken place when the Simon Commission reported.

Mr. NICHOLSON: Oh!

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: Well, we will leave it at that. If the terrorist campaign had assumed the proportions which it has—I hope the hon. Member will concede that—I do not think the Simon Commission would then have recommended the transfer of Law and Order.

There is a further point with regard to the Safeguards. You may safeguard the police, but what about the magistrates and the law courts? Law and order do not merely consist of the police, who are merely part of law and order; we must also have safeguards in regard to the magistrates who control the police in the Provinces. If you merely safeguard the police, you are not safeguarding the transfer of law and order at all. In the course of time there will undoubtedly be Indian Governors in the Provinces. We know that the police now carry out their duties in an extraordinarily efficient and commendable manner, in the face of tremendous difficulties which are due to communal and political pressure. They can only carry out their duties because they know for certain that they will be backed up by those in authority, whatever they may do in carrying out their duty, provided that it is their duty and not only because of their discipline and loyalty. When you transfer law and order, is it suggested by any hon. Member that political and communal pressure and intrigue will not increase enormously? A Minister will have the greatest difficulty in resisting those influences, and when there is an Indian Governor, what then? It would be almost beyond the power of man for an Indian Governor with an Indian Ministry and an Indian electorate all bringing pressure to bear against him, to bring into operation these Safeguards against those people's wishes. For those reasons, we view the transfer of law and order with the gravest apprehension.

We are not alone in that feeling. The police in India view this proposal with the same grave concern. The efficient administration of law and order is one of the departments which touch the everyday life of the common masses of India more intimately than the administration of any other department. It is almost true to say that the administration of all the other departments is dependent upon the efficient and just administration of law and order. It is therefore absolutely essential that the administration of law and order should be above suspicion, should be outside political and communal pressure, and that the police in exercising their duty should be certain in their minds that they will be supported. Otherwise, I believe that the poison of doubt and mistrust will permeate the whole of the police force, whose efficiency will deteriorate, that law and order will suffer and that the scales of justice itself will no longer be evenly held.

I am sorry to have to read so much to the House, but I must do it in support of my argument. I propose to read what the late Mr. Montagu wrote in his book "An Indian Diary" on this subject. He said:

"Until they"—

that is, the Indians—

"have learned the customs, traditions and uses inseparable from representative institutions, the transfer to them of powers of

law and order will lead to anarchy, revolution, bloodshed, and starvation, which have resulted in Soviet Russia."

Those are not my words, but the words of the man who was responsible for the introduction of the 1919 Act. There was no question in his opinion that safeguards would meet the case at all. The Government are relying upon safeguards, but the late Mr. Montagu did not mention safeguards. What he said was that we must change the mentality of those who are to work the administration of India, and until that mentality had changed and until they had learned the customs, traditions and uses inseparable from representative institutions it would not be right to transfer law and order to them.

In regard to responsibility at the Centre, I again refer to the Simon Commission's Report. They stated:

"First, we lay down without hesitation the proposition that dyarchy at the Centre or any system of divided responsibility resembling dyarchy, is quite impossible. Unity in the central executive must be preserved at all costs . . . any suggestion to introduce dyarchy into the government of India (is) wholly inadmissible . . . we regard such a plan as not only unworkable in itself, but as no real advance in the direction of developing central responsibility at all."

That is a perfectly definite and unqualified statement in the Simon Commission's Report. As I understand it—I may be wrong—we are introducing divided responsibility at the Centre by this Bill, and we are introducing a system of dyarchy. I would ask the Government why they are doing that in face of this most definite opinion on the part of the Simon Commission.

The pity of it all is that the Simon Commission's Report was never brought before this House and discussed as the basis of a future Constitution for India. As regards Federation, the Simon Commission's Report said:

"but even if we were to ignore the Indian States and were to rest content with the Provinces as at present constituted, the necessary conditions for bringing a fully federal constitution into being are not yet present. The Provinces must first become political entities. . . . The Provincial constitution only begins to exist as a living thing when the forces which operate it are at work and provincial opinion gives it inspiration and direction. . . . until the Provnces of India have established themselves . . . as self-governing units, the ultimate form which the Central Government of India will take cannot be finally determined."

That surely is a very important decision come to by the Simon Commission with regard to the proposals which we are discussing to-day. The position in the Provinces is exactly the same as it was when the Simon Commission reported. The Provinces are not yet political entities, and the Provincial Constitution has not yet become a living thing. In other words, the Provinces are not ready to come into a Federation. That is the obvious conclusion which must be drawn from the Simon Commission's Report. It is no argument for the Government to say, "Oh, but Federation is only included in this Bill because it will come in at some future distant time." We know that the financial position of India has to warrant it; we know that a Federal Bank has to be set up; we know that the Princes have to come into the Federation; and, unless these things take place, and until they do take place, there will be no Federation. But the Government cannot use that argument to delay federation to some distant date. I cannot imagine any Government spokesman getting up in this Debate and saying to the people of India, "We do not propose to give you this federation for a time; we propose to wait." I do not think they would do that. I think there is no doubt that it is the intention of the Government that, provided the finances of the country will stand it, provided the bank is set up, and provided that the Princes will come into a Federation of All-India then to bring in Federation immediately. But I would ask the Secretary of State how these things affect the question whether the Provinces are able to federate to-day or not? The Government have frequently argued that the accession of the Princes makes all the difference, that, immediately the Princes said they would federate, everything was changed, as by a magician's wand—the whole conditions in India were altered. I see that the right hon. Gentleman nods his head. Let me put this to him: What was changed? This very important fact was changed, that, if and when a Federation was possible, the Indian Princes would come in and make a Federation of All-India, instead of a Federation of British India only. That is most important, and there

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is no disagreement that, when federation does take place, it must be a Federation of All-India. I think we are all agreed about that. But I would ask the right hon. Gentleman how the accession of the Princes can possibly accelerate by one minute the time when the Provinces are fitted and ready to enter a Federation at all? That is the real point with regard to Federation.

I want to bring forward another argument with regard to federation. The Simon Commission point out in their report that experience shows that federation has generally come about some time after the federating units have become politically self-conscious. In Australia and South Africa, unity as a common centre was only brought about a substantial time after each of the constituent units, or at any rate most of them, had achieved self-government; and the same is true of the Dominion of Canada and the United States of America. History has shown the necessity of federation growing gradually, after the lapse of a substantial time, out of the desire and recognised needs of politically self-conscious federating units, in the case of European countries, where the nation was of one race, with practically one language and one mentality, knowing the whole details of democratic government, and where there were not the almost insuperable barriers to a democratic form of government that exist in India to-day, with the communal question, with a history of 3,000 or 4,000 years with an autocratic form of government, and where their territory was infinitely less and their population considerably smaller than that of India. If in their case history has shown that it was necessary for federation only to come gradually, as the federating units prepared themselves for it and were fitted and able to federate, and when they wished to do, so I would ask the House whether it is not common sense that, in the case of India, where the difficulties are infinitely greater, we should go slowly in the matter of Federation, and should not throw completely on one side, not only the Simon Commission's Report, but the whole teaching of history itself.

We who oppose this Bill do not do so because we do not desire to help the Indian peoples to develop self-government. Far from it. We desire that we should go forward towards self-government in India. But we say that no one in this country or anywhere else can say what form of Government will ultimately be proved by experience to be fitted to the mentality, the needs and the conditions of the peoples in India. We say give them self-government in the Provinces. Let them, with that tremendous extension, as it is, of self-government, try out the experiment with our fullest co-operation and good will and support, and find out by experience whether a democratic form of government—which in most cases has proved not to be fitted to European countries and may also not be fitted to the Indian people—can be tried out first in the Provinces. Let them, as is so clearly pointed out in the Simon Commission's Report, evolve from experience the form of self-government that is really fitted to their needs. Instead of doing that however, we are imposing upon the people of India a Constitution unparalleled in the history of the world—the greatest experiment of all time, to use the words of the Secretary of State. Should it fail, what then? On whom will the failure chiefly fall? On the 300 millions or more people on the land in India over 90 per cent. of whom are illiterate and whose welfare should be our special care. It is upon them that the failure of this Constitution will chiefly fall. I ask the Government in view of the remarks I have made, inadequate though they may be, to stay their hands and not go forward with this tremendous advance in constitutional government which, from all the facts, would appear at the present time to be totally unjustified.

9.53 p.m.

Lieut.-Colonel MOORE: I must express my sincere sorrow at having to disagree with my hon. and gallant Friend who has just sat down. He has, however, expressed his views with such vitality, and his voice has also exhibited that quality so strongly, that I feel he will get over it. Whatever old soldiers do, it is quite obvious that old sailors do not fade away. It was about two years ago that as one of a lone band of 43 I spoke and voted very regretfully against the Government on the first White Paper proposals. I did so because of my experience, possibly very trifling,

of India now 25 years old; but I also did so because I had an inherent feeling to which I could not assign any particular reason that the Government were going too far and too fast. I had also some other reasons. I was greatly guided by a speech made by my right hon. Friend the Lord President of the Council and also by a speech made by my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Sir A. Chamberlain) upstairs, in which the outstanding argument was that, as federation depended upon the Princes, and as the Princes would form a stable and conservative element in the future Central Government of India, and as they had given an indication of co-operation in that Government, the best course was to take on ourselves this responsibility and get them into this complete Federation that is outlined in the Bill.

But I have been thinking during the last few months while the Bill has been under consideration, whether there was not some even more fundamental reason why this step is inevitable. I believe it became inevitable from the time the first Briton set foot in India. I do not believe it is inevitable because of any declaration made under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms Act. I do not believe it is inevitable because of any statements made by successive Viceroys or Secretaries of State or statements made in the Preamble of the 1919 Act. I believe it is inevitable because we took upon ourselves certain responsibilities when we took over from the East India Company. We encouraged missionaries to go to India and bring with them education and equality of social status. Then followed education by the Government. Then we welcomed Indians here to our public schools and universities and our big medical schools, and not alone did we give them equality in the social sphere but we went further and gave them equality of sex. Can one wonder why they have thought themselves qualified and why they went back to India feeling that they should have the same equality in the government of their own country? That is one of the main reasons why I decided to support the Government on the Motion on which this Bill was based and why I propose doing the same thing again on Monday night.

But, although I am supporting the Government, I have, like probably every Member of the Select Committee and everyone who is supporting the Government to-night, very grave misgivings in regard to what will actually happen. For instance, I imagine that the Bill will be viewed from three different angles. The first is that of the British man in the street, the voter, the man whom we here are representing, the man who will be held responsible when we put this Bill through Parliament. The second angle would be that of the Indian politician and the third, that of the man at home here who knows India and is yet opposed to the Government's proposal. Those, I imagine, should be the three guiding critics of the attitude of the Government. Take the point of view of the man in the street. He has not read the report of the Select Committee. He will not read the Bill itself. He will only take the views of his favourite newspaper. If he is a student of the "Times" or the "Daily Telegraph," he will believe that anything that the Government do is well done, whether it is about India or anything else, and he will not worry any more, whereas if he reads the "Morning Post" or the "Daily Mail" he will assume that, whereas the Government may be right in most things, on India they are dead wrong. If his political gospel is taken from the "Daily Express" or the "News-Chronicle" or the "Herald" he will be quite satisfied that all the activities of the Government on India or anything else are stupid, vicious and reactionary. It depends on the paper.

I do not think therefore that the opinion of the man in the street can be given too much weight or confidence, so we are thrown back on the other two categories the Indian politician and our own cultured educated Briton who has been to India and knows it. What is the Indian politician's point of view? This is not my idea of the Indian politician's view, but the views that I paraphrased from the Indian papers. The Bill will appear to him as an absolute mockery of self government in that it seeks to persuade him that he is getting control over his own affairs, whereas in actual fact he will have less control than under the present regime. It will appear to him that there are so many restrictions put to self-government—the special responsibilities of the Viceroy, the reserved departments, the Viceroy's discretion, his

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power of interference, and finally his complete dictatorial powers should there be any breakdown of government either at the Centre or in the Provinces. To Indians, this will mean in actual practice that with a strong, determined Governor-General and with a British Secretary of State of a reactionary outlook, there will be practically little, if any, freedom of government at the Centre and very little in the Provinces.

So we come to the third category, those in this House who, like myself and many others view the Bill with misgiving, who know India, some to a greater extent, some to a less, with a desire to see the right thing done but who yet feel that the Government have gone too far in this case. They see, I imagine, two great dangers. They see, first of all, the difficulty of finding a man of the necessary quality, eminence, character and ability as the King's representative in his dual capacity of Governor-General and Viceroy. The second difficulty they see is the attitude of a Socialist Government should they be called upon at a later date to implement the Act of Parliament which will be based and framed on this Bill. Many of us feel that, if a National or a Conservative Government will be in office, they can rest in peace because they will be assured that a man of outstanding qualities and integrity will be appointed and that, therefore, the Safeguards will be properly imposed and executed. But if, for instance, as some of these critics feel, by subtle, unscrupulous propaganda this Government were defeated at a General Election on some issue such as housing or depressed areas or the Unemployment Assistance Regulations, and then a Socialist Viceroy were appointed with strict instructions not to implement the Safeguards, what is the safeguard against that? That is one of the things that appeal to many outside the House who are taking a great interest in the Bill. I do not attach so much importance to the argument that India must be kept within the Empire. If we deserve to keep India, we shall keep it, but if a Socialist Viceroy, with strict instructions not to implement the various Safeguards was sent out, India would not only be lost but also handed over to chaos, misery and, of course, to bloodshed.

Then there is this other difficulty that appeals to me of the Viceroy or Governor-General, even under a National or a Conservative Government, carrying out his special responsibilities, exercising his discretion or using his individual judgment. Suppose he finds it necessary to discharge these special responsibilities in regard to a particular Province and he is forced as a last resource to resort to the Army. We all hope, of course, that he will not, but he may find that the Minister in charge of some particular Department on which the Army depends is hostile to his Government. What then? He can of course dismiss and replace them, but he cannot go on doing that indefinitely. Then he himself takes over the appropriate Department or Departments, but he can only move the Army to the disaffected Province if the railwaymen operate the railways, if the clothing factories turn out the clothing and equipment, and if the commissariat and ordnance departments shell out stores and ammunition. What is the safeguard here? That is one of the things which worries me a lot, and I hope that whoever replys to this Debate, will help us out of this difficulty.

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: Is my hon. and gallant Friend, from the argument that he has just used, in favour of reserving communications as well as defence?

Lieut.-Colonel MOORE: If my hon. and gallant Friend will pardon me, I am putting some of the difficulties which I experienced in reading this Bill, and I am asking the Government to help me to have those difficulties solved. At the same time, I have decided to support this Bill in its present form because I believe that it is an experiment which must now be carried out. We have gone far too far, and, as I have said from the minute the first Britisher landed in India and the first missionary taught education and equality this moment had to come. I only pray to God that it will be a success. But it would be far better, in my opinion, if we gave self government generously and unanimously to the people in India so that they will be encouraged and made confident that if they do try to implement this great Measure, they will have the support of the vast body of public opinion in this country behind them as well as our assistance and good will.

When I was interrupted by my hon. and gallant Friend, I was trying to point out the difficulties that the Governor-General would experience without a loyal administration. If disloyal, the Army is helpless, and therefore his one power seems to be gone. There may be answers to these conundrums. If so, I hope that we may have them. There is one other consideration because it is no good criticising constantly unless one can make some suggestion to help to alleviate one's own doubts as well as possibly help the Government, if one may make such a bold suggestion. There is this consideration which does appeal to me, and that is in regard to the present form of the Bill. Let us retain the principle of federation as provided under the Bill, but insert a Clause that Federation is only to be applied in practice by a Resolution of both Houses of Parliament, and that Resolution to be based on the report of another statutory Commission, who would report that the time is ripe and the conditions are suitable.

I know that there will be many who feel and will say, "Let us get done with the question of India. Let it now be dealt with with finality and for all time." But the question of India will never be finally dealt with. If this great adventure of the Government comes to full fruition, it is possible that in 10 or 20 years' time, we may be taking one more, and a greater, step, and therefore it is no use saying that we have finished with it. And so I would like to feel that we should have that further safeguard that we might have the report that the time and the situation are ripe for the practical establishment of the federal system. If success is achieved, as I believe and hope it will be, in the Provinces, then we can give Federation at the Centre without any safeguard; without any of these paper safeguards in which so many have trouble in believing. But we would have the one essential safeguard, that is the experience, good will and the loyalty of the peoples of India themselves.

I have not time to go into the questions of elections, of finance, the federal bank or the judiciary, or even the Indian States. In any case these are largely Committee matters, but I would remind the House that we have three major responsibilities to discharge. One is as my hon. Friend has said, to look after and direct the welfare of the peoples of India themselves. That is the first and chief one. The second is to protect the property and capital of those who have placed it in India for the benefit of India, and the third is to justify the work of those who have sacrificed their health and their lives, so that India and Britain may prosper.

I hope that this great adventure will succeed. I somehow have the belief that there is an inherent genius in the British people for government by compromise. I believe that there is also and will remain in India a great British tradition of justice, honour and integrity, and that with that permeating our various great services and our Civil Service, and of course the Army, although the adventure is dangerous, it may be and can be carried to a successful issue. I feel that this experiment had to be made. There are two or three great experiments that have had to be made in this twentieth century of ours. Prohibition in America had to be tried, and it failed because it was tried out as a result of a deep and passing emotion. Communism has failed in Russia because it was tried out in a moment of great enfeeblement of the country, and by a caucus who temporarily eliminated all opposition. But neither of those conditions apply to this experiment. It is being carried out after seven years of thought and consideration. It is being carried out without any danger to the parties in opposition or else we would not have had so many of them vocal to-night.

Therefore, we have every quality to enable the adventure to be safely embarked upon. If we do it with confidence, unanimity and with sufficient hope and belief and faith we may evolve out of this experiment an India which will be a happy, prosperous and contented member of the British Empire. I hope so.

10.14 p.m.

Sir NAIRNE STEWART SANDEMAN: The hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Kirkpatrick) gave us a very interesting speech, and I am sorry that he is not in his place. There were a great many words in it that were quite outside the knowledge of the House, and he had evidently been in India for a considerable time. He told us that he had been a diehard, but that he had gone soft. We do not find a diehard going soft, so I think that his

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original attitude in 1918 must have been wrong. He had a lot to say about good will and getting trade through good will. My experience of life is that you get far more trade out of respect than good will. If we talked a little more and made the Indians respect us a little more, I think that we should have better trade with India. The hon. Member for Ince (Mr. G. Macdonald) made a statement that the Lancashire cotton operatives would not do anything at the expense of Indian labour, but I do not think that he would mind the Lancashire cotton operatives getting a little bit of work at the expense of the dividends of the Ahmedabad mill-owners. The Secretary of State for India, with that humility which we are accustomed to from him, gave the impression that he knew he had solved the inscrutable riddle of the East and that he had joined the East and the West, but he did not quite tell us how. I do hope that he is right and that we who take a different point of view are wrong.

I have prepared several Second Reading speeches on this Bill in my spare time, but with no success, none of them sounded right, and finally I spoke to a friend, who solved the difficulty for me, thereby doubtless preventing me from saying a great many things that I should have been sorry for afterwards. When one feels very keenly about a subject one is perhaps apt to be a little hasty in saying things that one is sorry for afterwards. My friend said to me: "Go into a room by yourself and speak straight to yourself and tell yourself why you are taking up the attitude that you are on this Bill." That seemed to come very easy. Why was I taking up this attitude? When I was young, I suppose, like a great many of us, I read a great deal of Kipling. Kipling struck me as the sort of man who understood men in all classes, from the highest to the lowest. He got right inside them and saw inside them and then he had the gift of telling what he saw. I shall never forget the passage where he says:

> "Feed them in silence when they say,
> 'Come with us the easy way';
> Feed them in silence when they seek
> Help for them to hurt the weak."

That is what I am afraid that we may be doing. I am afraid that we may be helping certain people to harm the weak. That is one of the reasons, and a very strong reason, why I take up the position that I am doing. Many of my kinsmen spent their lives in India. They lived and died there and helped to build up the Empire. I shall never forget when I was a boy the huge pride that I had in feeling that Sir Robert Sandeman, who was known all over the country and Baluchistan, was a relative of mine. That is perhaps the reason why I start with a prejudice. But I never try to be bigoted, and I do not want to be a fanatic, although I do believe that fanatics are the only people who really accomplish very much. Having traded with India a good deal all my life I know the poistion of the jute trade there pretty well. I will touch upon that subject later.

I was elected to the House in 1923 on a full-blooded Protection policy, with Empire Free Trade. There were only a few of us who won seats that year, and it was for a Lancashire seat that I was elected. Since then India has been more in my mind than anything else, because India gave employment to those people whom I had the honour to represent in Parliament and for whom I felt responsibility. I began to get very much afraid of the way that the Indian tariffs were going. On this question we must go back, because it is only from the experience of the past that we can form our ideas of the position to-day and what our future policy ought to be. Every year, from 1924 onwards, I spoke to the powers that be about the question of the tariff against Lancashire cotton. One year it was, "You are just a day too late. Nothing can be done." Next year it was, "There is a ticklish question arising just now about India. Do not bring it on in the House as it will be very awkward. Just keep quiet. Do not make any noise." What was the result? The only person who did not lead me up the garden path about tariffs was Mr. Wedgwood Benn, who said that he would do absolutely nothing for Lancashire as far as tariffs were concerned, although it was a matter of life and death to the people there.

I am afraid that there is a good deal of eyewash about. If Lancashire Members in 1922 had made a sufficient row about it and had examined the whole point of the fiscal convention Lancashire would be in a better position to-day. I am told that it was a gentleman's agreement. All the gentlemen were on one

side, and they were led up the garden path by people in India. It was a unilateral agreement, and could have been broken, and should have been broken, when it was seen that the tariffs were not being used for revenue purposes but to keep Lancashire goods out. The gentlemen on this side were duped. The Bombay and Ahmedabad mill owners made the profits, while Lancashire people had to walk the streets. I feel strongly about this question. I feel as though I am to blame, that I should have been quicker to see what was going on, and what was at the back of the fiscal convention. The people who were responsible for the Convention cannot get away from their responsibility. I consider that they were responsible for being lulled into quiescence by the talk of grave State issues and that this so-called fiscal convention should have been got rid of the moment they saw how it was being used. It was their duty to have done so. I know that some people were not very happy when Mr. Edward Wood, now Lord Irwin, went as Viceroy to India. We felt that his attitude of mind was one of compromise. I have a great admiration for the man, his personal courage and undoubted ability, but he did not understand the East, and I am rather afraid that he was as wax in the hands of Mr. Gandhi.

What was the result to Lancashire, and to the Indian peasants, who, I firmly believe, wanted to buy Lancashire goods. It is all very well to talk about regiments walking from Cape Coromin to the Khyber Pass with cotton goods on their bayonets. I agree that it is no good doing that if the people do not want the goods. But we know that the people do want to buy Lancashire goods. There is no reason to suppose that they do not want to buy Lancashire goods. We have heard stories of how the women find Indian home-made cotton so rough that they would much prefer Lancashire goods; and would rather have them. Why should they not have them? Let me quote something which will confirm what I am saying. Sir Charles Innes, the late Governor of Burma was in 1922 a member of the Government of India for Commerce and Industry. In introducing into the Assembly a Bill setting up a Tariff Board he used these words:

"If the Indian masses could make their voices heard and their influence felt in this Chamber, I would not dare to be introducing these proposals, nor would the Assembly given them a hearing."

That is pretty strong language for a Member in his position to have said. I think it was perfectly true. For that reason I believe that if Lord Irwin, as he was then, had said that there was not to be a boycott, there would have been no boycott. A man with deeper knowledge of Eastern mentality—some of the methods are pretty near the wind—would have stopped it at once, in the same way as a man with greater force would have prevented the raising of the tariff in order to produce revenue. Is it to be wondered at that I am a bit sceptical about everything that happens after these experiences? It makes one doubt all the time the wisdom of the next step. A tiny body of Indian opinion, very vocal, started a boycott and kept it going. But that boycott was kept from the Centre. It was not wanted right out in the districts, which were really the purchasers of the cotton goods. I know it could have been stopped. I have spoken to numbers of the people who have been in India, and they all say it could have been stopped. The hon. Member for the English Universities (Sir R. Craddock) when in Burma nipped a boycott in the bud straight away by making it illegal to talk boycott or to publish details of it in the newspapers. That is the way in which it should have been treated by Lord Irwin instead of his having Gandhi up to Delhi and all that sort of thing.

What is the result of trying to placate those who are resolute in their hate for us? The Congress Party has shown exactly what it thinks of the trade agreement, which I do not think was really of much use to Lancashire, though the Lancashire men who had gone abroad had to make a good deal of it. Congress has thrown out the agreement. It is not very much consolation to know that they have not the power really to throw it out and that it still stands. But surely that is an earnest of what is to happen in the future. I am worrying only about the future and trying to use our experience in the past to make something better for the future. I understand that there is to be a tariff board in India, which is to do exactly what it likes. The mere fact of appearing before a board to state your case is not going to prevent a tariff being raised.

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Take another thing that happened about the agreement that the English Bombay mill owners had to sign—an agreement to take in Indian capital and Indian managers, to use Indian banks and to ship all their goods in Indian bottoms? Is that sort of thing to go on? It has happened in the past. How are we to stop it? Is there anything in the Bill that makes it impossible for such things to happen? Another thing about which I am disturbed is the question of pledges. We have been told, and I think it is true, that we are in no way pledged, that the House of Commons is in no way pledged. But all along I have said that the Indians consider that we are pledged. I think they are quite right to think that, because if the Viceroy makes a statement about Dominion status or the Prime Minister makes a statement on policy, they naturally think it is a pledge. I should like to know whether Lord Halifax when he was at home was empowered to use the expression "Dominion status" and also whether it was agreed to by the Conservative party. If, having talked to the Government here and to the Chief Whip and the Conservative party, he went out to India and talked about Dominion status, then the Indians must look upon it as a pledge, though it is a funny sort of pledge, I admit. I think everyone would be better pleased if this point were elucidated. Nobody wants Lord Halifax to be blamed if he was not to blame, and I am sure nobody wants to shelter behind him.

Then there is the question of solvency throughout India. The Secretary of State answered on Monday a question on that subject put by the hon. Member for the English Universities. His answer does not make very good reading. If you were proposing a combine and had to show these figures, you would not get many people to take shares in it. After all, it may be said it is all right. We are not being asked to take shares in it. But some of the poor people in Lancashire and also hundreds of millions of people in India are not only being asked to take shares in it. They have to put their lives and their all into it. I do not think it is a good thing to start a Constitution with such deficits hanging over it. We talk about "Dominion status," but it is very difficult to define what the expression means. I suppose that each Member in this Chamber if asked for a definition would have a different idea of it. But I always understood that if you belonged to a Dominion, you were also a British subject, and I see a great deal of difficulty arising in that connection. How are those who belong to the Indian States going to be members of the Dominion of India? It is a difficult question. I cannot see that the Princes will jump at our suggestion that they should become British subjects themselves and that their own subjects should also become British subjects, but surely that is the only logical way in which we can give India Dominion status.

I have read a great deal on this subject in recent months, and the more I read the more doubtful I become. I have read most of the evidence which was led before the Joint Select Committee, and I cannot see any sign of unity or agreement in it. The Members of the House are taking a great deal of responsibility upon themselves in dealing with this matter if they have not tried to study it at first hand, and if they are merely going to accept blindly what is put to them by people who are, we know, perfectly straight—we are making no accusation against them. But a great many of us, I fear, are following them blindly without trying to find out the facts for ourselves. Those who do so are undertaking a responsibility which I should not like to undertake. I studied the Simon Report carefully, and I thought it went too far. I could not agree with handing over law and order. The maintenance of law and order for thousands of years in India, indeed from time immemorial has been the prerogative of the Crown, and I personally think that it ought to remain the prerogative of the Crown or the Viceroy. I think handing it over to Ministers is bound to land us in a most awful lot of harm and trouble. After the Simon Report we had the Round Table Conferences, which did not quite give one a feeling of reality, and what really finished me was when we had the Joint Select Committee, with—I am not saying it in an invidious way—the Secretary of State for India witnessing to them and telling them what to do, sitting as a judge on them, and so many people who——

Sir S. HOARE: I do not know to what my hon. Friend is referring.

Sir N. STEWART SANDEMAN: The Joint Select Committee, the composition of it. That committee did not strike me at all as a judicial committee. It struck me as a committee composed of a lot of people who had made up their minds one way or the other, but if you have people like that, it is very difficult indeed to come to what I should call a fair and just decision. I should not have minded those people all appearing before a committee composed of the Judges, because they could have sifted the evidence out very much better, and I am certain that the Secretary of State would have given just as good evidence before the Judges as he did before the Joint Select Committee.

What is going to happen if this does not work? I have heard many opinions about that. I have even heard people who dared to say, "Well, if it does not work, it is all right, for we can then go back." But surely that is a policy of fear and cowardice, and it is not straight. I do not think the Secretary of State for India thinks that way at all. I believe he thinks it will work. I do not think it will, but anyone who supports it with the idea of its not working, so that they can have gone the easy way and then come in again—I think very little of people who think like that. It shows a want of courage and everything else. Why must we dash in so fast? I think we are doing a grievous wrong to the majority. In all this evidence and in all these reports we hear continually of minorities, but what about the 300,000,000, the vast majority? We never hear a word about them, and they are the people that I am sorry for. I am not at all sorry for the few people who are going to get jobs, but I am sorry for these people, about whom nothing is going to be done. Really they are going to be handed over. We are bound by the promise of Queen Victoria to look after the whole lot and to govern India for their good.

So far as the Montagu-Chelmsford Report is concerned, the Preamble is a definite promise, which remains unchanged, that we should go back, advance, or stay on the way as might be proved by events during the next 10 years. That Measure was to decide at what pace we were to go forward. One hon. Member said, "We are only asking you to take two steps down instead of one," but I always think that one at a time is plenty. Careful consideration of all these Departments should have been made before any other Departments were handed over. Where a scrutiny has been made, the results have not been good and have shown constant deterioration in the Departments. These Departments, which even under good British management were finding it hard enough to go ahead, have since British management ended—take the Medical Department, for instance—gone back steadily. It is not noticeable yet, because the impetus which they had gathered up has not quite died out, but all the reports that one gets are to the effect that they are not in the position they were in before, when they were under the British Raj and British management. Then why go on? Let us keep the medical service in our own hands.

Then I hear, with regard to irrigation, and education also, that people are afraid of a deterioration all round. I would not be talking as I am if I did not feel very deeply about the subject of the majority of Indians. I think that we are handing them over to the few. I have a great deal of sympathy for the people of Lancashire who, I think, might have been in a different position to-day if the Fiscal Convention had been properly used. I have figures to show that as the duty went up the revenue went down, with the exception of 1932-33. In 1920-21 there was a comparatively small duty of about 6 crores. In 1929-30 it went down to 3; in 1931-32 to 3 odd; in 1933-34 it was 4. I suppose that that money went into the pockets of the Allahabad and Bombay millowners. What are we going to get out of this? I think we are going to get the wails and curses of the millions whom we are betraying and the contempt and derision of those whom we are trying to placate.

10.42 p.m.

Mr. RICHARD LAW: The hon. Member for Middleton and Prestwich (Sir N. Stewart Sandeman) said that those of us who were prepared to come to a decision upon this question without any direct experience of India were taking a heavy responsibility and one which he would not like to have to take. That is true, but it is a responsibility which we cannot avoid. If we supported the hon. Mem-

[Mr. Law.]

bers who are opposing the Bill, or if we abstained from voting at all, we would still be assuming a responsibility. The only thing we can do is to exercise our judgment upon such evidence as is available to us and to act accordingly. The hon. Member is very angry about the Fiscal Convention, and I do not blame him. If I were a Lancashire Member I should feel the same way about it, but I cannot feel that the solution which the hon. Member offered—which I take it is to denounce the Convention—is a very happy one. The Secretary of State reminded us of what happened in the American Colonies when we adopted the kind of attitude which the hon. Member recommends that we should adopt now. There is an even higher authority than the Secretary of State to whom we might refer. The hon. Member lays great store on people with a direct and long experience in India. More than 100 years ago Warren Hastings said that the day might come when India would be lost to the Empire, as the American Colonies were lost, on the Floor of the House of Commons. I think that that authority should satisfy even the hon. Member.

I find myself in a certain confusion of mind regarding the attitude of those hon. Members of my own party who are in conflict with the Government on this subject. The hon. Member for South Paddington (Vice-Admiral Taylor) said, what I take to be more or less the official view of the Conservative opposition, that there was no real distinction in principle between the attitude of the Government and the attitude of the Conservative opposition, and that it was a distinction only of degree and of speed. He said that he, for his part, was equally anxious with the Government to make an advance on this Indian question, but that the advance should not be as fast as the Government proposed. If that is the case, how can it be that what we might call the keystone of the Opposition policy is denunciation of the Fiscal Convention? That is not any advance at all, but is a step backwards for 14 years. I think that when hon. Members say it is only a difference of degree and not a difference of principle at all that they are deceiving themselves, and that what they really want to do is to go backwards, and to go a pretty long way backwards.

The hon. and gallant Member for Wycombe (Sir A. Knox), in a speech which, if he will allow me to say so, impressed the whole House, I am sure, by its sincerity, was very solicitous for the welfare of the masses of India. He asked what good could come to the masses from the operation of democracy in India; he said they are not fit for it, that they are illiterate, that they do not understand what voting means, and that it was quite hopeless. On that kind of assumption democracy is quite unworkable anywhere. If we proceed on pure logic it is quite unworkable in this country, where it has worked very well on the whole, and probably will continue to work very well on the whole until such time as the hon. and learned Member for East Bristol (Sir A. Cripps) gets hold of the machinery of government. But even in this country it would be possible, I think, to match the kind of story which the hon. and gallant Member told about the difficulties in which the Indian peasant finds himself when asked to vote. I can certainly match them from my own experience in my own constituency, and I daresay other hon. Members can also. Not long after the General Election, when one might have supposed that even the most obscure Member of Parliament would have been known, to some extent, in his division, at any rate, a constituent of mine was asked, "What is the name of your Member of Parliament?" and I am told that he replied, "He is a decent enough chap, but I do not remember his name. I know he is a Socialist and I know his father was Lord Mayor of London." That constituent was evidently not a very close student of local politics, though he knew a good thing when he saw one. In the same way, I think it is fair to suggest, as I am told by a man with very great experience of India, that the Indian ryot, though not able to read or write, and not quite sure where he ought to put his cross on the ballot paper, is a very hard-headed fellow and has a very good idea of what is to his own benefit. He is not nearly so easily put upon as hon. Members are inclined to make out.

Sir A. KNOX: Surely there is no comparison between the electorate here, even in the hon. Member's constituency, and in India. The stories I told were of

people being hustled into the polling booth who did not know the name of the person for whom they were going to vote.

Mr. LAW: As the hon. and gallant Member says, it is perfectly true that it is not an equal comparison, but what I was saying was that if we take the ground of pure logic we are going to prove that democracy is absolutely unworkable anywhere. There has been a great deal of talk to-day on the subject of Safeguards, but it seemed to me, listening to the Debate, that the attitude of a good many people towards Safeguards has undergone quite a considerable change. In previous Debates on this subject we have heard a great deal about paper safeguards. We have not heard nearly so much about paper safeguards to-day. Indeed, anyone who reads the Bill must come to the conclusion that the safeguards are made rather of steel than of paper. I may not be a mathematician, but if I were I should have tried to have counted how many times the phrase "in his discretion" applying to the Governor or Governor-General occurred in the Bill. Whatever safeguards there are, they are not paper; they are pretty solid and severe. If that is so, then we are told that we are up against the old dilemma that there can be no real responsibility with real safeguards. I am sure that is quite a false dilemma. It has been said by dozens of Members in this House that these safeguards would only apply when a sense of responsibility failed, when responsibility turned into irresponsibility, when and if India proved itself incapable of responsible government. The Secretary of State in his speech this evening compared this Bill to the gigantic vessel to which Warren Hastings referred. This Bill seems to me much more like one of those enormous buildings of steel and concrete, the steel and concrete very hard and stiff and not very malleable, but the occupier of the building perfectly free to move about and make his own arrangements.

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: Unless there is an earthquake.

Mr. LAW: Only when the incendiary comes along to set the building on fire or the burglar to break in, does the steel and concrete become important. It is much the same in this Bill. The safeguards will only be brought into effect by irresponsible Indian politicians, but there are many responsible Indian politicians. In the Debate that we had before Christmas the right hon. Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) twitted the Lord President of the Council for being a prophet, and told him that prophets were often wrong. The right hon. Member for Epping is hardly the person to talk about prophecy, for he has been prophesying doom ever since this Bill on India hove on to the horizon. Probably he would say that the Lord President's prophecies are based on the opinion of pygmies—of Viceroys and Governors—while his are based on the sage experience of men who have spent many years of their lives with their noses to the grindstone in India. There may be something in his contention. But I have gathered from the reading of history that India is an uncertain continent and even those with thorough knowledge do not always make the most expert and accurate prophets.

It is very interesting to refer back to Debates held in this House after the Indian Mutiny. It is very interesting to see the kind of argument put forward in those Debates. In those days the question was not whether Parliament should divest itself of responsibilities, but whether it should assume responsibility for India from the East India Company. It is very interesting to read those Debates and to see how those whom I may, perhaps, without impropriety, call die-hards, those who had most experience of India, were most franctically opposed to Parliament assuming responsibility, just as they are to-day most opposed to Parliament divesting itself of responsibility. What is even more interesting is that a great many of the arguments which they used 80 years ago are being used in exactly the opposite sense to-day. For example, one Member pointed out to the House that if this dreadful thing were done, and if the House of Commons assumed control of the destinies of the Indian Empire, it would have a terrible effect upon recruitment for the Indian Service. It was pointed out that at that time the flower of the English race went into the Indian Service, but that if Parliament assumed control you would get only political hacks and second-rate people going out to India.

An hon. Member asked whether the House was aware what people who really

[Mr. Law.]
knew India thought about the House of Commons as a body for governing. He said that the confidence which those experts had in the House of Commons was of an entirely negative quality and that they were quite convinced that the House of Commons was not qualified in any way to control the Secretary of State and the Indian Empire. Another hon. Member asked the Minister who was responsible for the Bill: "Do the Government seriously believe that an Indian Empire constituted as these Resolutions propose, will ever pay its own way?" The analogy is a strangely complete one, and though this is an argument which one might easily push too far, it does give one room to hope that a good many of the gloomy prophecies which we have heard about this Bill from people who know India very well indeed may not be fulfilled in exactly the way the prophets believe.

It is not my place to lecture any of my fellow Members, but I would like, if I may without presumption, to repeat from my own humble position something which was said by the Secretary of State this afternoon. He said that he hoped that this Bill would get through as expeditiously as possible. I do not wish to imply that those who take a different view from my own on this Bill have not, from their own point of view, a great deal of strength and force on their side, or that they should not do everything they can to make better a Bill which they consider to be bad, but as Members of Parliament we have other responsibilities besides this responsibility of India. We have responsibilities nearer home which, to my way of thinking, are even more urgent than this. We must remember that in hundreds of thousands of homes in this country to-day there is still a feeling of despair which has not been lifted, and I suggest that it is the duty of every Member who is a supporter of the Government to do nothing that will postpone the consideration of those other urgent domestic problems, and that we ought to do everything we can to stimulate and encourage the Government in their dealing with the terrible problems with which we are faced at home.

Ordered, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—[*Mr. John.*]

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

CONSOLIDATION BILLS.

Ordered, "That the Lords Message [5th February] be now considered."—[*Sir F. Thomson.*]

Lords Message considered accordingly.

Ordered,

"That a Select Committee of Six Members be appointed to join with a Committee appointed by the Lords to consider all Consolidation Bills in the present Session."—[*Sir F. Thomson.*]

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith.

Mr. Fielden, Mr. Janner, Mr. Holford Knight, Major Milner, Mr. Ross Taylor, and Sir Robert Smith nominated Members of the Committee.

Ordered,

"That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records."

Ordered,

"That Three be the quorum."—[*Sir F. Thomson.*]

UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—[*Sir F. Thomson.*]

11.2 p.m

Mr. BUCHANAN: At Question Time I gave notice to the Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Labour that I would raise a point concerning the regulations for payment in connection with public assistance. I regret that the hon. Gentleman is not present. I said quite definitely at Question time that I would raise the point to-night, and I thought that that notice was sufficient. I am rather surprised that no Minister is present.

Sir FREDERICK THOMSON (Treasurer of the Household): I do not think the hon. Member said exactly that he was going to raise the matter to-night He did not give the Minister warning during the day that he was going to raise it to-night.

Mr. BUCHANAN: I said clearly that I would raise the matter to-night, and I thought the Minister understood. In the circumstances, if I can raise it on the Adjournment to-morrow, and if the Government will not count me out, I will do so. Obviously a mistake has been made, and I have nothing to say against the

Minister. I give notice that I will raise the matter to-morrow.

The point that I want to raise is that I have had urgently represented to me the question of Poor Law authorities being allowed to supplement unemployment benefit. I have read carefully the Minister's statement on this matter, and, while I quite agree that no man can make a point more clear than the Parliamentary Secretary, I confess that, after reading and re-reading the statement, I cannot get the drift of it or fully understand what it means. In Glasgow two things are being done which I understand are not uncommon. The town council have said that they ought, in the case of children, to make the allowance 3s. for a child; they do not supplement anything else. As far as I can understand the law, we have now gone back to the public assistance scale, and I want to ask whether the law means that the scale will be the public assistance scale of 3s. plus the other money. In other words, will the allowance remain what it was before the 3s. was given? One reason why the scheme broke down was that the public assistance committees in this country, to their credit, often came to the aid of very poor people. I remember that, when the hon. and learned Gentleman was Solicitor-General for Scotland, I raised the question of evictions in Glasgow. The Poor Law authorities come to the aid of people by making grants to enable them to pay rent and to tide them over. I want to know if that will be allowed in future. I should like to have had it made clear to-night as the Glasgow Town Council meet to-morrow, but a mistake has been made, and I will raise the question again to-morrow.

11.6 p.m.

Sir PERCY HARRIS: We understand that under the law public assistance authorities will no longer be able to give grants to the able-bodied to supplement transitional payment in special cases. What will happen in the thousands of cases where these grants have been made owing to the inadequacy of transitional benefit to meet the needs of the household? I particularly refer to the question of high rents. That is where it comes in very much in London. It is well to give the Minister the points that we and the country want elucidating so that he can clear up the position to-morrow night.

Question put, and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at Eight Minutes after Eleven o'Clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 7th February, 1935.

[OFFICIAL REPORT.]

The House met at a Quarter before Three of the Clock, Mr. SPEAKER *in the Chair.*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Regimental Charitable Funds Bill [*Lords*].

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill pending in the House of Lords, no Standing Orders are applicable thereto, namely:

Regimental Charitable Funds Bill [*Lords*].

London Passenger Transport Board Bill (by Order).

Read a Second time, and committed.

Metropolitan Water Board Bill (by Order).

Second Reading deferred till Thursday next, at half-past Seven of the clock.

South Shields Corporation Bill (by Order).

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

UNEMPLOYMENT.

SUBSIDISATION OF WAGES.

1. **Mr. NORTH** asked the Minister of Labour whether any countries are adopting the principle of the subsidisation of wages with a view to the relief of unemployment; and, if so, if he can give the details?

The MINISTER of LABOUR (Mr. Oliver Stanley): As the reply is long, I will, if I may, circulate it in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following is the reply:

From information in my possession, it would appear that the principle of subsidising the wages paid by private employers, with a view to the relief of unemployment, has been adopted in the following countries: Austria, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, Switzerland, the Union of South Africa, and New Zealand. Brief particulars of the main schemes are given below.

Austria.—The Austrian Unemployment Insurance Act empowers the Ministry of Social Administration, in prolonged periods of industrial depression, to make agreements with employers' and workers' associations under which an employer who refrains from dismissing workers during a period of complete or partial closing down is guaranteed repayment from the unemployment insurance funds of part of the expenditure thus incurred. The repayment may not exceed the amount which would otherwise have been paid as unemployment benefit. It is known that such an agreement was made for the textile industry in 1933.

France.—A Decree of 29th January, 1935, provides for the payment, under certain conditions, of a subsidy from the Unemployment Relief Funds to employers who increase their existing staffs in specified proportions by engaging workers in receipt of unemployment relief. The subsidy may not exceed the amount of unemployment relief, exclusive of dependants' allowances, to which the workers engaged would have been entitled had they remained unemployed, and may not be paid to the same employer in respect of the same worker for more than 180 days in twelve months.

Germany.—In 1932, the German Government introduced a scheme, which was in force from 1st October, 1932, to 30th September, 1933, under which employers who engaged additional workers from among the unemployed received subsidies in the form of "tax certificates," which they were authorised to use as instruments of credit or to tender in payment of certain Federal taxes during the years 1934 to 1938.

At the present time, arrangements exist for the grant to small-scale farmers of wage subsidies from the Unemployment Fund in consideration of the employment, for at least six months, of additional young workers as farm assistants. The subsidy is limited, in general, to a maximum amount of 25 Reichsmarks a month for each additional worker. The scheme was instituted in March, 1933.

An Act of August, 1934, relating to the substitution of older workers for workers under 25 years of age, provides for the payment of wage subsidies from the Unemployment Fund in cases where an employer engages trained non-manual workers over 40 years of age who have been unemployed for a prolonged period. The subsidy is payable during the first six months of employment, and varies according to the remuneration and family circumstances of the worker.

The Netherlands.—In the spring of 1934, an experimental scheme was instituted under which the Government undertook to pay to farmers and horticulturalists in certain districts a subsidy in respect of additional workers engaged for agricultural or horticultural work for which the employers were not in a position to pay the normal wage. The subsidy was to be equal to one-third of the wages normally paid. The scheme was limited to a trial period of four months, and it is not known whether it has been continued.

Portugal.—Employers are, it is understood, subsidised from the Unemployment Relief Fund to the extent of 50 per cent. of the wages of unemployed workers engaged by them for a minimum period of three days a week. Details of this scheme are not in my possession.

Switzerland.—Under a Decree of 18th March, 1932, subsidies are granted to Swiss undertakings for specified export orders if the orders could not be undertaken without such subsidies, and the undertakings would otherwise have to close down or dismiss a large number of workers. The subsidy may not exceed the amount which the Confederation would have to pay in the form of grants to unemployment funds or as emergency benefit if the orders were not undertaken. The Cantons in which the undertaking is situated are called upon to provide a subsidy equal to at least one-half of the Federal subsidy. Subsidies are granted: (*a*) as loans to be repaid in whole or in part out of subsequent profits; or (*b*) as non-recoverable grants. A Decree of 20th June, 1934, amends this Decree, and grants higher subsidies, in exceptional cases, in order to meet increased competition by foreign exporting industries assisted by special Government measures in the engineering, machine construction, vehicle building and tool-making industries. Five million francs have been allotted for providing subsidies under the two Decrees.

South Africa.—In connection with recent schemes of assistance to farmers, the Government has undertaken to pay seven-eighths of the wages of unemployed Europeans employed by landowners and public authorities on anti-erosion schemes. With a view to the settling of white families on the land, the Government, in addition to granting loans to farmers to enable them to provide accommodation for such settlers, grants bonuses to supplement wages, the amount of the bonus being dependent upon the wage paid, the size of the worker's family, etc.

New Zealand.—The Unemployment Board pays wage subsidies of varying amounts from its funds to farmers who take unemployed workers into full time employment on work which the farmer could not carry out wholly at his own expense. The board also subsidises wages under various other schemes of land development work, and grants subsidies to gold mining companies in respect of unemployed persons taken into full time employment. In the case of gold mining companies, all subsidies must be refunded before dividends are paid or interests are disposed of to other companies.

ASSISTANCE (ADJUSTMENT OF ALLOWANCES).

5 and 6. **Mr. HALL-CAINE** asked the Minister of Labour (1) whether he can arrange for Members of the House to be supplied each week with typical assessments for different parts of the country, disguising the identity but setting out the full facts in each case, so that it may be possible for Members to see for themselves how the determinations are reached?

(2) whether arrangements can be made to supply Members each month with an analysis of the number of assessments which have been increased under the operations of the Unemployment Assistance Board; the number which have been decreased; and the number in which no change has been made?

11. **Mr. SMEDLEY CROOKE** asked the Minister of Labour the determinations made under the new unemployment regulations up to the end of January in the Birmingham area, the percentage of cuts, and the percentage of increases?

16. **Colonel ROPNER** asked the Minister of Labour whether he will publish the percentage of assessments which had been reduced, increased, or altered, respectively, up to the date of the standstill now current?

Mr. STANLEY: I would refer my hon. Friends to the appeal made yesterday in the reply given to a similar question by my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Northampton (Sir M. Manningham-Buller).

SEASONAL WORKERS.

7. **Captain PETER MACDONALD** asked the Minister of Labour the precise nature of the questions with regard to seasonal workers which he proposes to refer to the Unemployment Insurance Statutory Committee?

Mr. STANLEY: I propose to ask the Unemployment Insurance Statutory Committee to consider the operation of the Seasonal Workers Regulation and to advise me generally on the matter. Public notice will be given so soon as the Committee are able to receive representations from interested persons.

APPEAL TRIBUNALS.

8. **Sir WILLIAM JENKINS** asked the Minister of Labour what were the necessary qualifications in the appointment of chairmen and vice-chairmen of the unemployment assistance committees in Wales; what is the number of chairmen appointed who have a knowledge of the Welsh language; and in what form had they rendered public service to qualify themselves for such posts?

Mr. STANLEY: I assume that the hon. Member refers to appeal tribunals under the Unemployment Assistance Act, 1934. In making appointments of chairmen and reserve chairmen of the tribunals I have endeavoured to find persons whose character, local reputation, experience and ability would ensure general confidence in the work of the tribunals. Of the 18 chairmen in Wales and Monmouth my information is that 15 speak Welsh and where the chairman does not, there is a reserve chairman who does.

Mr. JOHN: Will the right hon. Gentleman say what local qualifications existed in the appointment made in the case of the Rhondda Valley?

9. **Sir W. JENKINS** asked the Minister of Labour what number of persons appointed as chairmen and vice-chairmen in Glamorganshire, under the Unemployment Assistance Board, are in receipt of a Government pension; and will he give the name of the person and the amount of pension received, together with his age?

Mr. STANLEY: The only chairman or reserve chairman of appeal tribunals in Glamorganshire in receipt of a pension paid from public funds is Mr. James Evans, the chairman of Rhondda, a retired civil servant. I understand that his pension is at the rate of £573 4s. 6d. and that his age is 66. The rules as to the adjustment of pension when a person in receipt of a pension paid out of public funds is employed in Government service will be applied in the case of Mr. Evans.

12. **Mr. LAWSON** asked the Minister of Labour whether he has formed the appeal tribunal for the county of Durham under the Unemployment Act, 1934; and, if so, whether he will give the names and occupations of such members?

Mr. STANLEY: There are eight appeal tribunals in the county of Durham and as the answer involves a tabular statement, I will, with the permission of the hon. Member, circulate in the OFFICIAL REPORT the desired particulars of the chairmen and reserve chairmen. As stated in the answer given on the 4th February to the hon. Member for Ogmore (Mr. E. Williams), I do not think the expense of publishing the panels of workers' representatives and representatives of the Unemployment Assistance Board would be justified, but I am sending the list to the hon. Member.

Following are the particulars referred to:

COUNTY OF DURHAM APPEAL TRIBUNALS.

Bishop Auckland—Tribunal to sit at Bishop Auckland, Crook, Spennymoor.

Chairman: N. Dewhurst, O.B.E., Solicitor.

Reserve Chairman: J. E. Brown Humes, Solicitor, Commissioner for Oaths.

Darlington—Tribunal to sit at Darlington, Northallerton.

Chairman: Councillor W. Heslop, J.P., Accountant and Public Auditor.

Reserve Chairman: George Kendrew, J.P., Retired Farmer.

Durham—Tribunal to sit at Durham, Consett, Chester-le-Street, Houghton-le-Spring, Seaham Harbour, Stanley.

Chairman: B. S. Roberts, Solicitor.
Reserve Chairman: W. Chrystal, J.P., F.A.I., Auctioneer and Valuer.
Reserve Chairman: Dr. J. G. Walker, Medical Officer of Health.

Gateshead—Tribunal to sit at Gateshead, Blaydon, Hexham.

Chairman: John Haswell, Solicitor.
Reserve Chairman: J. L. Taylor, Solicitor and Deputy Coroner.
Reserve Chairman: G. Lee Wanless, B.A., LL.B., J.P., Barrister.

The Hartlepools—Tribunal to sit at West Hartlepool, Hartlepool, Wingate.

Chairman: Major J. B. Graham, J.P., Steam Trawler Owner.
Reserve Chairman: Norman Graham, Solicitor, Deputy Coroner.
Reserve Chairman: Mrs. A. Swallow, J.P., No occupation.

South Shields—Tribunal to sit at South Shields, Jarrow.

Chairman: W. A. Armstrong, J.P., Solicitor.
Reserve Chairman: Councillor E. Thompson, J.P., Independent means, Secretary of Y.M.C.A., etc.
Reserve Chairman: Victor Grunhut, Solicitor.

Stockton—Tribunal to sit at Stockton.

Chairman: C. L. Townsend, Solicitor, Commissioner for Oaths
Reserve Chairman: Mrs. L. Riley, No occupation.

Sunderland—Tribunal to sit at Sunderland, Pallion.

Chairman: James Patrick, Borough Treasurer (Retired).
Reserve Chairman: W. B. Lockerbie, Colliery Agent for Wearmouth Coal Co.
Reserve Chairman: W. Rex Gibson, M.C., Solicitor, Commissioner for Oaths.

13. **Mr. LAWSON** asked the Minister of Labour whether he has had any requests from trade unions for representation on the appeal tribunal for the Unemployment Act, 1934; and what answer, if any, he has sent to such request?

Mr. STANLEY: I have received such requests in one or two cases. The answer given was that I was forming the panels of workpeople's representatives upon the appeal tribunals in the light of the advice of the local employment committees on which, as the hon. Member is aware, trade unions are fully represented.

ASSISTANCE BOARD.

10. **Sir W. JENKINS** asked the Minister of Labour whether any members of the Unemployment Assistance Board are in receipt of a Government pension; and, if so, will he give the names and the amount of pension received in each case separately?

Mr. STANLEY: Yes, Sir. Dr. Thomas Jones, one of the members of the board who renders part-time service, is in receipt of a pension of £495 per annum in respect of previous Government service.

GARDENERS.

14. **Captain P. MACDONALD** asked the Minister of Labour whether it is contemplated that gardeners will be included among agricultural workers in connection with the scheme that is to be introduced to provide unemployment insurance benefits for the latter; and whether, in view of the fact that there are over 100,000 persons in the country employed as gardeners, he will give sympathetic consideration to their claim for inclusion?

Mr. STANLEY: No decision has yet been reached on the question of unemployment insurance for agricultural workers, but I will see that my hon. and gallant Friend's point is borne in mind. As he no doubt knows, the report of the Unemployment Insurance Statutory Committee recommended that private gardeners should be excluded initially, but with power given to the Minister to bring them in subsequently by regulations.

JUVENILES (DAY CONTINUATION CLASSES).

15. **Miss CAZALET** asked the Minister of Labour whether, during his discussions with employers' associations and trade unions on the question of hours of work, he will also take the opportunity of discussing with them the question of day continuation classes for young people between the ages of 14 and 18?

Mr. STANLEY: My hon. Friend may rest assured that if these matters should arise in the course of the discussions referred to, their effect on employment will not be ignored, but will be brought to the notice of the Departments concerned.

EXCHANGE ACCOMMODATION.

4. **Sir RICHARD MELLER** asked the Minister of Labour whether he will make such arrangements as are necessary to ensure that persons attending the Employment Exchange at Tooting Broadway

are provided with adequate shelter from bad weather and adequate privacy?

Mr. STANLEY: Arrangements are actively in hand with a view to the provision of new premises for this Exchange.

17. **Mr. TURTON** asked the Minister of Labour at how many Employment Exchanges provision has been made to secure that those attending or waiting outside are adequately sheltered from bad weather?

Mr. STANLEY: It is not usually necessary for applicants to have to wait outside for any length of time if they attend at the times previously indicated, and no provision of the kind mentioned is normally made. If my hon. Friend has any particular cases of difficulty in mind, I should be glad to know them.

Mr. PALING: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of complaints about inadequate shelter, and is provision made in cases where permanent buildings are being put up?

Mr. STANLEY: When we put up permanent buildings we try to make them so that they will take the applicants inside and so that there will be no necessity for them to form outside at all.

Mr. PALING: If certain cases are brought to the Minister's notice will he give attention to them?

Mr. STANLEY: Yes, I shall be glad to do so.

Sir PERCY HARRIS: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that owing to the extension of work due to the coming into force of the Unemployment Act employment exchanges which were formerly adequate are now inadequate for the purpose, and will he inquire into the matter and see if improved accommodation can be provided?

Mr. STANLEY: Yes.

STERLING EXCHANGE VALUES (WAGES).

2. **Sir ARTHUR MICHAEL SAMUEL** asked the Minister of Labour whether, in view of the relationship between the exchange value of sterling and wages and prices in the unsheltered industries, he will arrange for a continuous analysis of wages in the basic industries to be made in such a form as will disclose the influence of unsheltered wage-levels upon sterling exchange values; and will he publish periodically the results of the analysis in the "Labour Gazette" and the "Board of Trade Journal" so that the influence of wages and prices upon the export trades can be studied?

Mr. STANLEY: There are serious difficulties in preparing such an analysis which at present I do not see my way to overcome. I should be glad if my hon. Friend could discuss the matter with me.

Sir A. M. SAMUEL: Will the right hon. Gentleman bear in mind that we cannot form any accurate opinion on the subject of the future stabilisation of sterling unless we have a knowledge of these basic facts in some definite form; and as this information does exist can he take steps to see how it could be furnished?

3. **Sir A. M. SAMUEL** asked the Minister of Labour the latest available approximate percentage figure showing how much the average purchasing power level of real wages, mainly in organised industries for those in full-time weekly employment, was above or below the figure applicable to persons of similar grades for the inclusive period 1925 to 1929, using for the calculation the official working-class cost-of-living index figures for the relative periods and omitting time and piece rates, variations in occupation and earnings, and in proportions and forms of employment?

Mr. STANLEY: The information in the possession of my Department, relating mainly to rates of wages in organised industries, indicates that for corresponding grades of workers the average level of full-time weekly rates of wages at the end of December, 1934, was approximately 5½ per cent. below the average level for 1925-29. The average level of working-class cost of living at 1st January, 1935, as measured by the official cost-of-living index number, was about 15 per cent. below the average level for 1925-29. On the basis of these figures the average level of real wages for workpeople in full employment was about 11 per cent. above the average level of 1925-29. This figure takes no account of changes in actual earnings resulting from variations in the state of employment, or from changes in the proportions of workers employed in different industries and occupations or paid at

[Mr. Stanley.]
time rates and piece rates, as to which comprehensive statistics are not available.

Sir A. M. SAMUEL: Will the right hon. Gentleman allow this information to appear in the "Labour Gazette" and the "Board of Trade Journal," so that we can study its implications?

Mr. STANLEY: The facts upon which my answer is based already appear in the "Labour Gazette," but to publish them in the form in which they appear in the answer, in view of the last paragraph, would be rather misleading.

HIS MAJESTY'S SILVER JUBILEE (PRISONERS).

18. **Mr. RHYS DAVIES** asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will consider, in connection with the forthcoming Silver Jubilee celebrations, recommending the remission of sentences on prisoners, more particularly political and star prisoners, persons in prison wounded in the Great War, prisoners who may be regarded as the victims of prolonged unemployment, and debtors?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir John Gilmour): In the opinion of His Majesty's Government, proposals involving special clemency to persons who happen to be serving sentences of imprisonment on a particular date are open to grave objection, and it is not proposed to recommend that any such proposals should be adopted.

Mr. DAVIES: Has the right hon. Gentleman caused inquiries to be made in other countries as to what is the custom on these occasions.

Sir J. GILMOUR: I think we should follow our own custom.

COAL INDUSTRY (WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION).

20. **Mr. GODFREY NICHOLSON** asked the Home Secretary whether he is satisfied that the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation (Coal Mines) Act, 1934, are being complied with?

Sir J. GILMOUR: The Act does not provide for its enforcement by the Home Office or other Government Department, and I have no definite information, but I have received no complaints and I have no reason to think that the Act is not complied with.

"FAZACKERLEY ESTATE."

21. **Major PROCTER** asked the Home Secretary whether he is now in a position to give the result of his inquiries into the so-called Fazackerley millions; whether there have been any proceedings by claimants in the Chancery Court; whether any legal proceedings are now taking place in camera; whether there are any undistributed assets from the so-called Fazackerley estate; and what action he proposes to take to prevent people paying money to unscrupulous promoters alleging the existence of a valuable Fazackerley estate in Lancashire?

Sir J. GILMOUR: The inquiries which I have made show that there is no record of any Chancery proceedings in respect of any Fazackerley estate and that there is no such unclaimed estate being administered by the Court in Chancery. Similar inquiries at the Principal Probate Registry show that during the last 40 years there have been no probate proceedings in any case of Fazackerley deceased. There is no foundation for the suggestion which appears to have been made in certain quarters that proceedings of this kind might be taking place in camera. As regards the last part of the question, I fear that there is no action which I can take to prevent credulous persons from parting with their money on the faith of statements which they are prepared to accept in the face not only of ordinary probabilities but of specific contradiction.

Major PROCTER: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that poor people, old age pensioners, are mortgaging their houses in order to purchase shares in this matter, and cannot he do something to stop this swindle which is going on in Lancashire?

FLOGGING.

22. **Mr. ATTLEE** asked the Home Secretary whether there are any cases during the 12 months ended December, 1934, in which, following a flogging with

the cat administered in any prison or Borstal institution in England and Wales, it was necessary, on account of septic wounds or other serious physical injury caused by the flogging, to keep the person who had been flogged under medical observation and/or treatment for a period of seven days or more; if so, whether he will give particulars of such cases, the nature of the injuries caused, and the period which elapsed before the persons concerned had completely recovered from the physical effects of the punishment?

Sir J. GILMOUR: There has been only one such case, which occurred in April last. In this case owing to an unexpected movement by the prisoner a superficial injury to the chest was accidentally caused by one of the strokes. No unfavourable symptoms appeared at the time. Some 15 days later a slight local inflammation was noticed which required treatment for some time but it has since completely subsided. At no time was it necessary to admit the prisoner to hospital. I may add that the records of the last ten years have been examined and there has been no similar case in that period.

Mr. WEST: Is not the right hon. Gentleman satisfied that the time has arrived when this brutality ought to be stopped?

19. **Mr. BERNAYS** asked the Home Secretary which of the principal countries include flogging as a penalty that may be imposed by courts of criminal law, and for what offences?

Sir J. GILMOUR: Authoritative and up-to-date information on this matter could only be obtained by addressing special inquiries to a number of Governments; and information confined to the points mentioned by the hon. Member would be of little value. Comparisons between the penal methods of different countries involve the assessment of many complex factors.

HOUSING (RE-HOUSING, MANCHESTER).

25. **Mr. FLEMING** asked the Minister of Health whether any plan for re-housing tenants on the derelict sites of cleared slum areas in Manchester has been presented to the Ministry of Health by the corporation of the city of Manchester?

The MINISTER of HEALTH (Sir Hilton Young): I presume that my hon. Friend has in mind the Collyhurst and West Gorton Clearance Areas which the corporation propose to use for re-housing. I have not yet received specific proposals for this re-housing.

Mr. FLEMING: Has the right hon. Gentleman any power to expedite this matter, in view of the urgency of the Housing problem in Lancashire?

Sir H. YOUNG: I think the corporation have that consideration in mind.

CONTRIBUTORY PENSIONS ACT.

26. **Mr. RHYS DAVIES** asked the Minister of Health what protests he has recently received against the provisions of the National Health Insurance and Contributory Pensions Act, 1932, as it affects unemployed persons; and whether he will consider introducing legislation to remove the hardships referred to in those protests?

Sir H. YOUNG: I have received representations from various quarters urging reconsideration of the provisions of the National Health Insurance and Contributory Pensions Act, 1932, which affect unemployed persons. These are receiving my careful consideration, but I would refer the hon. Member to the replies which I gave on the 14th November and the 31st January last to the hon. Members for Gorbals (Mr. Buchanan) and Wallsend (Miss Ward).

Mr. DAVIES: Will the right hon. Gentleman bear in mind the fact that some approved societies are able, because they are well placed, to pay the arrears for these unemployed persons, while other approved societies are not, and that consequently an anomaly prevails?

Mr. BATEY: Though the form of that reply holds out no hope of the Government doing anything in the matter, are we to understand that the Minister is reconsidering the question, and that there is a prospect of the Government doing something?

Sir H. YOUNG: If the hon. Member will look at the replies to which I have referred, he will see that we are awaiting the report of the Government actuary for the first decennial period.

29. **Colonel BROADBENT** asked the Minister of Health when he expects to receive and consider the Government actuary's report on the workings of the pensions scheme in connection with the National Health and Contributory Pensions Act, 1932?

Sir H. YOUNG: I am informed that the calculations on which the first report on the financial working of the Contributory Pensions Acts will be based are far advanced. It is hoped that the report will be available in the course of a few weeks.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES, WALES (AUDITORS' REPORTS).

28. **Major OWEN** asked the Minister of Health whether he is prepared to issue instructions for the publication of the district auditors' reports in the Welsh language as well as in English in the case of local authorities in Wales?

Sir H. YOUNG: I am not prepared to issue any general instruction to this effect. If, however, a local authority wishes to produce for publication or for distribution to its members a copy of the Auditor's report translated into Welsh I have no objection, provided that the original report and the translation are issued together.

Major OWEN: Does not the right hon. Gentleman realise that the constant refusal of requests by local authorities for reports of this kind in the Welsh language is causing great dissatisfaction throughout Wales, and cannot he give instructions that these reports shall be issued at the same time in both Welsh and English?

Sir H. YOUNG: It is not necessary for me to issue instructions. The local authority knows that it is at liberty to issue Welsh translations.

Major OWEN: In that case the responsibility for the accuracy of the reports does not rest with the auditor but with the local authority, and does the right hon. Gentleman not realise that that may lead to serious difficulty?

Sir H. YOUNG: No. I do not think it need cause any serious trouble.

COMMODITIES AND STOCK EXCHANGE SECURITIES (SPECULATIONS).

30. **Mr. DAVID GRENFELL** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the disastrous effect of speculation on the commodity market, he will ascertain the extent to which speculation in raw materials and in Stock Exchange paper values is being stimulated by abnormally cheap money; and whether, if gambling has been so facilitated, he will consider measures by which the benefit of cheaper money should be confined to legitimate industrial or financial reconstruction?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Chamberlain): Speculation in commodities and Stock Exchange securities is not specially characteristic of periods of cheap money, but is found whenever there is increasing confidence in future prospects. Moreover forward dealings, which I understand is the form usually taken by speculation on the commodity markets, are not in fact facilitated to any material extent by the prevalence of easy money. The second part of the question does not therefore arise.

Mr. GRENFELL: What is the actual state of the market in commodities now? Is there not ample evidence that considerable speculation has taken place and that very disastrous results have followed?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: It does not appear to me to be due to the prevalence of cheap money.

Mr. GRENFELL: Is it not the case that people who have control of large volumes of credit have been buying quite unnecessarily large quantities of a commodity in order to try to corner the market?

Sir A. M. SAMUEL: Is it not the historical fact that sooner or later not cheap money but abnormally cheap money usually gets us to a point at which legitimate trade is injured by the misuse of abnormally cheap money by speculators or gamblers?

Mr. HERBERT WILLIAMS: Is it not the fact that in one of these cases it was not the fall of the commodity price but an unexpected rise which caught people out?

Mr. GRENFELL: Is it not the case that large quantities of commodities have been bought and not paid for by buyers who have been unable to meet their obligations? Would the right hon. Gentleman consider an inquiry into the circumstances in order that the House and the country may know how far this thing has been done?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: No, I do not think an inquiry is necessary.

Viscountess ASTOR: Could any Government stop people from gambling?

BRITISH NORTH ATLANTIC SHIPPING INTERESTS.

31. **Mr. REA** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will clear up the misunderstanding that exists with regard to the remaining Red Star Line ships by confirming that the Treasury and the Bank of England will not oppose, or take effective measures to oppose, any further action being taken by the British interests concerned if they wish to buy these ships and assuming the vessels are still available for purchase?

34. **Lieut.-Colonel SANDEMAN ALLEN** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will explain his attitude in permitting the Red Star liners "Minnetonka" and "Minnewaska" to be purchased by British interests for breaking-up purposes in this country whilst he continues to raise obstacles, or declines to remove existing obstacles, to the proposed purchase of the Red Star liners "Pennland" and "Westernland" by British interests for operating purposes from this country?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I have already explained to the House the reasons why, when informally consulted, I was unable to agree that this case should be excepted from the general request I have made relating to operations involving the transfer of funds abroad. My view on that subject is unchanged. The circumstances attending the sale of the "Minnetonka" and "Minnewaska" were entirely different, and the transaction did not fall within the category of cases to which my general request could apply.

Lieut.-Colonel SANDEMAN ALLEN: Are we to understand from the reply that it is not the competition of the White Star merger but the foreign exchange problem which has made my right hon. Friend maintain his attitude?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir. I do not think that that would be a fair inference to draw from the answer I have given.

Colonel ROPNER: Arising out of the original reply, is it not a fact that the Red Star vessels are at present owned by a British firm, and that it would not in fact mean a transfer of money abroad if British interests were allowed to buy them?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: That all depends on the circumstances of the purchase.

Sir P. HARRIS: Are not the Germans in the same position about exchanges as we are?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I cannot speak for Germany.

Sir HERBERT SAMUEL: Is it the case, if there is no difficulty about transference of money abroad, that the right hon. Gentleman will not exercise his influence to prevent the building of ships in this country, or the purchase of ships in this country, on the ground of competition against the White Star and Cunard liners?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: In such a case I do not suppose that my opinion would be asked.

33. **Lieut.-Colonel SANDEMAN ALLEN** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will give particulars as to how and when the Treasury was approached in an informal manner by those concerned in purchasing the Red Star Line ships; and whether the British group themselves approached either the Treasury or the Bank of England?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: On 8th November last I received an informal request for my view on behalf of the financial interests concerned. In accordance with a common practice in cases involving the remittance of money abroad, the request was transmitted through the Bank of England.

Captain CAZALET: Is it not a fact that these ships have now been sold to a German firm, and that it is using them very largely as cargo vessels?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I have seen statements to that effect in the Press, but I can go no further than that.

54. **Vice-Admiral TAYLOR** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he will refuse to grant a licence for the sale and transfer to a foreign flag of the two remaining ships of the British Red Star Line?

55. **Colonel ROPNER** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether effective steps have been or will be taken to prevent the threatened transfer of the last two remaining vessels of the Red Star Line from the British to the German flag?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Runciman): The Board of Trade have no power to prevent the transfer of these vessels to a foreign flag.

Colonel ROPNER: Is it not a fact that any firm wishing to sell British vessels has to obtain a licence from the Board of Trade?

Mr. RUNCIMAN: I have said in answer to the two questions on the Paper that we have no power to prevent this transfer.

Lieut.-Colonel SANDEMAN ALLEN: Does my right hon. Friend realise that this is a reduction in the power of the auxiliary Navy in war time, and cannot he take steps to prevent it?

32. **Lieut.-Colonel SANDEMAN ALLEN** (*for* **Mr. TEMPLE MORRIS**) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether there has been any change in the position with regard to the raising of money for the purpose of operating the vessels of the Red Star Line on a new type of Atlantic passenger service; and whether he has any information to the effect that such a service may be provided by any foreign country if the initiative is not taken by a British concern?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: With reference to the first part of the question I would refer to the reply I have given to-day to the hon. Member for Dewsbury (Mr. Rea) and to my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for West Birkenhead (Lieut.-Colonel Sandeman Allen). With regard to the second part I have no information beyond statements that I have seen in the Press.

Lieut.-Colonel SANDEMAN ALLEN: On account of the unsatisfactory nature of the replies to questions on this point, I beg to give notice that I shall raise the matter on the Adjournment at the earliest opportunity.

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

GRANITE (IMPORT DUTY).

35. **Mr. PETHERICK** asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury whether he has yet received from the Import Duties Advisory Committee any recommendation for an increased duty on imported granite; and, if so, what action he proposes to take?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Duff Cooper): I would refer my hon. Friend to the answer which was given on 22nd May, 1933, to the hon. Member for Derbyshire South (Mr. Emrys-Evans).

Mr. BURNETT: When my hon. Friend is deliberating on the matter will he take into consideration the fact that there is an association which has a monopoly and is selling granite from Finland at prices which under-cut our own granite?

Mr. PETHERICK: Is my hon. Friend aware that there is very grave unemployment in the granite industry, that it is increasing and that there are many hundreds out of work?

Lieut.-Commander AGNEW: Is my hon. Friend further aware that the present duties are ineffective in carrying out their purpose?

IMPORT DUTIES (GOVERNMENT POLICY).

45. **Mr. DIXEY** asked the Prime Minister whether he is aware of the anxiety throughout the country as to the importation figures of foreign goods and also of the dissatisfaction at the non-use by the Government to the fullest extent of the tariff weapon; and if he will give the House a day for discussion of the position?

The PRIME MINISTER (Mr. Ramsay MacDonald): I am not aware that anxiety on this point is widespread; and it does not appear that the statistics of our foreign trade during the last year disclose any ground for anxiety. Any particular industry which considers that higher duties should be imposed on its goods should, under the procedure laid down in the Import Duties Act, make application to the Import Duties Advisory Committee. In view of the pressure of Parliamentary business, I can hold out no hope of a day being given for the discussion of this subject.

Mr. DIXEY: May I ask the Prime Minister whether, even at question time today, he has not had an illustration of the unsatisfactory working of the Import Duties; and as this Government was elected for the purpose of bringing in adequate tariffs——

HON. MEMBERS: No.

57. **Mr. H. WILLIAMS** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether it is the policy of the Government not to restrict imports of goods used as materials of industry even if adequate supplies of these goods can be produced in this country?

Mr. RUNCIMAN: The policy of the Government as laid down in the Import Duties Act, 1932, is that in considering what rate of additional duty should be imposed on any class of goods consideration shall be given to the interests of trade and industry generally, including the interests of trades and industries which are consumers of the goods as well as those which are producers. As my hon. Friend is aware, a number of the semi-manufactured materials of industry are subject to additional duties, and some others are not made in substantial quantities in this country.

Mr. WILLIAMS: In view of that answer, will my right hon. Friend assure me that in future neither he nor the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade will contend that there is no objection to the importation of goods which go through subsequent processes of manufacture in this country?

Mr. RUNCIMAN: That undertaking would be most unfair to the using industry.

RIVER DON DRAINAGE.

37. **Mr. GLOSSOP** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether he will state the date of the installation of the pump at the pumping station at Kirk Bramwith, near Doncaster; whether he is aware that the lifting capacity is so limited that the pump is unable to operate if the River Don is carrying a large volume of water; and whether he is satisfied that the drainage authorities are keeping the equipment of this pumping station sufficiently up to date to deal with present-day requirements?

The MINISTER of AGRICULTURE (Mr. Elliot): I am informed that the pump referred to was installed in 1878 by the Dun Drainage Commissioners. It was designed to deal with the drainage from an area of about 6,400 acres and is stated to be still capable of doing so, given a normal level of water in the River Don. I understand that the Dun Commissioners have recently had the question of the revision of their drainage system under consideration but came to the conclusion that it would be premature to take any action in that direction.

Mr. GLOSSOP: Does my right hon. Friend realise that the normal water level of the Don is considerably higher than it used to be on account of building developments higher up the river, and does he not realise the necessity for considering the replacement of the existing pump by a more efficient model?

Mr. ELLIOT: I am a little nervous about asking for reconsideration of any decisions reached in this area.

FISHING INDUSTRY.

AIR BOMBING PRACTICE.

38. **Captain P. MACDONALD** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether he has yet instituted any inquiry into the possibility of agreeing upon sites for air-bombing practice in home waters which will least interfere with fishing activities; and, if so, what arrangements will be made with regard to the hearing of the views of the various fishing interests?

Mr. ELLIOT: My Department, at the request of the Air Ministry, has been making inquiries as to the districts which could be utilised for bombing sites without serious interference with fishing

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activities. It is the practice to consult the local Sea Fisheries Committee before arriving at any definite decision to use any area for such purposes.

IRISH WATERS.

61. **Lord SCONE** asked the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs under what Act the Government of the Irish Free State claim the right to prevent British fishermen from carrying on fishing operations within three miles of the coast of the Irish Free State; and if His Majesty's Government admit the validity of the Ordinance?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for DOMINION AFFAIRS (Mr. Malcolm MacDonald): I would refer my Noble Friend to the reply which my right hon. Friend gave on the 5th February to the hon. Member for Banff (Sir M. McKenzie Wood).

Lord SCONE: As the right hon. Gentleman's reply on that occasion was not susceptible of definite interpretation, could the right hon. Gentleman not give us a definite assurance as to what the intentions of the Government are in this matter?

Mr. MacDONALD: I am quite ready to send my Noble Friend a copy of the reply, in which he will discover that it was a direct answer to a direct question.

Mr. HENDERSON STEWART: Does my hon. Friend not agree that the real problem here is whether in fact the limits set to territorial waters are fair and reasonable, and will he not consider entering into negotiations on that special point, which is of great importance to fishermen?

Mr. MacDONALD: My right hon. Friend has already expressed his readiness to consider the matter of making representations, if hon. Members will give him all the facts at their disposal.

AGRICULTURE.

ATTESTED HERDS SCHEME.

39. **Brigadier-General CLIFTON BROWN** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether he is aware that under the rules required to be observed for qualification in the Ministry's attested herd scheme it is practically impossible to make any contract for selling milk; whether any bodies of registered producers have been consulted on these rules; and whether he will take steps to have them amended in consultation with representatives of milk producers, so that a workable scheme can be evolved?

Mr. ELLIOT: The Milk Marketing Board and the Association of Producers of Certified and Grade A (Tuberculin Tested) Milk were consulted upon the Attested Herds Scheme before it was issued; and no representations were made that the conditions of the scheme would interfere with contracts for the sale of milk from attested herds. I am advised that the conditions of the scheme, though they may appear stringent, are the minimum necessary to attain the object in view, namely, the establishment and maintenance of herds free from tuberculosis. I should be glad however to consider any representations on the subject.

Brigadier-General BROWN: Is the Minister aware that there has been some misunderstanding of these regulations; and will he be kind enough to consider the representations of the producers with a view to clearing up those misunderstandings?

Mr. ELLIOT: I have said that I would be very glad to consider any representations.

Mr. GLOSSOP: Arising out of the original reply, can the right hon. Gentleman tell the House the number of producers who expressed a desire to qualify under the scheme?

Mr. ELLIOT: I am afraid I could not give that information.

POTATOES (EEL-WORM PEST).

40. **Major CARVER** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether his attention has been called to the increased infection and infestation of potato-growing districts from the eel-worm pest; and whether he is prepared to make this a notifiable disease, in view of the fact that the sale of seed potatoes from infected land has been one of the worst causes of spreading infection?

Mr. ELLIOT: The answer to the first part of my hon. and gallant Friend's

question is in the affirmative. The measures to be taken against the root eel-worm of potatoes will depend on the results of research in this subject, for which increased provision has recently been made. As regards the tuber eel-worm, evidence of the extent of infestation of seed potatoes by this pest is being obtained, and the most suitable method of preventing its spread will be carefully considered in the light of this evidence.

Major CARVER: Will the Minister consider scheduling the infected areas as has been done in Sweden until there is immunity?

Mr. ELLIOT: I am afraid I could not promise that without further consideration.

EGGS AND POULTRY COMMISSION (REPORT).

41. **Sir PERCY HURD** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether the voluntary quotas negotiated with the chief egg-supplying countries are now being strictly observed; and, if not, what steps are being taken to that end?

42. **Mr. HASLAM** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether, in view of the anxiety of the egg producers, he can state definitely that the report of the English Reorganisation Commission will be published this week; and whether, in view of the fact that the present restrictions of imports were only partially successful, he will take steps to augment these so that the position of the industry may not deteroriate during the consideration of the report?

Mr. ELLIOT: The report of the Reorganisation Commission for Eggs and Poultry for England and Wales will be published to-morrow (Friday). It is too early to say whether the arrangements proposed for the regulation of imports of eggs in shell during the current quarter are being strictly observed, but the position is being kept under close review. I would draw the attention of my hon. Friends to the reply which I gave to questions by my hon. Friends the Members for Wycombe (Sir A. Knox) and Honiton (Mr. Drewe) on 31st January, of which I am sending them copies.

Sir P. HURD: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer the first part of my question, as to whether these quotas have been observed in the past?

Mr. ELLIOT: I think the answer is given in the replies to previous questions, of which I am sending the hon. Member a copy.

Mr. HASLAM: Would the right hon. Gentleman consider the last part of Question 42 as to keeping down foreign imports during the consideration of the report?

Mr. ELLIOT: Certainly, Sir. My hon. Friend knows that while the scheme is under consideration it is possible to regulate imports into this country.

BACON (IMPORT QUOTAS).

43. **Sir P. HURD** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether, in determining the home quota of bacon under the marketing schemes, any change has been made in the basis of calculation of pigs in terms of bacon; how the position of the British home-producer has been affected in relation to import quotas; and whether care has been taken to safeguard his interests, especially in view of the intended expansion of British land settlement?

Mr. ELLIOT: The factor of 138 lb. of bacon per pig adopted in arriving at the estimate of home bacon output for the second contract period to 31st December was not realised in practice and it was accordingly decided for this year to revert to the factor of 128 lb. of bacon per pig used in the first contract period. Insofar as this tends to reduce the estimate of home bacon output to a figure more in accordance with probable results it also tends to increase import allocations since the objective of total supplies is the level recommended by the Lane-Fox Commission. I can assure my hon. Friend that the legitimate interests of the home producer under the bacon supply arrangements have been fully safeguarded.

Mr. BATEY: Will the Minister, when considering the interests of the home producer, also consider the interests of the home consumer; and is he aware that owing to his policy large numbers of the working class to-day cannot afford to buy bacon?

Mr. ELLIOT: I shall certainly do my utmost to take into consideration the

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position of the home consumer and indeed these matters have been reviewed by an independent commission. As for the position of the working class, bacon is cheaper to-day than it was when the Government which the hon. Member supported was in office.

Mr. GEORGE GRIFFITHS: They do not think so at Wavertree.

Mr. H. WILLIAMS: Is it not the case that the price of coal has gone up since pre-war days more than the price of bacon?

Mr. ELLIOT: Yes, Sir. Under the quota system introduced by hon. Members opposite the price of coal is very considerably higher.

Mr. D. GRENFELL *rose*——

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. North.

56. **Sir P. HURD** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether, in order to secure regularity in the operation of the bacon import quotas in relation to home supplies, he will arrange for the publication each fortnight of the quantity of bacon consigned by each importing country and the quantity allocated in each case?

Mr. RUNCIMAN: Arrangements have been made this year by which imports of bacon from the five main foreign bacon exporting countries are regulated on the basis of fortnightly periods. Observance of these arrangements is checked initially by reference to import certificates, final adjustments being made on the basis of monthly import and re-export statistics. I do not think any useful purpose would be served by publishing fortnightly figures.

Sir P. HURD: Can my right hon. Friend say whether, without such publication, it can be effective?

Mr. RUNCIMAN: So far we have found the arrangements for fortnightly and monthly figures sufficient for the purpose.

TRANSPORT.

Ribbon Development.

44. **Mr. NORTH** asked the Minister of Transport whether he is now in a position to state when the Bill for control of ribbon development along the highways of the country is to be introduced?

The MINISTER of TRANSPORT (Mr. Hore-Belisha): I would refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by the Prime Minister on Monday last to the hon. Member for Leeds, West (Mr. V. Adams), of which I am sending him a copy.

London Underground Railways (Accommodation).

46. **Mr. WEST** asked the Minister of Transport whether his attention has been called to the dangerous overcrowding which occurs, particularly in the evening rush hours, on the Piccadilly Tube trains from Hammersmith to South Harrow and Uxbridge; and whether he will address urgent representations to the London Passenger Transport Board with a view to immediate steps being taken to at least double the present service of trains to South Harrow in view of the fact that some of the trains at present carry 400 standing passengers?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: The London Passenger Transport Board do not admit that crowding of a serious nature is taking place on the railways to which the hon. Member refers, but they inform me that the traffic is expanding and that they will shortly augment the service with additional rolling stock.

Mr. WEST: Is the Minister aware that if he investigates the condition of these trains leaving Hammersmith Station any evening after 5.30 o'clock he will find that the facts given in the question are accurate?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I would not impugn any facts brought before me by the hon. Gentleman, and, if he asks me to take action on any matter which is within my normal sphere of influence, I will do my best to help him. In this case, I cannot do more than I have done.

Westway (Extension).

47. **Mr. WEST** asked the Minister of Transport what progress has been made with the eastern extension of Westway, W.12?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: The London County Council, the appropriate highway authority in this case, are now preparing

plans and estimates for the extension eastwards of Westway between Wood Lane and Latimer Road and when these are submitted to me I shall be prepared to consider the question of making a grant towards the cost of the scheme.

MENAI BRIDGE (TOLL).

48. **Miss LLOYD GEORGE** asked the Minister of Transport whether he is prepared at the present time to make any reduction in the toll charges for vehicles using the Menai Bridge?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I am glad to inform the hon. Lady that I am reducing the Menai Bridge tolls as from the 1st April next. Particulars of the new charges, which represent reductions in general of 50 per cent., will be announced shortly.

Miss LLOYD GEORGE: While thanking the Minister for the concession which he has made, may I ask him now whether he would not be prepared to consider the abolition of this toll altogether, on a bridge which is, after all, a vital part of a national highway?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I do not like to refuse the hon. Lady anything, and I will, with pleasure, give the matter that further consideration for which she asks.

ROAD SURFACES (VISIBILITY).

49. **Lieut.-Colonel Sir MERVYN MANNINGHAM-BULLER** asked the Minister of Transport whether he is aware that many road surfaces are being laid down which are practically black; and that, as visibility on such roads at night is greatly inferior to that on roads of lighter colour, he will endeavour to secure that, in the interests of public safety, material of lighter colour shall be used?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: The attention of all highway authorities has been directed to the desirability of producing a light coloured surface when dressing and gritting roads. Experiments are at present being carried out, under the observation of officers of my Department, by certain highway authorities to increase the visibility of road surfaces at night.

Mr. MABANE: Is it not a fact that concrete roads are invariably light in colour; and would the Minister recommend local authorities and highway authorities to use concrete roads on all occasions?

MANCHESTER-LIVERPOOL ROAD (LIGHTING).

50. **Mr. TINKER** asked the Minister of Transport whether any progress has been made with the local authorities concerning the lighting up at night of the new East Lancashire road (Manchester to Liverpool)?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I have asked the Lancashire County Council to be so good as to give attention to this matter, and I understand that they will consider it at their meeting on the 20th February.

Mr. TINKER: May I ask the Minister to continue to use his influence in this matter to achieve two purposes—one to ensure safety and the other to provide additional employment?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: I have every sympathy with the hon. Gentleman's point of view. I have informed him that the county council will consider the matter on 20th February, and I hope that a satisfactory issue will result.

Mr. RHYS DAVIES: Is the Minister aware that there are already red lights at the end of this road—at Wavertree?

NAVAL AND MILITARY PENSIONS AND GRANTS.

52. **Mr. NORTH** asked the Minister of Pensions how many applications for pensions have been made to his Department during the last five years by ex-service men who have become blind; how many of such applications have been entertained; and how many refused?

The MINISTER of PENSIONS (Major Tryon): I regret that the records of my Department do not enable me to give all the figures asked for by my hon. Friend, but I may say that during the last five years 89 cases have been admitted to pension in respect of eye disabilities resulting from war service. Of these, two were cases of total blindness.

53. **Mr. T. SMITH** asked the Minister of Pensions the procedure when an application from a pensioner is received at an area war-pension office for a domiciliary visit, and the number of days that elapse, on an average, before the area medical officer makes his visit?

Major TRYON: Applications from pensioners for medical examinations are

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immediately referred to the local medical officer of the Ministry. The date of the visit, if a domiciliary visit is necessary, is determined in accordance with the circumstances of each case. I have no records which would enable me to make the calculation asked for in the last part of the question.

SCOTLAND (MILK MARKETING SCHEME).

60. **Captain JAMES MacANDREW** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland whether he will make any alterations in his recent amendments to the milk marketing scheme to remedy the injustices from which milk producers in the south-west of Scotland consider themselves to be suffering?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for SCOTLAND (Mr. Skelton): The amendments referred to were made with a view to arriving at a fair settlement of the questions at issue, on a temporary basis, pending the outcome of the inquiry to be undertaken by the reorganisation commission. My right hon. Friend is not, therefore, prepared at present to make any modification of these amendments.

Lord SCONE: Will my hon. Friend consider consulting with the Secretary of State for Scotland as to the advisability of modifying the regulations still further in the interests of the East of Scotland producers, who are still suffering unfairly?

Mr. SKELTON: No; I think the answer I have given applies to both sides of the country.

MERCANTILE MARINE (BRITISH COLOURED SEAMEN).

58. **Brigadier-General NATION** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether lascars and other British coloured subjects employed on British ships receive the scales of pay laid down by the National Maritime Board; and, if not, what authority is responsible for regulating their pay?

Mr. RUNCIMAN: The rates of pay agreed by the National Maritime Board apply to vessels of 200 tons gross and upwards whose crews are engaged in the United Kingdom on ordinary Board of Trade Articles. They cover lascars and other coloured British seamen on European Articles who form part of the mixed manning of the deck, engine-room or stokehold departments, but there is provision for considering separately a few special cases. There are no statutory powers for fixing the pay of any class of British seamen.

Brigadier-General NATION: Have the Government any say in the rates of pay laid down by this body?

Mr. RUNCIMAN: No. The rates that are adopted by this body are adopted by agreement.

Mr. WEST: Is it not a fact that the rates of pay given to Lascars are below those given to our sailors, and is not that fact the main reason for the unemployment of the latter?

Mr. RUNCIMAN: No, that is not the case.

Mr. LOGAN: Is it not a fact that there is an arrangement that a certain number of these men must be carried, and could not a provisional arrangement for our nationals to be carried be made instead?

INDIA.

TRADE AGREEMENT.

62. **Brigadier-General Sir HENRY CROFT** asked the Secretary of State for India the numbers of elected Indians who voted in the majority in the Indian Legislative Assembly against the trade agreement, and the number of non-elected members who voted in the minority?

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Sir Samuel Hoare): I have asked for this information and will let my hon. and gallant Friend know as soon as I receive it.

63. **Mr. HAMMERSLEY** asked the Secretary of State for India whether he has taken cognisance of the action of the Legislative Assembly in connection with the Indo-British Trading Agreement; and whether, in consequence thereof, any change in policy is contemplated?

Sir S. HOARE: The Government of India have decided not to accept the

motion recommending the denunciation of the agreement which was carried by 66 to 58 votes in the Legislative Assembly. The validity of the agreement is not affected, and no change of policy is contemplated.

Mr. HAMMERSLEY: Are we to understand that the validity, not only of the agreement but also of the exchange of letters which followed the agreement, is not affected?

Sir S. HOARE: I think my hon. Friend had better put that question down, but my impression is that the exchange of letters is not affected either.

PUNJAB (ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE).

66. **Mr. LENNOX-BOYD** asked the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the Chief Justice of Lahore High Court had a discussion recently with the members of the Bar Association at Lahore to devise ways and means for eradicating corruption in the courts; whether he has any report as to the ways and means devised; and what steps he proposes to take to support the efforts of the Chief Justice?

Sir S. HOARE: I have seen an account in the Press of a discussion between the Chief Justice and members of the Bar Association on this subject, but I have no official report. I have no doubt that the Government of the Punjab will give the Chief Justice their full support in any efforts he may make to improve the administration of justice in the Province.

Mr. WEST: Was there not a discussion in the House of Lords quite recently on this matter?

TERRORISM.

64. **Colonel BROADBENT** (*for* **Mr. THORP**) asked the Secretary of State for India the number of terrorist outrages which have taken place in the various provinces of British India since the 1st January, 1930, specifying the numbers of British and Indians, respectively, who were killed or injured therein and the number of such outrages and the numbers of British and Indians so killed or injured since the period covered by the memorandum of the Secretary of State presented to the Joint Select Committee in November, 1933?

Sir S. HOARE: I am unable to add to the information contained in the note published in Volume II (Records) of the report of the Joint Select Committee in respect of the period covered by it. As regards subsequent outrages I would refer my hon. Friend to the answer given yesterday to my hon. Friend the Member for Smethwick (Mr. Wise). According to the information at present in my possession six Indians were killed and four Europeans and approximately 25 Indians were injured in these subsequent outrages.

MR. CHANDRA BOSE.

65. **Colonel BROADBENT** (*for* **Mr. THORP**) asked the Secretary of State for India upon what date Mr. Sabash Chandra Bose, president of the Bengal Congress, was released from detention as a dangerous political subject; whether, since his release, he has been made any and, if so, what allowance by the British Government; whether any terms were imposed to prevent his engaging in any anti-British propaganda; whether his attention has been drawn to the recent utterances in Italy of this gentleman to the effect that English merchandise should be boycotted and purchases made from other states of the world; and whether he proposes to take any steps to curtail such and similar subversive activities?

Sir S. HOARE: Mr. Bose was released on the 23rd February, 1934, in order that he might proceed to Europe for medical treatment. Except for his recent brief visit to India on the death of his father, he has been in Europe ever since. No allowances are paid to him while out of India. My attention has been drawn to certain statements made by Mr. Bose in Italy of the kind indicated in the question. I do not understand what kind of action my hon. Friend thinks it would be possible for me to take in the circumstances.

MYSORE.

67. **Duchess of ATHOLL** asked the Secretary of State for India upon what date and upon what terms was the administration of Mysore handed back to the present dynasty; and in what respects any of these terms affect the interests of the British Government and of British subjects in the assigned tracts known as the civil and military station of Bangalore

Sir S. HOARE: I am not sure whether my Noble Friend is referring to the restoration of the present dynasty after the fall of Tippoo Saib in 1799 or to the restoration of the administration to that dynasty in 1881 after 50 years of British administration. The relevant documents, which are too lengthy to quote, will be found by my Noble Friend in the first case on pages 53 to 57, and in the latter case on pages 250 to 254 of Volume IX of Aitchison's Treaties, Engagements and Sanads, a copy of which is in the Library.

HYDERABAD RESIDENCY BAZAARS.

68. **Duchess of ATHOLL** asked the Secretary of State for India on what date the Residency Bazaar at Hyderabad was transferred to the administration of His Exalted Highness the Nizam; what was the size of the population so transferred; whether the inhabitants were consulted as to the transfer; and what their views were ascertained to be on this matter?

Sir S. HOARE: The jurisdiction over the greater part of the area formerly known as the Hyderabad Residency Bazaars was restored to Hyderabad on the 14th May, 1933. The inhabitants numbered about 14,000. The matter was one of restoring to the Nizam's Government full control over a portion of the State's territory and no special measures were taken for ascertaining the views of the inhabitants, of whom the greater part were the Nizam's subjects.

Duchess of ATHOLL: Will my right hon. Friend tell me why the Residency Bazaar was not included in the answer to the question which I asked him the other day as to what territories had been handed over to Indian States since the 1st January, 1931?

Sir S. HOARE: The reason is that my Noble Friend makes a distinction between two kinds of secession, namely, secession of British territory to Indian States, and the restoration of Indian States territory to Indian administration.

VILLAGE INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION.

69. **Duchess of ATHOLL** asked the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the law member of the Government of India recently stated in the Indian Assembly that the aim of the Village Industries Association, which is a new feature of Congress organisation, was to drill and discipline the masses to be used later for political purposes; that the Government of India had recently issued to Provincial Governments a circular pointing out possibly dangerous potentialities of this association; and what steps the Government of India are taking to prevent the association, under the guise of working for economic betterment, from taking political action of the kind referred to?

Sir S. HOARE: The answer to the first two parts of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the last part, the fact that the Government of India thought it necessary to issue this circular is sufficient indication that they are alive to the possibility that the movement will be used for subversive purposes, and that the necessary action will be taken if and when it is required.

Duchess of ATHOLL: In view of the importance of this matter, and the evident importance which the Government of India attach to it, will my right hon. Friend ask for further information so that we may know what has happened?

Sir S. HOARE: I think I have given my Noble Friend all the relevant information. If there is any specific information which she requires, perhaps she will communicate with me.

CHILE (BRITISH INVESTORS).

70. **Mr. BURNETT** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will inform the Chilean Government that the demand that their creditors should abandon their rights is not acceptable; and will he request the London and provincial stock exchanges to withdraw facilities for negotiating Chilean Government defaulted bonds, issued in London prior to the War, until that Government has terminated its default in a manner acceptable to those British subjects who before the War entrusted their savings to the good faith of the Chilean nation?

The LORD PRIVY SEAL (Mr. Eden): In reply to the first part of the question, I would refer my hon. Friend to the reply given to my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-on-Tyne North

(Sir N. Grattan-Doyle) on the 30th January. Any action on the lines suggested in the second part of the question is a matter for the consideration of the stock exchange authorities concerned.

Mr. KIRKPATRICK: Is it not a fact that an important Commission is now on the way to this country from Chile to discuss this matter?

Mr. EDEN: I must ask for notice of that question.

CHINA (PIRACY).

71. **Lieut.-Commander AGNEW** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will direct His Majesty's Minister in China to confer with the Chinese Government as to the steps which can suitably be taken by them, with the assistance of His Majesty's naval forces, to clear out the pirate settlements at Bias Bay, Hong-hai Bay and elsewhere?

Mr. EDEN: As my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary, stated yesterday in reply to the question put by my noble Friend the Member for Bristol Central (Lord Apsley), close practical co-operation exists between His Majesty's Navy and the Chinese Navy for the suppression of piracy in China, and I am not aware that any useful purpose would be served at the moment by such further action as my hon. and gallant Friend proposes. The general question of piracy is, however, being carefully watched and my hon. and gallant Friend may rest assured that no measure calculated to improve the situation will be neglected.

Lieut.-Commander AGNEW: Is my right hon. Friend aware that action against this kind of piracy cannot be effectively taken solely at sea, because the inhabitants of the villages mentioned in the question in some cases collaborate actively with the pirates?

Mr. EDEN: There has recently been a particularly successful result of action taken at sea.

Lieut.-Commander AGNEW: Can further action be taken?

72. **Lieut.-Commander AGNEW** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will make a statement as to the seizure by pirates of the British steamship "Tungchow" off the mouth of the Yangtze; whether any of the party of British schoolchildren on board the vessel received any injury; and what steps are being taken to prevent similar incidents in the future?

Mr. EDEN: On the 29th January the steamship "Tungchow" carrying 70 European children was seized by pirates off the mouth of the Yangtze and taken southwards in the direction of Bias Bay. As soon as they learned that the vessel was overdue, the naval authorities took steps to supplement the normal anti-piracy patrol, and aircraft from His Majesty's Ship "Hermes" were also employed in an attempt to locate the vessel. When, on the 1st February, one of the aeroplanes from His Majesty's Ship "Hermes" flew over the "Tungchow" which had meanwhile been disguised as a Japanese vessel, the pirates deserted the ship, which subsequently proceeded to Hong Kong escorted by one of His Majesty's destroyers. In the course of the piracy two Russian guards were killed and the second engineer was wounded; the children and other passengers were, however, unharmed. The circumstances in which the pirates obtained control of the ship are not yet known. The steamship "Tungchow" is due back in Shanghai to-day, and His Majesty's Consul-General at Shanghai will conduct a full enquiry into the circumstances in co-operation with the naval authorities and municipal police.

Lieut.-Commander AGNEW: While thanking my right hon. Friend for the reply, may I ask him whether His Majesty's Government intend to make direct representation to the Chinese Government that the pirates shall be traced to their lair on shore and punished?

Mr. EDEN: There is in this matter close, and in this instance there was successful, co-operation between us and the Chinese authorities.

Commander MARSDEN: Will my right hon. Friend ask the League of Nations to appeal to the pirates' better feelings?

STRAUSS & COMPANY LIMITED (EXCESS PROFITS DUTY).

36. **Mr. PALING** (*for* **Mr. EDWARD WILLIAMS**) asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury whether his atten-

[Mr. Paling.]

tion has been called to the fact that a statement of the financial position of Messrs. Strauss and Company, Limited, shows a debt to the Inland Revenue of £500,000 in respect of Excess Profits Duty under appeal; and whether he can give any explanation why this large amount remains due under a duty which has been so long repealed?

Lieut.-Colonel Sir A. LAMBERT WARD (Lord of the Treasury): I have been asked to reply. My hon. Friend's attention has been drawn to the case to which the hon. Member refers. With regard to the latter part of the question, my hon. Friend would remind the hon. Gentleman that assessments to Excess Profits Duty can still be made under the provisions of Section 38 of the Finance Act, 1926. My hon. Friend is precluded from disclosing information relating to cases of individual taxpayers; but he is satisfied that any delay in the settlement of this case is due to causes for which the Inland Revenue are not responsible.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. LANSBURY: May I ask the Prime Minister the business for next week? At the same time I wish to ask if he can tell us when the Unemployment Assistance (Temporary Provisions) Bill will be ready.

The PRIME MINISTER: I will give the business first. As I announced on Thursday last, the Debate on the Second Reading of the Government of India Bill will be concluded on Monday.

Tuesday: Second Reading, Unemployment Assistance (Temporary Provisions) Bill and Committee stage of the necessary Money Resolution; Second Reading of the Consolidated Fund Bill.

Wednesday: Second Reading of the Housing (Scotland) Bill and Committee stage of the necessary Money Resolution; remaining stages of the Unemployment Assistance (Temporary Provisions) Bill.

Thursday: Remaining stages of the Consolidated Fund Bill.

The business for Friday will be announced later.

On any day, if there is time, other Orders may be taken.

The Unemployment Assistance (Temporary Provisions) Bill will be presented to-morrow, and copies circulated to Members on Saturday morning. The Bill is urgent, and the Government desire, if possible, to obtain its passage by, say, Wednesday.

Mr. LANSBURY: We should like to discuss through the usual channels the allocation of time to the Unemployment Assistance (Temporary Provisions) Bill and the Consolidated Fund Bill, because it may be that we shall ask for one of the stages of the Consolidated Fund Bill to be taken formally, in order to discuss a Resolution which we would like to table for the consideration of the House; but we are not certain at the moment, and would like to see the Bill first, and then discuss the allocation of time.

The PRIME MINISTER: Certainly, I should be most agreeable to that. We desire that the convenience of the House should be consulted before any final arrangements are made. There are certain times at which certain business must be concluded, but within those limitations we are quite agreeable to come to an arrangement.

Sir P. HARRIS: I understand that these Regulations are temporary. Will the Prime Minister say when the permanent Regulations will be introduced?

The PRIME MINISTER: I cannot say. The present situation must be dealt with in the first instance.

Sir ROBERT HORNE: May I point out that in next week's Debate on the Scottish Housing Bill a large number of Members may wish to make speeches, because very important questions arise on this Bill, which is differentiated in many aspects from the English Bill, and I am afraid the time afforded may not be enough if the Bill is to be taken on the same day as the other important Measures to which the right hon. Gentleman refers.

The PRIME MINISTER: We must see how we get on, but our view is that this Bill will go to the Scottish Standing Committee upstairs, and most of the points which I believe are likely to be in dispute are points that are essentially Committee points. We will see how we get on.

Ordered,

"That the Proceedings on the Report of Supply of 5th February be exempted, at this day's Sitting, from the provisions of the Standing Order (Sittings of the House)." —[*The Prime Minister.*]

POST OFFICE (AMENDMENT) BILL,

"to amend the Post Office Act, 1908, and other enactments relating to the Post Office," presented by Sir Kingsley Wood; supported by Sir Ernest Bennett; to be read a Second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 26.]

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to,—

Amendment to—

Supreme Court of Judicature (Amendment) Bill [*Lords*], without Amendment.

Consolidation Bills,—That they propose that the Joint Committee on Consolidation Bills do meet in Committee Room A, on Tuesday next, at Half-past Eleven o'Clock.

CONSOLIDATION BILLS.

So much of the Lords Message as relates to Consolidation Bills considered:—

Ordered, That the Committee appointed by this House do meet the Lords Committee as proposed by their Lordships.—[*Captain Margesson.*]

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

STANDING COMMITTEE A.

Mr. William Nicholson reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee A: Major Colfox, Sir Gifford Fox, Mr. Holdsworth, Major Leighton, Brigadier-General Makins, Major Mills, and Mr. Patrick; and had appointed in substitution: Lieut.-Colonel Sandeman Allen, Major Lloyd George, Sir Robert Gower, Mr. Janner, Mr. Maitland, Mr. Petherick, and Sir Walter Womersley.

STANDING COMMITTEE B.

Mr. William Nicholson further reported from the Committee: That they had appointed the following Members to serve on Standing Committee B: Miss Lloyd George, Sir Robert Hamilton, Mr. David Mason, Dr. George Morrison, Mr. R. J. Russell, and Sir Thomas Rosbotham.

Mr. William Nicholson further reported from the Committee; That they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee B: Viscount Wolmer; and had appointed in substitution: Major Leighton.

Mr. William Nicholson further reported from the Committee; That they had added the following Twenty Members to Standing Committee B (in respect of the Herring Industry Bill): Dr. Addison, the Lord Advocate, Mr. Boothby, Mr. Chorlton, Major Colfox, Sir Godfrey Collins, Mr. Smedley Crooke, Mr. Elliot, Mr. Harbord, Mr. Richard Law, Mr. Lovat-Fraser, Captain James MacAndrew, Mr. McEwen, Sir Ian Macpherson, Mr. Macquisten, Sir Arthur Michael Samuel, Mr. Henderson Stewart, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. David Williams, and Sir Murdoch McKenzie Wood.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

EXPERIMENTS ON ANIMALS.

Mr. GROVES asked the Home Secretary how many of the applications for licences or certificates issued in 1934, under the Cruelty of Animals Act, 1876, were signed by the President of the Royal Veterinary College, London?

Sir J. GILMOUR: No application for a licence and no certificate in 1934 bore the signature of the President of the Royal Veterinary College, London.

SPIRITS, BEER AND WINE (CONSUMPTION, NORTHERN IRELAND).

Mr. LECKIE asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer the estimated number of standard and bulk barrels of beer, proof gallons of spirits, and gallons of wine consumed in Northern Ireland during the calendar year 1934, and the estimated revenue under each head?

Mr. COOPER: The following table shows the estimated quantities of spirits, beer, and wine, retained for consumption in Northern Ireland during the calendar year 1934, and the estimated revenue attributable thereto:

Article.	Quantities retained for consumption.	Attributable revenue.
	Proof Gallons.	£
Spirits ...	221,000	780,000
Beer ...	Standard barrels 151,000 / Bulk barrels 190,000	553,000
Wine ...	Gallons 280,000	83,000

SMUGGLING.

Captain ERSKINE-BOLST asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the increase in smuggling, he will consider introducing legislation to increase the present maximum penalty of six months' imprisonment?

Mr. COOPER: I have noted the suggestion for consideration.

GREAT WEST ROAD (GRASS MARGINS).

Mr. DORAN asked the Minister of Transport what grants have been made by his Department during each of the past three years towards the expenditure of the Middlesex County Council in levelling and covering with grass the margins of the Great West Road; and whether, before such grants were made, any steps were taken to ascertain whether such expenditure was undertaken with a view to providing better facilities for pedestrians and riders or merely to render such margins ornamental?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: Expenditure on the care and maintenance of grass margins together with other items of work of like character is included in the estimates submitted by county councils in connection with the classification grant under the general head of "Maintenance." County authorities are not required to distinguish the individual items making up the total under this head.

UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE (ADJUSTMENT OF ALLOWANCES).

Colonel ROPNER asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can give any indication of the extent of the new financial liability which will fall on the State as a result of the remodelling of the administration of unemployment relief assistance?

Mr. COOPER: I would ask my hon. and gallant Friend to await the Financial Memorandum on the Bill which is to be introduced, when such information as is possible will be given in the usual way.

Colonel ROPNER asked the Minister of Labour his estimate of the approximate time needed by the Unemployment Assistance Board to make the necessary examination of the present position and to present its revised proposals to him?

Mr. STANLEY: No, Sir, I cannot at this stage make such an estimate.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

FOOD (WILLIS REPORT).

Mr. LEONARD asked the Minister of Health when the Government expect to be able to submit legislation to Parliament implementing the recommendations of the Willis Report on the Composition and Description of Food, dated March, 1934?

Sir H. YOUNG: I am keeping the matter in mind, but I cannot at present say when it will be possible to introduce legislation on this subject.

INFLUENZA.

Major DESPENCER-ROBERTSON asked the Minister of Health whether his attention has been called to outbreaks of a virulent type of influenza in two places in France; and whether, in view of the fact that the influenza epidemic in England two years ago was responsible for the loss of several thousand lives, he can see his way to take steps, either by quarantine restrictions or by other regulations, which may lessen the chance of infection spreading to this country?

Sir H. YOUNG: The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, I am advised that there are no known practicable means whereby the spread of in-

fluenza from one country to another can be prevented, and there are, therefore, no effective steps which I can take for the purpose mentioned by my hon. and gallant Friend.

POOR LAW ACT, 1934 (WOUNDS, &c., PENSIONS).

Mr. T. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister of Health whether the Section of the Poor Law Act, 1934, which deals with wounds and war disability pensions has been put into operation; and, if not, when it is proposed to issue an order to make this Section operative?

Sir H. YOUNG: An Order fixing 1st March next as the date of the operation of the provision was made on 31st January.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES' STAFFS (SALARY CUTS).

Captain ERSKINE-BOLST asked the Minister of Health the number and names of local authorities which have not restored the emergency cuts in salaries and wages made in 1931?

Sir H. YOUNG: I regret that I do not possess the desired information.

GRAIN CARGOES (SHIFTING).

Mr. T. MORRIS asked the President of the Board of Trade the number of mishaps in each of the last two years to home trade and coasting vessels as a result of the shifting of grain cargoes?

Mr. RUNCIMAN: So far as I am aware, there have been no such casualties during the past two years.

NAVAL AND MILITARY PENSIONS AND GRANTS.

Mr. T. SMITH asked the Minister of Pensions the number of hospitals for the treatment of disabled ex-service men now under the administration of the Ministry; where each hospital is situated; the number of patients for which there is accommodation in each hospital; and the number of doctors, sisters and nurses attached to each institution?

Major TRYON: The particulars asked for are as follow:

Ministry of Pensions Hospitals.

Name.	Where situated.	Equipped Bed Strength.	Medical Officers.		Nursing Staff.
			Whole time.	Visiting.	
Chapel Allerton ...	Leeds	157	2	4	23
Chepstow	Monmouthshire ...	140	2	—	8
Cosham	Portsmouth	285	4	—	10
Dunston Hill	Newcastle	120	2	1	16
Edenhall	Musselburgh, Edinburgh.	103	2	2	13
Latchmere	Kingston, Surrey ...	20	1	—	6
Leopardstown Park ...	Dublin	80	2	3	10*
Mossley Hill	Liverpool	300	4	4	32
Orpington	Orpington, Kent ...	170	3	—	6
Rookwood	Cardiff	86	1	2	13
Roehampton*	London, S.W.15 ...	463	11	8	62

* Hospital controlled under special arrangement.

Mr. SMITH asked the Minister of Pensions the number of area war pensions offices; where each is situated; and the area covered by each office?

Major TRYON: There are 15 area offices of the Ministry, but as the further information asked for by the hon. Member involves a tabulated statement and considerable detail, I am communicating with him on the matter in due course.

INDIA (KIDNAPPING).

Mr. DONNER asked the Secretary of State for India the number of cases of

kidnapping of women and children and of dacoitees in the British Indian Provinces, and, separately, in Sind, annually during the last five years?

Sir S. HOARE: I am sending my hon. Friend two statements giving the figures from 1929-1933. Figures for 1934 are not yet available.

EDUCATION.

PUPILS' TRAVELLING EXPENSES, SOUTHPORT.

Dr. O'DONOVAN asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education whether the attention of his Department has been called to the refusal of the Southport Education Committee to pay the travelling expenses of some pupils from St. Patrick's parish to St. Marie's schools, a distance of two miles; and is it within the discretion of the committee to sanction such payment of fares?

Mr. RAMSBOTHAM: The board have not been informed of any such refusal on the part of the Southport local education authority. As regards the second part of the question, I would refer the hon. Member to Section 88 (1) of the Education Act, 1921.

PROVISION OF MEALS.

Sir W. JENKINS asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education the number of children in elementary schools in England and Wales who are receiving meals at school because they are unable to receive proper education through lack of food; the number who received a mid-day dinner; the number who received a second meal either in the morning or afternoon, breakfast or tea, giving England and Wales separately; what is the cost per meal; and the number of days per week it is supplied?

Mr. RAMSBOTHAM: The number of children attending public elementary schools in England and Wales who are receiving ordinary meals under arrangements made by local education authorities is about 108,000, of whom about 98,000 receive free meals. These children have not, however, in all cases been certified by the medical officer to be in need of meals because they are unable by reason of lack of food to take full advantage of their education, as the basis of selection has hitherto varied considerably in different areas. Figures showing the number of children who receive mid-day dinners and other meals, respectively, are not available, but the number of breakfasts represents about 12½ per cent. of the number of dinners, and the number of teas about 5 per cent. The cost per meal varies considerably, but the average cost is about 4d. Meals are usually given on five days a week only, but some authorities provide meals also on Saturdays or on Saturdays and Sundays. Detailed information on this point will be found in the answer which I gave to the hon. Member for the Don Valley Division (Mr. T. Williams) on 12th April last.

Sir W. JENKINS asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education the number of elementary school children who are in receipt of milk, malt and cod-liver oil because they are in need of nourishment; the list of education authorities in England and Wales, separately, who select the children who are in need; and what is the cost per child per day?

Mr. RAMSBOTHAM: About 200,000 children in public elementary schools are receiving free milk under arrangements made by 151 local education authorities in England and 20 in Wales. The number of children who receive milk because they have been certified by the medical officer to be in need of supplementary nourishment cannot be stated, as the method of selection has hitherto varied considerably in different areas. The cost of the milk under the Milk in Schools Scheme is ½d. for a third of a pint; some children receive a third of a pint daily, and others two-thirds of a pint or one pint. The number of children receiving malt and cod liver oil is not available, as these are given in some areas as part of the authority's arrangements for the provision of meals, and in others as a form of medical treatment under Section 80 of the Education Act, 1921.

Sir W. JENKINS asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education what number of local education authorities in England and Wales have had permission from the Board of Education to erect dining halls and

cooking facilities to provide a hot meal for children in elementary schools; and whether the board is prepared to grant these facilities in the building of all future schools?

Mr. RAMSBOTHAM: The board have no figures which would enable them to answer the first part of the question, but I would refer the hon. Member to paragraph 22 of the board's annual report for 1932. Where the need for dining accommodation in connection with a new public elementary school is shown, the board are prepared to consider proposals for its provision sympathetically.

TUBERCULOSIS (AFRICA).

Dr. O'DONOVAN asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his Department has had an opportunity to consider the report by Dr. Allan, Captain Burrows, and Drs. Matthews and Wilcocks, presented to the Medical Research Council on Tuberculosis in Africans; and has any preliminary line of action been decided upon?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: Yes, Sir. The investigations on which this report is based were undertaken in consultation with the Colonial Office. The reports of Dr. Allan and Captain Burrows, while naturally of general interest in connection with the problem of tuberculosis in Africa, do not relate to territories dealt with by the Colonial Office. As regards the report by Dr. Matthews on tuberculosis in Zanzibar (which was first submitted in 1932), the local government has naturally given full consideration to the recommendations which Dr. Matthews put forward. A tuberculosis clinic was established in Zanzibar township, two new tuberculosis wards were built at Welezo infirmary, and special accommodation for tuberculosis cases was provided at the general hospital. Arrangements have also been made for the establishment of a home treatment service. It may be mentioned that the number of deaths notified in Zanzibar town as due to tuberculosis fell from 185 in 1923 to 52 in 1933. Dr. Wilcocks's report is in the nature of an interim report on an investigation financed from the Colonial Development Fund which began in 1931. An application has been submitted by the Tanganyika Government for the grant of further assistance from the fund to enable the investigation to be continued, on the lines indicated by Dr. Wilcocks, until May, 1937. The Tanganyika Government is fully alive to the importance of taking measures against the disease. Special instructions have been issued to all medical officers, administrative officers, schools, missions and native authorities in order to check its spread and to bring home to all concerned the danger which it presents.

POTATOES (EEL-WORM PEST).

Mr. de ROTHSCHILD asked the Minister of Agriculture whether he has considered the representations from the county council of the Isle of Ely as to the prevalence of eel-worm in Scotch seed potatoes; and whether he proposes to take any steps to ensure that such infected potatoes do not find their way into this administrative district or other parts of the British Isles?

Mr. ELLIOT: The representations referred to in the first part of the question are receiving the Ministry's attention. As regards the second part, I would refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to-day to a question on this subject by my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Howdenshire Division (Major Carver), of which I am sending him a copy.

PEOPLES' PALACE (REBUILDING).

Dr. O'DONOVAN asked the hon. Member for Bosworth, as representing the Charity Commissioners, whether his Department have considered the representations from societies or people resident in Stepney, Mile End, or Bow, calling his attention to the fact that it is four years since the Queen's Hall of the Peoples' Palace was burnt down, and whether his Department has funds in hand which, if released, would enable an approved rebuilding plan to be put in hand forthwith?

Sir W. EDGE: The commissioners have received such representations as are referred to in the question from a single local political association and are aware that complaints are being made by residents in the neighbourhood as to the delay in the rebuilding of the Peoples' Palace. Plans for rebuilding have now been submitted by the governors and are

under consideration. In considering the question of expenditure it is necessary for the commissioners to have regard to the financial stability of the charity as well as to the desirability of the provision of adequate and suitable buildings. Only two representations such as are referred to in the question have been received, but the charity commissioners are aware from what they have seen in newspapers that it is desired that the rebuilding of the Queen's Hall should not be delayed. The plans of the proposed new hall were received by the commissioners on the 28th ultimo and they and the financial position of the charity were considered at a meeting between representatives of the governors and the commissioners on the 5th instant. The plans will be sent forthwith to the commissioners' architect for approval, and if the result of the tenders when received justifies an immediate start the rebuilding will be commenced without delay. It is almost certain, however, that an appeal to the public for further funds will be necessary for the completion of the whole scheme.

WATER SUPPLIES, SCOTLAND.

Sir A. SINCLAIR asked the Secretary of State for Scotland whether the recommendations for early action contained in the interim report of the Committee on Scottish Health Services have yet been carried out?

Sir G. COLLINS: The Department of Health for Scotland are at present actively co-operating with local authorities and water undertakers in examining the whole position of water resources and supplies in Scotland with a view to a comprehensive consideration of the best use of those resources and supplies.

CIVIL SERVICE SUPERANNUATION.

Sir I. FRASER asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Bill to deal with superannuation provisions affecting civil servants will be laid before this House?

Mr. COOPER: The Financial Resolution upon which the Bill will be founded has been placed upon the Order Paper. I cannot at present say when it will be taken.

GOLD STANDARD.

Duchess of ATHOLL asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer which countries have gone off the Gold Standard since 1st October, 1931, and 1st January, 1932, respectively?

Mr. COOPER: It is not possible to say precisely what measures constitute a departure from the Gold Standard. A table showing the dates at which the principal measures affecting currencies have been taken in recent years up to May, 1934, appears in the League of Nations Statistical Year Book for 1933-34 (page 206), and in a more up-to-date form in the October number (No. 10) of the League's Monthly Bulletin of Statistics (page 436).

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA BILL.

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [*6th February*], "That the Bill be now read a Second time."

Which Amendment was, to leave out from "That," to the end of the Question, and to add instead thereof:

"in the opinion of this House, no legislation for the better government of India will be satisfactory which does not secure the good will and co-operation of the Indian people by recognising explicity India's right to Dominion status and by providing within it the means of its attainment, and which does not by its provisions as to franchise and representation secure to the workers and peasants of India the possibility of achieving by constitutional means their social and economic emancipation."—[*Mr. Attlee.*]

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

3.45 p.m.

Mr. DAVID GRENFELL: I confess that I find it more than usually difficult to speak on this large and complicated question. The Government of India is a subject which reaches far beyond the range of the best-informed Members of this House. The hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Kirkpatrick) yesterday made a most impressive contribution to our knowledge of India, but I feel certain that he will not claim that the problems underlying this Bill have been simplified by his added knowledge. We are assuming a great responsibility in presenting to India the Constitution and the form of government contained in this Bill. Previous speakers have examined the main parts of the Bill and endeavoured to show how it is to apply. I have been able to get only a general picture of the proposed scheme of government and of the plan by which the several parts are related. The Explanatory Memorandum issued to Members does much to assist us to reduce the contents of this compendious document. In this Debate we have to select a few of the salient points upon which differences have arisen.

The Bill is to be offered to India as a charter of constitutional rights; in addition, it is a fixed plan of government, permanent and unalterable unless it is changed by a future British Parliament. There is laid down in the first three Clauses the future position of India in relation to the British Crown. The Bill then proceeds to define the plan for the unification of India—its federalisation—so as to include the Provinces of British India, or the Governors' Provinces as they are henceforth to be called, and the Indian States which have voluntarily entered into the Federation. That recognition of India's unity is fundamental to the structure of government here provided. The powers to be conferred upon the Federal Legislature are superior to those of the Provincial Legislatures, because it has authority over the whole area of Federation. The Provincial Legislatures have a more limited legislative range and are to have an authority over the Provinces enumerated in the Bill. The framework of government, provincial and federal, is here laid down. The machinery contains much material which is not Indian and which is designed to retain the power of Britain in matters vital to India's interests.

Whether the Bill provides for the better government of India or not, it cannot be described as self-government. The whole of the Clauses from Part II to the end of Part V show clearly how the new order is going to preserve ultimate control in British hands. It is obvious that the Constitution is to be an instrument for permitting Indians to take part in the government and administration, but does not ensure that the people of India are to be given full rights in the control of local or national affairs. The Bill lays down the conditions under which rulers of the Indian States may accede to the Federation before or after establishment of Federation, and for reserving certain conditions from the authority of the Federal Legislature in those cases. At the head of the Federal Executive is the Governor-General, exercising executive authority on behalf of His Majesty.

Then we come to the Council of Ministers who advise the Governor-General in the exercise of his function. These Ministers are to be chosen by the Governor-General, and they are removable at his discretion. He is also to have three counsellors, including an Advocate-General.

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Special responsibilities are reserved to the Governor-General who, in those special responsibilities, retains full control of almost every important subject which may arise in India. There is to be a Federal Legislature with two Chambers for the Federal Government. The provincial executives will consist also of a Council of Ministers but executive power will be exercised by the Provincial Governors, who will have reserved to them control over external affairs, defence and ecclesiastical affairs. The Provincial Legislature is to consist of one Chamber in some Provinces and of two Chambers in others. There is so much machinery for dealing with legislation that one is given the impression that much of it is duplicated unnecessarily. Any kind of detailed examination is impossible in one speech at this stage. The main principles concern us all, and must be weighed carefully before we give our votes in the Division Lobby.

The Secretary of State for India, speaking yesterday on the Bill, compared the Bill to a gigantic boat such as Robinson Crusoe built to achieve his escape from the island on which he had been an unwilling resident for so long. The analogy does not exactly fit. Crusoe's boat was a dug-out, but this Bill is a construction of many pieces, with mortices, stays and plugs, and even putty. The right hon. Gentleman is rightly concerned with its seaworthiness. Our view is not that the design is not bold enough but that the materials are not well chosen. There is too little Indian wood in the boat and too much reliance on bolts and stays to keep the craft intact in stormy weather. This boat is to be launched under unfavourable auspices. The builders are quarrelling. If it does go to sea ill-manned or ill-provisioned, it will suffer damage and wreck long before the end of the voyage is reached.

It is because we do not want to start this enterprise in an unsound ship and with a mutinous crew that we desire to give attention to what we regard as the elements of success for the Measure. The first and the greatest of those concerns Status. We know that the Government stand firmly by the pledge in the 1919 Preamble and by the Viceroy's Declaration of 1929. From 1919 to 1929, 10 years passed, and they have been followed by five years. The world has been told over the whole of that period that the natural isue of Indian progress, as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion status. The right hon. Gentleman said yesterday that we can only reach the end which we have plainly set before ourselves when India has succeeded in establishing the conditions upon which self-government rests; but the Bill involves a co-partnership in legislation and administration, and in it Britain has the greater responsibility. Success does not depend wholly upon India's effort. She cannot establish conditions for self-government unless she knows that in this Constitution she is permitted to stand on terms of equality and to work for the attainment of equality of status. A considered declaration on this question of status would assist the right hon. Gentleman to overcome the suspicion of India. Why not, in the Preamble to this Bill, make the position clear beyond doubt?

Then as to the rate of progress. We should try to look upon this Bill as if it were to apply to ourselves. The inferior position which Indians occupy in their own country and in the management of their affairs is a fact, and it is not a pleasant fact. It is one of the disturbing, irritating and dangerous conditions which have been the cause of conflict and war all through the ages. There is no remedy for it except the removal of racial discrimination. The evil lies deep, but it can be overcome, and here is a great opportunity. Let us decide to come to terms with India so that the progress of India may be expedited and not delayed by acts on our part. For my part —I speak, I am sure, for my colleagues in this—I should like to see the general condition of India raised to our level as early as possible. That great country, with its 360,000,000 people who are increasing in numbers faster than they can raise their standard of subsistence, is not playing its full part in the world. Hon. Members yesterday insisted upon the retention of our markets in India. Those markets are valuable, but they are exceedingly poor when spread over the immense area and the great population with whom we deal in this Bill.

Our administration in India will be judged by the extent to which we are able to raise the standard of living for India's teeming populations. Nothing will stand to our credit if the standard of living

for those masses of terribly poor people is not enhanced by our administration. India, like all other countries, is suffering poverty because she is badly governed. It is true of Britain as of India but not to the same bitter degree. We heard yesterday of the money-lenders, the castes and the low wages. they are familiar to us here in a less degree. Those conditions are not confined to India. There is illiteracy and bad housing in all the older countries, which move slowly. Such conditions must go, if modern industry is to find a place for its production. Lancashire cotton goods and British manufactures of all kinds cannot be sold to India unless she arrives at greater prosperity and is disposed in a friendly way to enter into economic co-operation with the people of this country. It is therefore vitally important that we should now secure the good will of the people of India. It is a very dangerous and wrong thing to ignore the feeling of Indians. They have declared against this Bill in its present form. We should now consult with them, and endeavour to make the Bill acceptable. The question of status is most urgent. Our word is given. There are pledges which, if they mean anything at all, bind everyone of us, and those in whose name we speak in this House. Our honour as a nation as it stake. Our peace with India rests on their faith in us.

Then we come to the machinery of the Bill. Indians have a perfect right to deny our claim to give advice, but if any constitution is to apply to a united India, she will herself have to cope with a great many difficulties for which Britain is not in the least responsible. Our idea of a constitution for India, as for Britain, is one based on liberty and equal rights for individuals, without distinction. India has a great task ahead. She is in a world where change is universal and rapid. The hon. Member who yesterday spoke of villagers waiting for the omnibus, referred to a change whose influence is incalculable in world of ideas and in politics. Where the omnibus, the wireless, the aeroplane go into primitive countries, those countries are never the same afterwards. The tractor plough, irrigation, electricity are elements of change and re-adaptation. India is influenced, as we have been, by the coming of industry and invention. She will meet those changing conditions by herself changing, by better education, by social organisation, by better politics and by better institutions. It is the people of India themselves who are to free themselves.

One of the grave defects of the machinery of government in this Bill is that it is not sufficiently representative. The question of franchise is not directly raised, but we would insist upon the extension of the franchise to all classes upon the same principle. The property qualification is unacceptable to us. India's backwardness in education should not be a bar to the franchise of an intelligent person who has been condemned to illiteracy. The electoral rolls for the Provincial and Federal Legislatures should be open to all classes. A simple educational qualification might be necessary, but it should apply to all men, whether they possess property or not. These details are important, but they are matters really for the Indians. It is not likely that they will tolerate a franchise where only an insignificant percentage of the people vote for the Federal Legislature, and only a minority for the Provincial Legislatures. Self-government for India does not mean the transfer of authority to the rich landed interests and the ruling classes of India. If the interests of the Indian people are to be considered, they must find a place in the constitution, and in the daily administration of their country's affairs. Education, taxation, finance, defence are all matters for control by the Indian people. They are asking for more than is being given in this Bill. We believe that they are entitled to more. We think, moreover, that the real interests of our own country will better be served by inviting India to join in a larger partnership with larger and higher aims than are foreshadowed in the Bill now before the House.

4.5 p.m.

Sir A. BOYD-CARPENTER: It is with considerable trepidation that I rise, after some years, to address this Assembly, and I am going to ask for the indulgence of the House in so doing. Of course it is only when one feels very deeply upon a great subject that one is carried away, perhaps, and the House will forgive me if I am in

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some respects by my criticism, and by what may be called by some, want of judgment. This is a question which vitally concerns every Member of this House, and there is no party in this House or in the State which does not recognise that of all subjects which have been submitted to us in recent years this is the most prominent, the most important in its bearings for the hereafter of our people in England and in India. It is, therefore, a question which must evoke sympathy on one side, and some measure of indignation on another, and I am bound to admit, if the House will allow me to say so, that from my point of view, and the point of view of some others who may or may not agree with me—I think some do—we have been forced into a position, in studying this question, which is an unfair one to us in the whole history of this controversy.

The House will remember, and those who were in the House in 1919 will well remember, that when the Montagu-Chelmsford suggestions were made there was a distinct promise given to the Members of this House that as regards the experiment of giving powers for local legislation, the House was entitled to look at it and judge it by its results, and that when the report of those results was submitted, as it should be, to this House, then they would not only be entitled to review but to alter and restrict the activities of the authorities just in so far as they proved to be failures. In the whole of this discussion during the last two months there has been no reference whatever, not to a party report, but to the report of the eight Provincial Governments in India as regards that experiment. Four of the Provincial Governments in India have condemned the experiment as a complete failure in their four provinces, and the other four, while not condemning them as a whole, have had to admit, and have admitted, the incursion of corruption and indifference which are a negation of any form of successful democratic government. At the same time, while this has been stated, not by politicians but by the people responsible for submitting those reports, not a single word of reference to it in the development of arguments for the giving of further powers has been said.

The last speaker referred, and quite rightly, to the future of the people in India, not necessarily the electors in India but the people who are to be governed in the future. If the reports that have been submitted to the Government are correct, their lot is going to be considerably worse in the future than it has been in the past, and this House of Commons, representative of British democracy, is asked to give additional powers to a selected electorate in India which will, no doubt, carry on the machine in interests rather diverse from the interests of the proletariat and the people of India. If anything could have made me emphatic in my opposition, it would be the speeches of those people who have been by their position compelled to advocate so-called reforms. I speak with great respect for the Secretary of State for India, whom we all respect and admire in this House, but his speeches, and, indeed, the speeches of others who are pleading for this, have always an apologetic tone—a forgive-us-for-being-alive attitude. The Secretary of State for India made a speech the other day, which I read with great interest, in which he asked, "What is the alternative?" What a wonderful question from a statesman. It is the easiest question to put. It is just like at a General Election when everyone probably in this House has been asked by an elector to answer yes or no to an impossible question, and the ordinary refuge of the ordinary Member of Parliament is to retort, "Have you done kicking your wife?—Yes or no," and one cannot reply. But we can reply to the Secretary of State for India when he asks for an alternative. We can say to him, "There is no alternative to death, but there is no reason why we should commit suicide."

In this respect may I be allowed to go a step further? What has made us feel more than anxious as regards these proposals, based not upon principles but upon a practice which is growing up of ignoring previous pledges in the House of Commons, such as I referred to just now, when we were entitled to look back upon the experiment of 1919 and review it in the light of experience. We are entitled, therefore, to fear because of other suggestions which have been made from other quarters. May I suggest, with great respect to the Lord President

of the Council, that when he made a speech on 12th December last year in this House on this question, he said a thing which to many of us was terrible to hear. Speaking on this India question, he said a thing that no man has ever experienced living in the East, as I have in a humble way—a thing that is so untrue that it requires reference. He said:

"Yet the Indian, wherever he may be, looks for advice rather to the men of his own blood, of his own religion, of his own language than he does to the best of our own race. That you cannot help. That is a hard, stubborn fact that you have to realise."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 12th December, 1934; col. 516, Vol. 296.]

There was no statement ever made from a responsible bench in any part of the world that was more untrue. It is common knowledge to everybody who has experience of living in the East that the Oriental, kindly disposed as he may be, stupid as some people may imagine him to be—but he is not—will always come to the men of our people who have been in positions of authority, asking for their advice and consideration, and their counsel, rather than go to their own, because they know that their confidence is respected and their position assured. Therefore, it was something that made one doubt whether the right hon. Gentleman himself was quite *au fait* with the facts that would justify these proposals. But he went a little further, if he will allow me to say so, when the other night he made his broadcast, which frightened a good many people in this country, for he said, in speaking of the policy underlying these proposals:

"The British Raj is not cravenly withdrawing from India. It will remain there, with such modifications of form as circumstances may require, until its work is complete and its presence no longer necessary."

So this Dominion status is to be established, and we are to clear out as and when somebody out there says we are to go. Is there nothing left to us, who have borne the burden and heat of the day in the administration of India, in creating its wealth, in giving it its justice and assuring its unity and security? Is it to be put forward by a responsible statesman in this country that only a measure of time is to elapse before we are to fade out of the picture, and what used to be called the greatest jewel of the British Crown is to be hurled aside because people who have no knowledge of the East think, for political reasons, that it is advantageous so to do? I ask the forgiveness of the House if I have spoken with some measure of feeling, but it is those utterances that have made me, although I did not wish to intervene in this Debate, feel that it was necessary to lodge a protest against suggestions and statements which may be the basis of future policy.

As regards the Bill itself, I agree that the ryot and the working man of India is going to get nothing out of it. He is going to be merely the pawn of the machine, the machine that is to be put over 350,000,000 people with a potential 25,000,000 electors. Who are they to be? We shall see. I remember some years ago a very distinguished ruling Sovereign of an Oriental State saying to me, "It has always struck me as so curious that you Englishmen are always trying to make us accept democratic institutions in exchange for the religions that we sent you from the East, and just at a time when you are rather doubtful as to whether they have any value in your own country."

We are asked to accept the analogy, put forward by the Secretary of State for India yesterday, between America and Canada and India. He will forgive me if I say it is incredible folly that he should have put forward an argument of that kind. There is no analogy. After all, the people of Canada and America were of our own stock; they had some measure of Parliamentary traditon behind them; they were brought up, even in the limited degree that existed in those days, with some representation in local authorities and central authorities; and to compare their lot, and what happened there, with what it is proposed to do in India, is to ask the House of Commons to swallow a good bit more than it has been accustomed to swallow for some years past. Therefore, it was intolerable that these analogies should be drawn, which have no substance in fact and no reality whatever. It is for you and me, as people who wish to see decent government established in the greatest dependency of the British Crown, to see that it should not be handed over to people who have openly said that they want the machine, and do not care about what happens to the people who have to work for that machine. That is not democracy; that is

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plutocracy. For that reason alone it is almost intolerable to me that this country should be asked to endorse a policy that will confirm in their offices a large number of people who have not the slightest wish to look after the welfare of their own people, but who are determined to wrest from us that measure of security which hitherto, through our government, we have been able to accord to the working classes and the ryots of India.

Let me go a step further. I remember another Indian of great position, who worked upon one of the Councils for which my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for India was responsible. I asked him: "How can you be supporting these proposals?" His reply to me was, "'Safety first,' to use the words of the great leader of the Conservative party. If you are going out, we are going to get in and get hold of the machine before it is too late." What a wonderful idea of democracy that is. It is intolerable. [*Interruption.*] I will give his name privately; I cannot do so across the Floor of the House of Commons. He is a man of position and authority, and he has to live and earn all that he owns under the security of the British Raj.

The Lord President of the Council, in his broadcast, made a reference to what was happening in China and Egypt. The same thing that has happened in Egypt is happening, and will happen, in India. The people who were our best supporters are leaving us for "Safety first." They have to live in their own country; they have to move and have their being there. Their trade, their living, and the security that was accorded to them by the British Raj, are being withdrawn. Liberty and confidence are being taken from them. They have to live, move and have their being there, and, being not altogether devoid of thought, even though it may be of an inquisitive kind, they are going to establish themselves in the areas from which we are going to divorce our protectorate, and from which we are withdrawing the security of all.

Will anybody tell me, who has ever visited Egypt in the years that have passed since we gave up our hold there, whether the position of the fellahin is better or worse? It is infinitely worse. The same system of corruption and damnable misjudgment has come in. People in Egypt to-day, the fellahin, will come to you privately at night—they will not be seen coming to you in daylight; they are afraid; but they will come to you at night and tell you what has gone on, and say, "Why is not so-and-so back? We got water in those days, but now, unless we bribe the Omda or the Mudir, we get nothing." And yet we are contemplating on a bigger scale handing over to a section of the community, not representative of the people at all, these powers.

Think of the Bill itself. Look at the position of the Governor-General and the Governors. What an impossible position to put anybody in. You want a superman, and you will get a politician. What ridiculous nonsense it is to say that these people are to have such powers, when it will take them 24½ hours out of the 24 to study their responsibilities before they can take any action and see that things are carried out in honesty and in honour. It is stupid and absurd. Then there are the safeguards. What a magnificent suggestion. I remember that the Prime Minister, in a speech he made in 1911, said that safeguards were worth nothing, but apparently safeguards are now to be the watchword of the Government's proposals. Looking at safeguards from an ordinary point of view, you may put them on paper, but you forget the insult to the people to whom you are giving these powers. It expresses distrust of them to start with, and, therefore, it is the one thing that will prevent adequate action and interaction between the communities concerned.

You are creating an atmosphere of distrust and making for indignation by these proposals. It may be said that they are necessary. We might argue here from an academic point of view, and in different circumstances, that they are necessary, but you are entrusting 350,000,000 people in India with the control of their affairs, and you say to them, "We trust you so little that there are not only to be safeguards, but this, that and the other is to be reserved from the atmosphere of your own action." It is a stupidity beyond imagination that these things should be suggested. In this matter, whether it be in connection with the Governor-General, these safeguards, or law and order, you have the same in-

determinate weakness and half-heartedness, not giving the encouragement to those responsible for law and order that they will be supported in their action; saying with one voice that somebody shall be there to whom they will never give their confidence, and saying at the same time that somebody else shall be in another position who will, if the knowledge is ever conveyed to him, be able to control the underling, although the damage has been done before the man in supreme control knows what has happened. That has occurred before.

I beg of this great House of Commons to think once, twice and thrice over this Bill. I am not going to suggest for one moment—it would be wrong to do so, however deeply one may feel on this matter—that it should create a division, not only in one party, but a division in the House of Commons. Members here and Members there are equally responsible for the future welfare of our Empire in India, and it is necessary that men of good will of all parties should come together and prevent this sacrifice from being achieved at the expense of all the interests of every section in the British Isles to-day. I beg them, therefore, not to divorce themselves from their own party allegiances, but, while maintaining their party allegiances, to divorce themselves entirely from the attitude of mind that, because such action must be taken, they are, therefore, going to be reprobated by this person or that.

I would express the hope, though it is impossible to hope for such a thing, that a Bill such as this, which has no party cry for it or against it, should be left to the free discussion and vote of the House of Commons, so that the opinions of all men of good will could be expressed. That, I am afraid, is impossible because of the determination of His Majesty's Government. The issue is too great, and I am afraid that minds are too small, and they will not adhere to a principle which in its essence is the greatest one of our great democracy. After all, the opinion of Lord This and Lord That really does not weigh against the opinion of the forest officer and the police officer when times of emergency arise. You may quote as much as you like what the Secretary of State has done, or the great names of great people whom we all respect. When the Secretary of State, in a speech the other day, quoted two distinguished admirals and two distinguished generals in another place, he must have had in his mind a challenge of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Carnarvon Boroughs (Mr. Lloyd George), whose opinion of soldiers and sailors is well known. He quoted them as people who were entitled to vote and speak on this matter. They are just as much entitled to vote and speak on this matter as we are, but their opinion, great as their position is, has no greater value than that of the forest officer, the police officer, or the man in daily contact with the ryots and the working men of India.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Sir Samuel Hoare): I did not quote these admirals and generals as experts on India, but as people unlikely to support a policy of surrender.

Sir A. BOYD-CARPENTER: That does not alter my argument in the smallest degree. The right hon. Gentleman quoted them as supporters who voted for this. That was the point of my argument. But their value is no greater than that of any Member of this House of Commons.

The House has listened to me, and I am grateful. I have spoken with some measure of emotion and feeling on this matter which has vexed the country for a considerable time. I would ask hon. Members seriously to consider whether it would not be wise to think before they endorse a policy based upon fear, surrounded by so-called safeguards which must only militate against success, antagonising the very people whom it is proposed to enfranchise and creating in India itself, that great dependency of the Crown, an innate hostility which will increase the sense of irresponsibility to which the Secretary of State referred yesterday. Of course, it will. Irresponsibility will be shown in a greater degree in so far as this Measure, with its restrictions, its antipathies and its ordinances militates against the welfare of those submerged millions in India whom it is our first duty to protect and for whose interests many of us feel and speak.

I beg of the House to think twice before they endorse this. It can only bring friction and lead to further

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trouble. It will not create a sense of increased loyalty to the British Crown or of satisfaction among the citizens of the Empire. It can only widen what is hardly a breach to-day, for, after all, the breach has been effected by but a small percentage of the people of India who speak through a certain number of newspapers which they possess and which they finance, which represent in no degree anything but the smallest percentage of the people. We are asked to accept their opinion as the opinion of the millions of India who say, "Give us our British Raj." To millions of them Queen Victoria is not dead. She lives among them. She is there. She is on a pedestal of justice and righteousness for them all. They worship her to-day. We are asked to subordinate all that and kill the very fabric of enthusiasm which should give loyalty to the Crown and support to the British administration in India.

4.34 p.m.

Earl WINTERTON: The House will generally agree that my hon. Friend who has just sat down has made a most eloquent speech, imbued and impregnated with the deepest sincerity. I do not propose to follow the bad practice of the House of Commons in these days in saying, "I do not propose to follow the last speaker's speech." I propose to follow it very closely and to attempt to answer it. That seems to my mind to be the true function of debate. But before I come to it I should like to make one or two preliminary observations.

In the first place if the House will permit a personal reference, I have three unique experiences in connection with this great subject under review. Firstly, I am the only Member of the House who in recent years or, as far as I know, at any time has for nearly seven years represented the Secretary of State for India in this House. Secondly, I am the only back bencher who has sat on both the third Round Table Conference, the Burma Round Table Conference, and the Joint Committee. All of us who sat on those Conferences and Committees had to carry out a very long and sustained labour. I reckon, for example, that I myself sat for over 1,000 hours in Committee, sometimes when the House was in recess and sometimes when it was in session, and I can assure my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) that the pygmies did work on those Committees in their limited sphere. They worked very hard, not of course with the distinction and with the influence of world figures, those who move great armies and navies over the face of the earth, but at any rate they worked according to their lights, and the work they did is on record to-day. Let it not be thought for a moment that this subject has been approached by the House without very considerable preliminary observation and preparation. Thirdly, I am the only member of the Joint Committee who has not yet taken part in the Debate, except my right hon. Friend below me. He has imposed a Trappist vow of silence upon himself throughout this Parliament though I understand he is going to break it to-morrow.

Having made these autobiographical observations, for which I apologise to the House, I proceed to say no more about my personal reasons for supporting the Bill, because it seems to me that there has been a tendency throughout these discussions rather to over-emphasise the personal factor. As I see it, at any rate, this Bill is not the result of the all-pervasive and all-persuasive influence of a Socialist Prime Minister or of a former amiable but too-yielding Viceroy, nor even of a Satanic Secretary of State, nor has the rather long conversion of my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Sir A. Chamberlain), of which my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping made some play on a former occasion, nor the rather shorter conversion of the Foreign Secretary produced the process by which this Bill was brought into being. It has, in fact, only exemplified it.

It is in my judgment the fact that for at least a generation past the thoughts of all the wisest men in Indian government, whether of Britons or of Indians, have been directed towards the confederation and consolidation of the whole sub-Continent as a great unit in the British Empire, self-governed but guided and influenced by what may be called without exaggeration the incomparable tradition of British administrators and British administration. That process was, of course, accelerated by what occurred during the War, not only in India but elsewhere. India's participation in the

War, her very material contributions towards the winning of it, the attitude which this country adopted to other countries both within and without the Empire since the War in the matter of self-determination and, above all, the fact, to which I will call the particular attention of my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) who I understand is going to follow in this Debate because I think he cannot deny this—the paradoxical but indubitable parallel growth in the Dominions overseas since 1918 of a strong local pride and nationalism together with a broadening Empire patriotism, and sense of common right and common obligation towards the whole Empire. All these have accelerated the process to which I have referred.

It is quite obvious that my hon. and right hon. Friends who oppose the Bill and who have opposed the recommendations of the Joint Committee and of the three Round Table Conferences have a completely different picture in their minds as to the position that India should occupy now and in the future. This is no quibbling difference of opinion. It is a fundamental cleavage within the party, a cleavage which of course is perfectly honourable to both sides. Holding those views, not only the official Socialist Opposition, who are also of course in fundamental opposition to our conception of the position that India should occupy in the Empire, but Conservative opponents of the Bill have a perfect right to offer strong opposition to it. I have never denied it, though I think they should remember, in putting forward their opposition, that at the most favourable estimate of the strength which they hold in the party it does not exceed 50 per cent.

The Government could, of course, hardly expect them to refrain from opposition, especially after the agreement to differ in the early days of this Parliament, and I for one think it is a very good thing in this respect that during the Debates that we shall have in Committee we shall return for a time, at any rate, to pre-war conditions of Debate where we shall have dissection and analysis, brilliant point and counterpoint, and not the pure mechanisation of legislation, which has done so much to injure the prestige of this House outside. We are now going to enter on a great period of controversy—one might also say historic controversy. I do not object to that thought I am profoundly sorry to find myself in disagreement with those Members of my party with whom normally and usually I have worked and hope to work together in the future. That discussion will do good, I think, in many ways. The phrase is attributed to the Lord President of the Council—I do not know whether he ever used it—that oratory is the harlot of the Arts. I should rather prefer to say that oratory is the sister of free discussion and the daughter and upholder of democratic institutions. When the House of Commons ceases to be interested in historic issues it will cease to have any interest for the public outside.

I want to refer to one or two points which have been made by opponents of the Bill, and in particular by my hon. Friend who spoke last. First of all, it has been stated throughout these discussions by Conservative opponents that the whole thesis of All-India Federation is false because the Princes were not and could not be willing parties to it. This statement, which has been so oft repeated, is based on the grossly inaccurate belief that the Princes have been cajoled and coerced into declaring for Federation. I am sorry that my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping has left the House, because I have been asked here to refer to a statement which he made a short time ago upon this subject. Let me say, first of all, that there is not a shred of evidence which would be accepted in any properly constituted court of law to support this contention. On the contrary, the evidence is all the other way. The most astonishing efforts have been made to induce the Princes to make certain public declarations. Hon. Members of this House and others have gone to, what I venture to describe, the limits of decency. They have shown an officious and impudent interference in the affairs of distinguished men who are the subjects of His Majesty which I have never remembered to have occurred in connection with any other controversy in my experience.

What is the answer? The answer was given by two of the most distinguished of them, and I hope that my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bourne-

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mouth will deal with that answer in the course of his speech. I invite him to do so, and I put this specific question to him. Does he, or does he not, accept the statement which was made by the Maharajahs of Bikaner and Patiala the other day, and, if so, will he restrain himself and his friends from saying the things which they have been saying? I never remember any persons, however humble or great, receiving such unsolicited and unwelcome advice as that offered by the right hon. Gentleman and his entourage. My right hon. Friend the Member for Epping not only says that the Princes have been cajoled and coerced but threatened in the actions which they took. He thinks that there is some dark plot as well. The other day he said, speaking in the country, "If the facts were only known." There is nothing to stop my right hon. Friend from giving the facts. We are not living in Soviet Russia or Hitlerite Germany. Distinguished statesmen are not put in concentration camps for giving, either here or outside, facts of importance which come under their observation.

I cannot understand why there is not a word. My right hon. Friend is allowing himself to be the victim of what is known in medical science as "persecution mania." He thinks that there is not only a plot which will destroy the British Empire, but, what is worse, that it will involve him and his son in the ruins of it. I can only compare him to those persons who during the first two months of the War saw in every stranger they met a German spy and believed that every Cabinet Minister was in communication with the enemy. As my right hon. Friend is not here, but has a very distinguished substitute in the hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth, I would really pray my hon. and gallant Friend not to allow these suspicions to impregnate a frank and open mind and not to believe that there is any plot in the matter or anything said by the Princes in public which is divorced from what they said in private. The Secretary of State made the position of the Princes perfectly clear yesterday.

The second point made by opponents of the Bill is that no one in India wants, or will work the scheme. I maintain that the first statement is a half truth and that the second is definitely untrue. It is a fact that most Indians in public life would like the scheme to go further and the safeguards to be reduced or abolished. Is it really surprising that keen and ambitious men, prominent in the public life of their own country, should press for a greater scheme of advance, even though most of us in this House think that they are not wise to do so? There is nothing necessarily incompatible in thus working, as they do, for fuller and freer powers with loyalty to the King-Emperor, and the desire to remain within the Empire. The Labour party do not object to the Constitution so much on those grounds; not so much on the grounds that Indians will not work it, but that, if they do work it, they will not work it in the way the Labour party would like to see India governed. That may well be so. I do not want to say anything wounding to the Labour party, but it is a fact that, except in this country, the views which the Labour Party hold are not very popular anywhere in the world. There is a slight, what one may call, retrocession from the summit.

Mr. LANSBURY: They were very popular at Wavertree.

Earl WINTERTON: There has been a slight retrogression, perhaps that is the more correct term, from the position 10 years ago, when the views held by the British Labour Party began to be popular in many countries in Europe. That is no longer so to-day. The trend is to the right rather than to the left, and therefore it can hardly be expected that in India or anywhere else the political views of the Labour Party are likely to receive majority support in the near future. I would answer what has been said on this point in a sentence. Whatever you may say about the new Constitution, it gives a greater opportunity to the average Indian, which I should have thought, from the Labour point of view, was satisfactory, to exercise his influence through his vote. It gives a far greater opportunity than has ever been given before.

It was said yesterday—and there is no need further to emphasise or repeat the argument—that a large proportion of the Indians in public life are prepared to work the scheme of my right hon. and hon. Friends, which I will call the Salis-

bury scheme. No one in India is prepared to work it. As far as I know, no one who has recently held, or is likely to hold office in India in the Civil Service is in favour of such a scheme. It is really not surprising. It is fantastic for the Conservative opponents of this Bill to put forward such a scheme, holding the views that they do. It is clearly shown—and never more clearly than in the speech of the hon. Member for Chertsey (Sir A. Boyd-Carpenter)—that in their opinion Indians are unfitted for any extension of self-government. Yet their conclusions are completely divorced from their arguments. My hon. and gallant Friend shakes his head. What then was the object of the eloquent speech he delivered wholly directed against giving India more opportunity to govern itself? He thought that terrible things had happened and made a fierce attack on the Lord President, but what is the meaning of his speech if he is not—as I maintain he is—fundamentally opposed in his heart, as are some right hon. and hon. Gentlemen, to any extension of self-government in India?

Sir A. BOYD-CARPENTER: There is not a word of truth in what the Noble Lord says. The whole point is that the speed with which the proposals have been made from 7,000,000 to 35,000,000 is a speed which the requirements of the situation do not justify.

Earl WINTERTON: Oh, no, my hon. and gallant Friend and none of his colleagues can get away with that. I could quote—I am not going to do so as it would take too long—speeches in this House and outside from which the only conclusion was that the Indians were not fitted to be trusted with self-government. But I will quote what Sir Michael O'Dwyer said in his answers to me in the Joint Committee. It will be generally agreed that Sir Michael O'Dwyer, a former distinguished Indian civil servant—I am not comparing him to Governors like Lord Lloyd—who is on their side is an able man and a good protagonist of their point of view. I asked him:

"Apart from that, I suppose I am right in inferring that you consider the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms to have worked well enough to justify the transfer now to Ministers of the important matters which you are prepared to transfer?—. . . In view of the expectations roused. They have worked very differently in different Provinces. In some there has been an absolute deadlock, such as in Bengal and the Central Provinces. It worked best in Madras and the Punjab, and with varying success elsewhere, but I am prepared to take the risk on the whole (and it is a big risk) of the course I have suggested.

"As a result of experience?—As a result of the expectations aroused. That test has, in fact, not been applied which was laid down in the Act of 1919, that future advance should be determined by the degree of co-operation and the sense of responsibility shown by those on whom greater opportunities had been conferred. That has more or less gone by the board, and we have to accept that fact now and decide what further advance can be made now with the least risk.

"You would be prepared to go further than you were in 1919?—Yes, undoubtedly."

I quote that as a typical instance of the lack of clear thinking on the part of those who are opposed to this Bill.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Oh!

Earl WINTERTON: Yes, a lack of clear thinking. If the right hon. Gentleman will listen, I will tell him that they are attempting to do two or three different things. First of all, they say that they are prepared to go further and then say that no real test has been applied. In other speeches they proceed *ad nauseam* to tell the people of this country that Indians are not fitted for self-government. Why do they need to go further? There is nothing in the Preamble to the famous Act of 1919 which causes you to go further. The hon. Member for Chertsey in the most eloquent part of his speech, said that there is no alternative to death but that that is no reason why we should commit suicide. The meaning of the phrase is somewhat obscure, but I submit in the judgment of those supporting the Government that this Bill does not involve either death or suicide. I should have thought, from the point of view of the opponents, holding the views which they do, that to support any scheme for the extension of self-government was to commite suicide in respect of themselves. [AN HON. MEMBER: "No!"] I should be glad to hear the answer. It has not been given yet. Take the position of the Noble Lady the Member for Perth (Duchess of Atholl). She has devoted speech after speech in this House to explaining how the transfer of subjects under the existing law has been mismanaged and muddled by Indians, and how

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public health and education and everything has suffered, and yet my hon. Friend proposes to allow Indians to have even greater control over these things than before.

Duchess of ATHOLL: If the Noble Lord will refer to the speech which I made in December last on the report, he will see that I said that, if we were to keep strictly to the terms of the Preamble of the Act of 1919, to which he has just referred, and to think only of doing our duty to the Indian masses, we should not transfer any further departments until the steps recommended by the Simon Commission for restoring efficiency had been put into effect. But I went on to say, as Sir Michael O'Dwyer said, that in view of the expectations which had been aroused among the politicians, I very reluctantly had brought myself to being ready to transfer further provincial services, but not law and order.

Earl WINTERTON: The Noble Lady could not have given a better answer to my question. I think it was the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping. Perhaps he will answer that on Monday. I understood that his position was that we had a completely free hand in this matter, and there was no reason why we should advance at all. I cannot understand that point of view nor that of those outside this House. The hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth in a most eloquent speech at the conference hall outside referred to the lonely White Man.

Mr. CHURCHILL: It is true.

Earl WINTERTON: It was a very eloquent passage in a very fine speech, but the White Man will be lonelier under the proposal. There will be fewer of them. They will have less power.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Hear, hear!

Earl WINTERTON: My right hon. and hon. Friends are able to produce intellectual arguments in this House, but no one has attempted to explain this extraordinary difference between the conclusion of their speeches and the arguments they have used. Not one, and I challenge them to do so. We are told that they support the Simon Commission Report. They support it in this sense, that they support some of its conclusions but none of the spirit in which it was written, because the spirit in which it was written was not a spirit impregnated with distrust and hostility to the Indian people. They are impregnated with mistrust and dislike of the Indians in public life—and they are entitled to hold those views—but, holding them, it seems to me very odd that they should support the Salisbury scheme, which is going to set no sort of bar against them. Although they believe that the Indians are dishonest in public life, they are willing to give an extended opportunity to that dishonesty.

They remind me of the position of a banker to whom a borrower goes and says, "Lend me £2,000. I want to extend my business. I consider that I have most capably managed my own affairs." The banker replies, I will not lend you £2,000. You are unfitted to manage your own business. You are incompetent, but I will lend you £100. It does not matter whether I lose £100, but I do not want to lose £2,000." The borrower in those circumstances would change his bank. I say to my hon. and right hon. Friends that they have made the worst of both worlds. They have created great feeling in political circles in India but have done nothing whatever, and do not propose to do anything whatever, to prevent Indians from having an extended opportunity of doing the things which they do not want to see them doing.

They make reference to the fact that trade is going to be lost under the Bill. They tell us that the Bill will injure British trade with India, which means, so far as it means anything, that in some mysterious way Indians can be compelled to buy British goods. If it were true that we could compel the Indians or anybody else outside these islands to buy British goods, we could close the Employment Exchanges all over the country.

The fact that we cannot do so is one of the difficulties at the present time. The only way that we can get British goods sold is by good will between us and our customers and, in the case of the Empire, by mutual inter-Imperial preferential trading. I should have thought that the opponents of the Bill would have been grateful that for the first time in India, during the rule of a much-maligned Viceroy

and Secretary of State, we have established preferential trading between this country and India. I should have thought that the hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth would have been very pleased with that. I have been reading the speech of the hon. Member for Eastbourne (Mr. Slater). He spoke of the great decrease in Lancashire trade. That is perfectly true and it is a very deplorable thing, but the decrease is not entirely due to the loss of the Indian market. It is due to a great many causes. The whole state of the Lancashire cotton industry is undoubtedly bad, but it is not wholly due to external causes. There were internal causes, particularly during the War, which had something to do with it. I have not, however, time to develop that argument.

The hon. Member's argument, which is generally that of the Diehards, was that if you stop the Indian millowners from having protection and allow a completely free market into India for cotton and other British goods the consumers in India would be infinitely better off. Under that mixture of self-interest and idealism, which is characteristic of some people in this country and which is sometimes referred to by foreigners as British hypocrisy, the minority, speaking for Lancashire, would say: "Take off all the Indian duties and destroy the Indian millowners." The answer is very simple, and it is this, that the principal competitor both of Lancashire and of India is Japan. The competitor with Lancashire is not primarily the Indian mills but the Japanese mills. Therefore, if you really want to help the Indian consumer you will not help him by letting him have Lancashire goods without duty, because Japanese goods will always be able to undersell Lancashire goods in a completely free market. What then becomes of the hon. Member's argument?

So far from this Bill doing injury to Imperial trade, it is a step forward towards the goal that some of us, certainly the right hon. Member for Sparkbrook (Mr. Amery), myself and others have had in view for many years past, and that is the gradual economic and strategic unification of the whole of the British Empire. I agree with what Lord Beaverbrook has said about opportunities of inter-trade between Great Britain and India, and I think that will be brought about by this Bill. Given good will and common sense on both sides, there are almost illimitable opportunities for trade expansion between Great Britain and India. My right hon. Friend the Member for Sparkbrook and myself visualise an evolving British Empire, unity in diversity, with increasing self-government locally, coupled with increasing trade within the Empire and a progressive sharing of responsibilities for mutual help in both peace and war.

That is our conception of the British Empire, but we would go much further. We want to see not a dependent but an inter-dependent Empire. We believe that the days of the dependent Empire have passed away. We want the whole of this evolving inter-dependent British Empire linked together by fealty to the Crown and appreciation of the material and moral benefits to be found within a great world-wide confederation. I suggest that there are only two ways in which a modern and scattered Empire composed of different races and religions can be held together—the method which France has adopted and the method which we have adopted. France says to her fellow citizens in her Colonies and Dependencies: "We will admit you to our family life, and our Legislature, also to our army on equal terms, and in return you must be for ever France. Share with us the traditions, the privileges, the dangers and the sacrifices of our great country."

Sir JOHN HASLAM: And trade.

Earl WINTERTON: And trade. Britain, on the other hand, says to her fellow subjects overseas: "We will teach you to govern yourselves as we have learned to govern ourselves. In return we expect you to remain loyally and contentedly within the British Empire, because that Empire affords within its component parts the best working partnership ever seen between free peoples. It is an example to humanity." Some difference of opinion has arisen about the meaning of the relationship of the different Dominions one to another. It is not true to say that legally and constitutionally Dominion status involves the right of secession. I definitely say that and I definitely challenge anyone to deny

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it. I challenge my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) to deny that. Dominion status does not involve the legal and constitutional right of secession from the Empire.

Mr. CHURCHILL: My Noble Friend is no doubt speaking of Dominion status as defined by the Statute of Westminster?

Earl WINTERTON: Yes, I say that on high expert opinion. Therefore, let it not be thought that in using that phrase——

Mr. ANNESLEY SOMERVILLE: What about South Africa?

Earl WINTERTON: My hon. Friend may say "What about South Africa?" The view that I have put is the conception that is put by high legal authorities. Some parts of the Empire may challenge it. By using the term "Dominion status," there is not the slightest suggestion that His Majesty's Government have altered the attitude towards this question which their predecessors held in 1919. They have not done so. In 1919 it was clearly laid down, and the House accepted it without a vote, that there should be the eventual attainment of the status of a self-governing unit within and as an integral part of the British Empire. That was the promise given to India. There has been no recession and no alteration. I think it is very necessary to say that, because great Imperial harm is going to be done if two things are said: (1) as a result of the Statute of Westminster there has been an entire alteration in the whole conception of Dominion status, and (2) that by giving to India Dominion status there has been any alteration in the position that existed before.

We who hold the views which I have just described, that of unification in both an economic and strategic sense of the British Empire, repudiate the notion that those who are in favour of the Bill are in favour of either abdication of surrender. That would indeed be contrary to the practice and profession of a lifetime in both peace and war. On the contrary, we say that this is no question of a weary worn-out land, discarding its rights and obligations towards a conquered territory, but rather it is the case of a vigorous mother or centre State of a great free Empire, taking one further step to cement a world-wide fellowship that surmounts race, creed and colour.

5.13 p.m.

Mr. de ROTHSCHILD: If I were to sum up the three speeches to which we have listened I would say that the spirit of one speech was India for Congress, the second was definitely India for Britain, while the third was India for the Indians. As far as I am concerned, I should come down strongly on the side of the last speaker. The spirit of the speech of the hon. Member for Chertsey (Sir A. Boyd-Carpenter) was that we should rule India until the end of time. That is a distinct contravention of many pledges that have been given to India by right hon. Gentlemen both inside and outside this House. I do not want to make quotations from statements made by great pro-Consuls, because the hon. Member for Chertsey rather derided the Secretary of State for doing that, but I should like to remind the House of a very memorable saying of Lord Curzon as far back as 1904, when he said:

> "Depend upon it, you will never rule the East except through the heart, and the moment that imagination has gone out of your Asiatic policy your Empire will dwindle and decay."

The proposals that have been put forward on the extreme right and the extreme left display the greatest lack of imagination. They are concentrated on one particular object and leave out altogether a vision of the future. It has been said that we cannot give India self-government on a Western pattern and that Western civilisation does not agree with the civilisation of the East. One thing is certain—we cannot abandon India at the present time. If we are going to carry out the promises we have made and lead her in the path of freedom, we can only do so by giving her a constitution which is a pattern of the constitution which has served us in this country so well. There is one thing at which we must aim. There must be no domination, no attempt at complete and perpetual British domination in India. That is the policy advocated by the right hon. Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) and those who support him. It is the policy of the diehards throughout the ages. It was the policy which, as the Secretary of State pointed out, lost this country the American Colonies, and it is

the same policy which caused the trouble between this country and Ireland, from which we are still suffering.

The proposals put forward by the right hon. Member for Epping and his faction are so numerous and vague that if I am to consider their point of view I must restrict myself to the authoritative proposals made on their behalf by Lord Salisbury in the Joint Select Committee. The proposals of Lord Salisbury are that there should be no Federation. Instead of Federation the Noble Lord goes back to the proposals of the Simon Commission, and wishes only for a Greater India Council, having nothing but advisory powers, and no influence whatever. He wishes the powers of the Governor-General to be increased, and he wants the veto to be strengthened. He expects the Princes to swallow these proposals because he says they will favour their administration. The Princes have not lent their ears to Lord Salisbury. That is not to be wondered at, because the advisory council, which is supposed to further their interests, would be a rival to the equally feeble Legislative Assembly in existence at present, which he wishes to carry on.

As regards the Provinces, the right hon. Member for Epping and his friends are prepared to carry out and extend some of the proposals in the White Paper, but they draw the line at law and order. All subjects are to be transferred except law and order. Most people who are cognisant of what has been going on in India during the last 13 years know that at the present time, in practically every Province, only the two subjects of land revenue and law and order have not been transferred. What advance is therefore proposed in this case? Moreover, how can anybody say that real authority is transferred if the main power of law and order is kept in other hands. Provincial Autonomy, which the right hon. Member for Epping and his friends are prepared to grant to the Provinces is quite useless, quite nugatory, without Federation, and will lead only to the complete disintegration of the unity which exists in India at present. Lord Hardinge, speaking in another place, pointed out that since 1919 there had been a growth in the Provinces of a very strong provincial feeling and that if there were as many as 11 great Provinces set up, with their own particular interests, they would create a centrifugal force which would detract from the power and coherence of the centre.

The only way of consolidating Federation is to create it now; to give the country the freedom which is proposed in the Bill. That is not the policy of Lord Salisbury and the right hon. Member for Epping and their friends. What they want, as far as I can make out is the iron hand and the mailed fist—nothing less will satisfy the Sultan of Epping and his janissaries. These gentlemen are constantly appealing to and basing themselves on the Simon Report. It is true that the Simon Report did reject a British-India Federation, but it did not reject an all-India Federation. I think that the Foreign Secretary himself has in some measure been responsible for the misconception which has arisen. He did not see fit to make it clear very early to this House and to the country that the declaration of the Princes vitiated the conclusions of the report which he had drawn up with his colleagues. May I remind the House that the declaration of the Princes was in January, 1931. The Foreign Secretary spoke in this House in December, 1931, almost a year later. He was non-committal. He explained the difficulties, weighed the pros and cons, but came to no conclusion; he gave no lead. In April, 1933, on the Motion to set up the Joint Select Committee, he was equally non-committal. Again he weighed the pros and the cons, and again he gave no opinion of his own. In both these speeches he stated the issues involved, but gave no indication of what he himself desired should take place. He explained what Federation was, but he did not tell us what he thought it should be. He explained it in the abstract, but did not say what it would be when applied to India.

It was the Foreign Secretary himself who suggested the Round Table Conference, in the exchange of letters which took place between the Prime Minister and himself. Why did he suggest the Round Table Conference? Because he recognised that the discussion of the relations between British India and the Indian States was a matter of great importance, especially for the constitutional development of India. Following the suggestion of the Foreign Secretary himself, the first Round Table Conference was convened. Its object was to seek the greatest possible measure of agreement

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between British India and the Indian States, and for final proposals to be submitted to Parliament. It is obvious, therefore, that the Foreign Secretary did contemplate at that time that some arrangement would be come to between the Princes and British India, and that on these lines some form of Government should be elaborated. Why did he not indicate at once how far the declaration of the Princes had modified the conclusions of the Statutory Commission? What did the right hon. Gentleman do? He joined the Select Committee; but he attended it only once, and that was six months after it was convened, on a formal occasion, when a resolution of regret was passed on the death of two members.

It is true that the right hon. Gentleman's acceptance of membership of that committee deprived him of the privilege of speaking his mind in public, and some people may think that that is the reason he joined it. But it should have given him a greater opportunity. He could have put forward his views as a member of the committee, or as a witness before the committee. That opportunity he never took. If he had, then Lord Salisbury and those associated with him could not have based every one of their proposals on the findings of the Simon Commission, nor could they have quoted from the Simon Commission over and over again in order to substantiate their proposals? On 31st October, 1934, the Joint Select Committee's Report was published, and at last, a month later, the Foreign Secretary first stated his acceptance of Federation in his speech at Dumfries. Speaking later in this House, on 12th December, four full years after the declaration of the Princes, the right hon. Gentleman again stated his acceptance of the declaration. January, 1931, the declaration of the Princes—December, 1934, the right hon. Gentleman's acceptance of it at Dumfries. Four full years for the Conservative opposition to fatten and batten on the Simon Report. Now at last the Conservative opposition is deprived of the authority of the Simon Commission. They have claimed the support, however, of other bodies—and these claims are proving equally false. They have claimed the support of the Services in India. It has been disproved. There have been a few sporadic exceptions who have come forward and criticised the plans of the Joint Select Committee and the White Paper, but, on the whole, there has been a concensus of opinion in the administration undoubtedly favourable to the White Paper and which will be favourable to the Bill. It is also claimed that the Princes are not supporting these proposals. They have already come forward and rebutted this statement.

What do hon. Members who are opposing the Bill say now? They say that members of the Administration and the Princes are concealing their true convictions, that they have been coerced and browbeaten into complacent asseveration. I do not understand how you can, on the one hand, say "Here are these great administrators, who throughout the ages have conducted the affairs of India with such skill and raised the status of the ryot, who have administered this gigantic country and these huge Provinces with fairness and intelligence," and on the other hand say, "These are the people who to-day, in order to save their own skins, in order to keep their own places, are agreeing to kow-tow to the Government and agree to any proposal which is made to them." How can you say that these great potentates, whose line has been carried on for over 1,000 years, these men whose families and ancestors have ruled over these great territories, can be browbeaten at the present time into obedience to a Viceroy who is the very man whose powers you want to increase yourself?

Let me turn for a brief instant to the Labour criticisms. It is difficult to assess the extent of their criticisms. Indeed the hon. Member for Limehouse, who spoke on behalf of the Opposition yesterday, has complained, especially in his broadcast, that the criticisms of the Labour party are not being considered. I really do not know which one of their criticisms we are to consider. Are we to consider that of Lord Strabolgi, who was put up to speak for them in another House, whose points were condemnation of the communal award, which is opposed to every tenet of the Labour party, praise of the occupational franchise and a distinct understanding that the occupation by Britain is to go on, and that no Labour government would ever clear out of India because our presence is necessary in case there is a war and invasion from

the North. How does that square with what the Leader of the Opposition said, not only in his articles in the "Clarion" but also in his broadcast the other day, when his view-point was that we should jettison this Bill, give it up altogether, set up a constituent assembly in India, and give Indians the right to frame their own Constitution and to remain within the British Empire or leave it at their will?

I prefer to restrict myself to the views and the considered proposals made by the hon. Member for Limehouse in the draft which is known as Mr. Attlee's Draft, in the report of the Joint Select Committee. The points which were made by the hon. Member for Limehouse were, first of all, the acceptance of the communal award in contradistinction to the view of Lord Strabolgi; then to recognise the responsibility of the British Government to devise an Indian Constitution with safeguards—that in opposition to his leader. No wonder that right hon. and hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench do not know which one of these lovely sirens to answer. One of the pet theories advocated in the Draft Report is the transference of foreign affairs to a responsible Minister, and the hon. Member for Limehouse yesterday stressed that point with great vigour. He still thinks that you can reserve defence on the one hand and give up foreign affairs on the other. I cannot see how you can dissociate those two. He says that India has paid for her defence for years. But are you going to transfer Imperial troops in India into common mercenaries? Are you going to give the Government employing them the right to involve them in war at any time? Further, suppose that there were a war in India, suppose that the foreign policy carried out in India did lead to war, if the foreign policy endangered the safety of India, does anyone believe that India would then be paying for her defence and that it would not be Great Britain who was footing the Bill?

What is the Labour party's attitude to Safeguards? Labour puts forward many safeguards far more stringent than those put forward in the Bill itself. But all those safeguards relate to one thing only —tyranny, reaction, social injustice, racial and communal minorities. But the Leader of the Opposition does not believe in any safeguards at all; he wants to do away with them altogether. In this respect he and the Draft Report are once more at issue. Not only does the Draft Report condone the safeguards, but it does not object to the safeguard which is for the prevention of commercial discrimination. The hon. Member for Limehouse wants the best of both worlds; he wants to please both Lancashire and Indian Nationalism. The Bill confers emergency powers on Governors and Governors-General. These powers will fall ultimately into disuse. But the safeguards that the Labour party wishes to impose will affect the electoral system. They are there in order to create a particular economic outlook in the Indian situation. They will be permanent, they will be rigid and they will be unalterable.

Here again, I cannot understand how the hon. Member for Limehouse can plead the cause of self-government. Not only does he want to fasten on India an electoral system which runs absolutely counter to the wish of every thinking Indian in that great sub-Continent, but he has constantly opposed the will of the Indians by recommending indirect election to the central Chamber. Yesterday he did not discuss the point but discussed only the question of franchise. I would like to know where he stands to-day on that point, because his attitude all through the different conferences that have taken place and ever since the Simon Commission, would make an eel jealous. On 15th March, 1934, the hon. Gentleman submitted to the Joint Select Committee a memorandum advocating indirect election. There came the 18th June, only three months later, when his own draft was submitted, and that recommended direct election. In this he was supported by his three Labour colleagues.

Major MILNER: Does my hon. Friend the Member for Limehouse (Mr. Attlee) know that the hon. Member intended to raise these points?

Mr. de ROTHSCHILD: I do not see why I should have let the hon. Member for Limehouse know? There is no reason whatever why I should have done so.

Major MILNER: I think you should.

Mr. de ROTHSCHILD: I should have expected an hon. Gentleman who made a speech yesterday to have been here

[Mr. de Rothschild.]

to-day listening to the answer. I regret that the hon. Member does not think my speech is worth listening to. He may be right, but I am sorry he is not here. On 6th July, the Amendment of my hon. Friend on these benches was brought before the Joint Select Committee. It was an Amendment, as the House knows, for direct election, and on that occasion the hon. Member for Limehouse did what he has done to-day—he did not appear; he abstained; whereas his colleagues voted for the Amendment. Then on 12th October the hon. Gentleman supported by *his vote a paragraph in the final Report* which recommends indirect election, and on this occasion he was not supported by his colleagues. Notwithstanding these gyrations, these circumvolutions of the hon. Member, I still hope that in our plea for direct election we shall be reinforced by the support of the Opposition; and I also hope that the Government will be tempted by the arguments we have put forward to return to the proposals of the White Paper. Indeed, this is not a minor matter. It is a matter which concerns primarily the community of India. It is necessary, in order to maintain the unity of India, to increase the interest in national affairs versus provincial or parochial affairs.

To this Bill we shall give our most cordial support. There is, obviously, no alternative to the principles which underlie it—Federation, responsibility at the Centre and in the Provinces, subject to certain emergency powers and safeguards. But I regret, for the sake of India, that the Opposition has magnified this question of emergency measures and safeguards to such a degree. Those measures will never need to be operative in India if that great country shows its fitness for self-government. It will be far better for the hon. Members of the Opposition who have such influence with certain parties in India to persuade the Indians to accept this Bill at its true value; because I believe it will create a new atmosphere of peace and good will. I do not believe that India's Legislative Assemblies and its Ministries will ever menace the peace and tranquillity of the country. I do not believe that they will threaten financial stability, or interfere with the rights of the Civil Service, and as peace and good will increase, owing to the responsibility which is put into their hands, I do not believe that there will be any discrimination against British trade.

I know that Indian public opinion does not feel very cordial to this Measure. Nevertheless, I would like to say that it will give them full scope to fulfil many of their aspirations for self-government. It will open to them the vast channels of health, of education, of agriculture, and of social services, and I hope and believe that it will bring the conscientious and the patriotic to co-operate, and will cause the ambitious to try for the glittering prizes. The Indians, indeed, have shown their great faculty for co-operation. I would remind the House of what took place at the first meeting of the Round Table Conference. India was seething with discontent, the prisons were full, the Viceroy was governing the country by Orders-in-Council. Yet at that very time the Indian intelligentsia rallied to our cause and came here, many of them the most intelligent, the most educated, and the most expert politicians in India, to give their help to British politicians who were sitting with them, in solving the many problems that were arising at the time.

It is incumbent upon us to induce the Indians to give this Measure a fair trial, and in this respect I welcome the pronouncement made by the Secretary of State reaffirming our ultimate aim—to give India a place among the nations of the British Commonwealth as a responsible united and self-governing Federation. I hope—and nothing has been said about this up to the present—that when, in a few days' time, the Instrument of Instructions is published, there will be in it some reference to this point. It will be remembered that in the Instrument of Instructions published in 1921 this point was made abundantly clear, and after the very responsible statement made yesterday by the Secretary of State it is not too much to hope that some Instruction of the same kind will figure in the document which is to be presented to the House in a few days' time. The paths of Britain and India must run together for many years. Co-operation between us must continue, and I hope that India will trust and support

us in the policy of world peace and the betterment of the people. We shall be happy to see the consummation of her national pride.

This Bill is indeed a great step towards the fulfilment of India's highest ambitions. But, let me say, the task of the English in India is by no means over. The inauguration of this great Constitution is fraught with grave difficulties. It will require tact and ability of the highest order on the part of the whole of the British personnel in the Services from the lowest rungs of the ladder to the Governors and the Viceroy. They must continue in India the task of the last 100 years, the task which has been so admirably carried out, particularly in the last 13 years, the task of developing the capacity of the Indians for legislation and administration. They will have, more than ever, to impart to the Indian people those specifically English gifts of willingness and enthusiasm for responsibility, of capacity for taking sides and of ability to make decisions. The men who are called upon to do this work are made of the same stuff as that distinguished band, which found a continent famine-stricken, in turmoil, and in discord, and led it to plenty, to peace and, above all, led it to unity.

5.49 p.m.

Sir IAN MACPHERSON: I shall endeavour, in the short time at my disposal, to deal only with the broad and general considerations which have persuaded me to give my support to the Second Reading of the Bill. Even the most cursory study of the Bill impresses one with the fact that we are dealing here with issues unequalled in their magnitude by any issues which have ever appeared before the British House of Commons. They are issues which affect the destiny of one-fifth of the globe, which affect the destinies of the rich and poor but particularly the poor, in a population of 350,000,000. I think even the opponents of the Bill must recognise that the British Parliament has done everything in its power, within the last decade in any case, to bring before the people of this country by minute and careful examination of the question at the hands of bodies of the most authoritative and impressive character, the real salient facts of the situation.

Many of us have been in close touch with the question of self-government in this country, and I may say that for good or ill I have been in close touch with it, in a particular form, for nearly a quarter of a century. I remember even the awakening, many years ago, in the Morley-Minto Reforms, of the spirit of self-government in India. I was in the Government of 1917, and from that period up to 1920 or 1921 I was in the closest possible touch with the ideas of the British Government with regard to self-government all over the Empire. Indeed I saw, and I think I took part in, the drafting of the Preamble to the Act of 1919, and I remember saying to the then Secretary of State for India what I would say to my colleagues in the House of Commons to-day, "After this you cannot go back." It is on that Preamble, and particularly on the instructions to the Viceroy in 1921, and the declaration of the Viceroy in 1929, that this Bill is founded, and I cannot think that we can go back from the attitude which we took then.

I do not think there is any justification for saying that we are pursuing a policy of scuttle or surrender. What is the actual fact?—and this has weighed with me more than anything else. One of the most remarkable things of the time to which I refer was the Indian effort and Indian co-operation in the War. The spirit of self-government at that time was in the air. I remember perfectly well—and it has been referred to by the Noble Lord the Member for Horsham (Earl Winterton)—that without a vote in the House of Commons we gave a pledge to India of responsible government, with a generosity remarkable for its spontaneity. Why? Because of the effort and the co-operation of that great Dominion in the time of crisis and of danger. It was one India that fought in the War. It was one India that signed the peace.

One hears a great deal nowadays and we have heard a great deal in this Debate about Dominion status. That term has acquired a sinister meaning for many, particularly since the passing of the Statute of Westminster. I am not sure that Dominion status involves the right to secede but I am satisfied of this, particularly having heard the statement from my right hon. Friend the Secretary

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of State in his admirable speech, that whether you include the words "Dominion status" or not, the fact remains that in this Bill as it is presented to the House we are giving India the measure of self-government which was intended for her in 1919. It cannot be doubted what was meant in 1919. It cannot be doubted what the Bill means to-day. It cannot be doubted that the Secretary of State in his clear and lucid statement conveyed the meaning and intention of the British Government.

I was one of those who thought the report of the Statutory Commission presided over by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary one of the greatest documents ever presented to any Parliament. I thought it was conclusive in its logic, in its reasoning and in its findings. Many others took the same view. But that document, magnificent as it was, did not deal with the whole subject. It dealt only with British India. Whether it dealt with the whole subject or not however, it envisaged Federation as the ultimate goal for the Indian people and if anyone wishes to get the best and most accurate justification for Federation in India he can go to the report of the Simon Commission for it. Since that date, as my hon. Friend the Member for Isle of Ely (Mr. de Rothschild) has pointed out, events have supervened and what was foreshadowed in the Simon Commission's Report as the ultimate goal has become in this Bill, after meticulous consideration by one of the greatest bodies ever brought together, not the ultimate goal nor a provisional goal but the actual possible and practical goal.

This Bill is, no doubt, based upon the Joint Committee's report. It differs in many respects from the White Paper. That is admitted. It deals with innumerable subjects but having taken the trouble to go through all Clauses of the Bill and having compared it with the report of the Joint Committee, I find very little difference between the two. The main points decided upon by the Joint Committee are in the Bill and I am not surprised, because that committee, as I have said, was one of the most comprehensive and brilliant that ever sat to decide any issue of importance. The main point of controversy ever since the days of the White Paper has been the question of Federation. What do we find? I had very grave doubts about it myself. I had misgivings about a good many things connected with the proposed government of India. But five or six of the most distinguished of those who have made a study of this subject—ex-Viceroys, ex-Cabinet Ministers, ex-Governors—went to the committee in the same spirit of trepidation and misgiving and the only conclusion to which they could come after minute examination of all the facts, presented not in an *ex parte* manner but presented by both sides—the conclusion to which they could not hesitate to come, after all that, was that Federation was bound to come, and that they approved of it, and that it was the natural outcome of self-government in India. If there are to be Provincial Autonomous Councils and Centres, there is no doubt that you must have, as the natural conclusion from these, a Federal Centre also, and if you are going to have Provincial Centres, you must have them represented in the Federal Centre. This, I believe, was the real reason why the Joint Select Committee made the system of elections not direct but indirect.

We heard from my right hon. Friend the Member for Darwen (Sir H. Samuel) what actually happened during the discussion of whether the system of elections for the Central House should be direct or indirect. In the Bill it is by indirect election. He pointed out that that meant that six or 10 people who themselves were elected had the power to elect a member to the Federal body. The other side of the question is this: He pointed out that indirect election meant corruption and in many cases that the right person would not be sent, but when you are dealing with direct election, you have illiteracy to consider and also this fact, that no member could possibly have time to overcome the distances and the magnitude of the work entailed. But the additional advantage of having the Provincial Centres very strongly represented in the Federal Centre was that a great many cases had to go through the Federal Centre, and it could be more easily done by agreement there with the elections indirect than it could otherwise. Finally, if there is any fear as to federation and its results, it is clear in the Bill that it cannot come into effect without a Resolution of both Houses of Parliament.

With regard to the other controversial point, Provincial Government, the Bill gives a great deal of power to the Provincial Centres, but that means that it extends, consolidates, and carries out what is practically already done in the Provinces to-day. Provincial autonomy undoubtedly is the main foundation of this new constitution, and that foundation has for a long time been promised. To be quite frank, the Indian people have shown by experience that they are well qualified to form an efficient Executive and, under the close guidance of the various Governors—and I lay great stress upon the Governors, because they are the chief points in the situation—to administer the 11 Provinces of India which will now exist instead of the old nine. A good deal has been said about safeguards, and I had very grave misgivings myself about them, and about special safeguards, and all the rights connected with the Anglo-Indian community in India, but I am satisfied, after reading the Bill and listening to the speech of my right hon. Friend, that we need not in this British House of Commons really fear any disaster in that respect. I regard it as being intolerable to think that a British House of Commons could for a moment sacrifice the interests of those who had struggled hard to maintain the best traditions of our race in the Indian Empire.

There was another cause for alarm, and that was subversive terrorism. I read in this Bill that very special precautions are taken to cope with that. The control of subversive terrorism is not really in the hands, in the long run, of the police at all, or even of the Provinces, but of the Viceroy, who has very strong powers, in co-operation with his forces of defence and his Foreign Office powers, to deal with questions of this kind. The Bill goes so far as to say distinctly that, where Bengal is concerned, nothing can happen there, so far as handing over the question of law and order is concerned, unless special arrangements are made for that purpose. A good deal also was said in the course of the discussion on the White Paper about the anxiety which had been expressed about the Ministers in the Executive keeping important information away from the Governor in these Provinces where their responsibility was concerned. I am glad to see that in the Bill itself it is expressly provided that all such information must be supplied and that Ministers on all occasions must be the very first to provide the Governor with adequate and complete information dealing with any of these particular subjects.

There are a good many details connected with the Bill, and I will not deal with any of them except to refer to them generally. I think the amount of detail discussed in the Bill is a clear proof that the Joint Select Committee left no stone unturned to deal with this question as a whole. I was very much attracted by the brilliant speech made by my hon. Friend the Member for Chertsey (Sir A. Boyd-Carpenter), who dealt with the subject with hereditary eloquence, but in the course of my study of the Bill I was pleased to see that they have dealt with the whole question of the use of water, and that not only is there authority for dealing with the question of water as it affects the various Provinces, but they also pay attention to another matter which has affected other Dominions where self-government exists, namely, the question of railways. They have a water board and they have a railway board, and these two boards dealing with the amenities of the situation are, in my judgment, clear proof that nothing has been left untouched or unthought of by the Joint Select Committee. I am also glad to see, as a lawyer, that everything is done, not only to preserve the maintenance of law and order, but to preserve the Judicature from any political interference. The Federal Court is entirely independent, and so are the subordinate courts, and I think that should bring a great deal of reassurance to many people in this country.

I was very much interested in one statement of my right hon. Friend the Member for Darwen, and I quite agree with what he said about instructions to the Viceroy. I think these are very important. They are new, and they may be very far-reaching. We do not know whether, if they are statutory, amendment means that you can add to them or subtract from them, and we should like, in the course of the discussions on the Bill, much more information with regard to them, but I can see why these were introduced. It is clear that the constitution as its exists now is a rigid constitution, and if you want growth and flexibility, these two characteristics can

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only be given to it by a measure of this kind. Accordingly, we await with great interest whatever further statement my right hon. Friend may make with regard to these instructions.

I was hoping very much that when we dealt with this gigantic problem of India we should deal with it as a real National Government. That would appear to be impossible, but I have been very much surprised at the attitude adopted by the Labour party. I have listened with the greatest attention and care to the principal speeches delivered by them, particularly from the Front Bench. I know that they want self-government for India—it is part of their policy—but every speech that I have listened to has been a speech not to create good will, but to create bad will, and the main charge in the speech of the hon. Member for Limehouse (Mr. Attlee) was a charge which could not be brought against this Bill. He complained about the social and economic conditions in India as if we were responsible for all these things. What are the facts? We have had great trouble in the past in dealing with these matters, because they were all mixed up with the religious factor, and for the first time we find presented to the House of Commons a Bill by means of which in any case a genuine attempt is being made to give the people of India the right to deal with their own people, in their own way, and in their own institutions; and the one party which has done more to create a bad atmosphere, not only in this country, but in India, has been the Labour party. I am very much astonished, because I know that in their heart of hearts they are just as anxious to give self-government to India as is the Government.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: Not this Bill though.

Sir I. MACPHERSON: I am not sure whether the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is a member of the Labour party or is his own Member. I think he represents no party. He represents a point of view, and I hope that the Chair will be able to call upon him to give us that point of view in the course of these Debates. I am very sorry that there is dissension in the great Conservative party. It is not for me to call attention to it, but this I may say, that those who are dissenting are sincere. It is my good fortune to know a good many of them personally, and I know that they have taken up this matter with sincerity and with a courage which is very remarkable. I have listened to my right hon. Friend and Parliamentary tenant, the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill), delivering one of the best speeches I have ever heard in this House; I have envied the tireless intellectual energy of my Noble Friend the Member for Kinross and Western (Duchess of Atholl), whose anxiety for the welfare of the Empire I know well; I recognise the sincerity of my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft), whose consistency and courage I admire both in peace and in war; but I am forced to ask myself this question: If they succeed, what will be the result?

I will not dilate upon the alternative put by my right hon. Friend the Member for Darwen—I have had enough of coercion in my time—but with the impassioned description of our unparalleled and unimpeachable record in India I agree wholeheartedly. I know of generations of Anglo-Indians who have devoted their lives in a spirit of self-sacrifice to maintain in India the finest traditions of our race. Their example has impressed itself, generation after generation, on that great dependency. Is it not more imperative than ever now for us not to fall below those standards, and to seek a great and lasting settlement in a spirit of co-operation and in accordance with the dictates both of interest and of honour?

6.16 p.m.

Brigadier-General Sir HENRY CROFT: Before turning to the subject of this Bill, I would like to say to the Secretary of State that if, in view of the momentous telegram which I presume he has received from India this afternoon, he feels that we should adjourn the Debate in order to reconsider this question and have time for thought, no one in this House will put any difficulty in the way. I will refer to the matter a little later, but I will only say now that I realise that for the Secretary of State this must be a very tragic moment, in which everyone will sympathise with him, for everyone knows his extraordinary sincerity in the whole of this question. It is difficult for

me as a humble backwoodsman to follow the big guns who have addressed the House. I feel rather like an anti-aircraft gun firing at three great bombers. They have all been very kind in regard to the spirit which has animated my hon. Friends, and we appreciate the spirit in which their speeches were delivered.

I must confess that I trembled for my hon. Friend the Member for Chertsey (Sir A. Boyd-Carpenter) when my Noble Friend the Member for Horsham (Earl Winterton) rose to his feet and said that he would depart from Parliamentary practice and would deal entirely with his speech. The Noble Lord need not have apologised for the warmth of his attack on me, because it was delivered in such courtly phrases that no one could possibly have complained. Indeed, I enjoyed his pleasantries, but I was alarmed for the fate of my hon. Friend. The only point in which he really attempted to devastate my hon. Friend was with reference to his attitude in regard to Indians and democratic government. The House ought to be quite fair about this. It may be that, like myself, my hon. Friend thinks that the reforms of 1919 were most unwise. Is there any Conservative who does not? My hon. Friend suggests that we ought to get rid of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. What we do say is that Indians have not yet graduated in the arts of self-government to such an extent as to enable us to hand over to them the fate of a great country as large as the whole of Europe, excluding Russia. My Noble Friend asked me particularly to deal with the question of the Princes. I will endeavour to oblige him in a moment or two, and, since he asked what the Princes said, I will endeavour to tell him.

I would like to say a word or two about the origin of this policy, because it has been stressed both in speeches of the leaders of the Conservative party in the House and in speeches in important assemblies outside. I do not think it matters very much, but a great deal has been made of it. The fact is, I think, that up to three or four years ago no leader of the Conservative party has ever suggested to the people of this country that a policy of this description was desirable. If my Friends and I are reactionary, there is not a leader on the Front Bench who was not equally reactionary three or four years ago, until they were entangled in the spider's web of Lossiemouth, or until the first Round Table Conference was jockeyed by the Noble Marquis, Lord Reading, who was so proudly claimed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ross and Cromarty (Sir I. Macpherson) as the author of these reforms.

Sir HERBERT SAMUEL: What does the hon. and gallant Gentleman mean by "jockeyed"?

Sir H. CROFT: That he ran off all the horses on to the rails, that he consulted with none of his Conservative colleagues before he made that dramatic speech. Therefore, I deliberately use the word "jockeyed." I would further ask whether any Conservative candidate at the last election indicated that he was going to take this line of policy and engage in this great revolutionary, constitutional proposal. If there be one such, I ask him to rise in his place here and now.

Mr. MOLSON *rose.*

Sir H. CROFT: An hon. Gentleman rises in his place. We can all now acquit him, at least, of issuing a fraudulent electoral prospectus, and we can congratulate him. The fact of the matter is that assurances have been given recently on every hand since this great change has taken place. We have been told, "We are only taking a small step forward, a logical step forward. You have all these wonderful safeguards. It is not true what these people are saying; there are no real dangers. It is not true to say that if you take all the administrators away from him the Governor will become lonely. That is something which is so ridiculous that it need hardly be argued." We heard all that. Then we heard the momentous statement of the Secretary of State yesterday with regard to Dominion status. I want to read his words in case any Members were not present. He said:

> "The position of the Government, therefore, is this: They stand firmly by the pledge contained in the 1919 Preamble, which it is not part of their plan to repeal."

That is satisfactory to everyone. Then he went on to say:

> "and by the interpretation put by the Viceroy in 1929, on the authority of the

Government of the day, on that Preamble that: 'The natural issue of India's progress as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion status'."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 6th February, 1935; col. 1173, Vol. 297.]

I must say at once that this statement has no Parliamentary sanction. It was never accepted by this House, and is therefore not binding on anyone. We know perfectly well that Parliament alone can by legislation make any changes in the status of India. The Preamble of the Act, as the Select Committee has told us, alone governs the situation. We are also told in the Preamble that India must remain an integral part of the Empire. Under the 1919 Act Parliament, as everyone knows, can retrace its steps if it finds that the state of India does not warrant that the present position should remain, or that we should go back. Whereas the statement of the Secretary of State yesterday—was it made under pressure from the Socialist party and the "Times" newspaper?—may only indicate a very distant policy, it can, in my opinion do nothing but great harm in India. The right hon. Gentleman, with the immense experience that he has had, must realise that if you make any suggestion to Indians of a distant policy, you are immediately accused of bad faith unless you implement that policy immediately.

I wish to ask the Government this definite question. When they speak of the attainment of Dominion status, do they mean Dominion status as understood under the Statute of Westminster? If the right hon. Gentleman would nod his head we would know exactly where we are.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Answer!

Sir H. CROFT: I beg my right hon. Friend not to press for an asswer. This is such a very vital question that I would rather not press the Secretary of State as long as he will give an answer before the Debate ends. If the right hon. Gentleman is unable to answer now——

Sir S. HOARE: I am quite able to, but I think it had better be done in its proper place in the Debate.

Sir H. CROFT: That is very convenient for my right hon. Friend, but it is impossible for me to draw a conclusion as to what his policy is unless he is prepared to state "yea" or "nay." Therefore, I must consider both sides of the question. If he does not mean Dominion status under the Statute of Westminster, does he realise that the phrase is so much in the minds of so many Indians that they think it gives them the right to secede? Mr. Sastri has said so. If, on the other hand, the right hon. Gentleman means the full implication of Dominion status as it is now understood, what becomes of all the promises to the Conservative party, who were told that we are to have all these safeguards and reservations, but Dominion status would destroy the very instrument that is being set up. Therefore, every pledge given in trying to collect the faithful into the fold goes by the board if you mean Dominion status under the Statute of Westminster. My friends and I cannot admit that this statement is anything but a pious personal opinion, and we cannot agree that it is binding in any way on this House.

Great play has also been made at important gatherings of the Conservative party outside the House with regard to the fact that the intense desire of the Princes to come into this Federal scheme changed the whole situation. We are told that we must not override the desire of those loyal allies who have always stood by the British Throne. This is, and always has been from the start, the purest invention. I will give the facts for which the noble Lord asked me as stated by the spokesman of the Chamber of Princes at the recent meeting of the Chamber. I refer to the Maharaja of Patiala, who said:

> "The States, while willing to enter the Federation, would be equally willing to stay out if British India was not anxious to have them."

There is not much anxiety about that. They must frankly declare, he said,

> "that if British India is hoping to compel us to wear on our healthy body politic the Nessus shirt of a discredited political theory, it is living in a world of unreality."

There is not much desire there to enter the Federation. Again he said:

> "They were not enamoured of a Federal constitution as such, and had never approached His Majesty's Government and requested them to devise Federal government in order to safeguard the future of the States."

Surely that is a very different story from that which was told to the important assembly which decided the opinion of a great party in this country shortly before

the report was brought to the Floor of this House. The noble Lord specially pointed his accusing finger at me with regard to the Viceroy and the Princes. He said, "Tell me all the details you know." I think it will be better for me to suggest that I know no details.

Earl WINTERTON: I do not want to interrupt my right hon. Friend, but I have put it to his right hon. Friend, whom I challenged to give the facts to which he referred in the speech in the country in which he said, "If only the facts were known." I challenged the right hon. Gentleman to say whether or not he accepted the statement made by the two Maharajas with regard to the suggestion that unfair pressure had been brought to bear.

Sir H. CROFT: I thank the Noble Lord. The Viceroy, in this very Debate to which the Noble Lord is referring, admitted that he had advised the Princes on this subject. He did not deny it. I ask the Secretary of State, "Is it or it is not the fact that not only did the Viceroy advise the Princes, but did he not telegraph to several of them inviting them to come and discuss the question with him?" After all, he is the representative of the King-Emperor, and if he calls by telegram Princes to come and discuss this question and, as he has told us, urges this policy upon them as being in the interests of India, it is very difficult for a loyal Prince to imagine that that is anything but putting pressure on him—I will not say anything more than that.

In all the Debates we have had in this House we have been principally concerned with the subject of the Constitution as it affects India. To-night I want to deal with that very much neglected side, the great problem of the peril to our great industries in this country and to the artisans, operatives and transport workers, the great multitude of whom depend for their livelihood upon our Indian market. Apart from the right hon. Gentleman, whom, I am glad to say, did refer to the question yesterday, hardly a Minister has referred to British interests. When the Prime Minister spoke in the first White Paper Debate in this House, from start to finish he never said one word as to British interests and the reaction thereon. I go further. The Prime Minister, from that day to this, as far as I am aware, though I may be wrong, has hardly made a speech on the subject of India at all. He merely dropped the ugly brat on the knees of my right hon. Friend the Lord President of the Council and forgot all his obligations of parenthood. It is just as important for this House to look after British interests as it is to consider the few vocal agitators in India. It is the prime duty of Ministers, it is why they hold office and why they receive their, I admit, inadequate, salaries—to look after British interests.

May I give briefly the fiscal history of our trade in India? In 1895 there was a revenue duty imposed upon imports into India—I am speaking of textiles—of 3½ per cent. The Government in this country were determined, however, to see that that duty did not operate to the disadvantage of Lancashire and our other trades, and so they insisted on a countervailing duty of 3½ per cent. Thus we competed on equal terms in India with Indian manufacturers—in that great market which has been sustained and defended and built up by British genius and British wealth. It was, therefore, a thoroughgoing British policy, supported not only by the Conservative Governments of those times but by a succession of Liberal Governments—the Government of 1906, the two Governments of 1910, the Government of 1914, and the first Coalition Government. The Liberals of those days—there is only one real Liberal left in the House, my right hon. and gallant Friend on my right (Colonel Wedgwood)—insisted on keeping India a free market for British goods. They were adamant about that. Then came the late Mr. Edwin Montagu, determined to stir Indians out of their pathetic contentment, and equally prepared to arm Indians against Lancashire's products, as the Indian millowners demanded. It was under the 1919 reforms, with utter disregard of the great British interests which had been built up, that the so-called Fiscal Convention was initiated. Thereafter the Excise Duty was abandoned and the duty was raised against Lancashire—to 11 per cent. in 1921, to 15 per cent. in 1930, and to 25 per cent. in 1931. The Secretary of State, I believe I am right in saying, had power to intervene, but neither he nor his predecessors took

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any steps to stop this policy by which Lancashire's trade has been so largely strangled in the market upon which their prosperity chiefly depends.

I do not want to weary the House with figures, but they are so essential that I beg hon. Members to bear with me if I tell the story in figures. In 1913-14 the United Kingdom supplied 57 per cent. of India's consumption of cotton textiles. In 1933-34 we sent only 8 per cent. India in 1913-14 provided 40 per cent. and last year 85 per cent. This is only the beginning of the story. Without our lifting a finger in this country Lancashire has been to this enormous extent ousted from India by sweated goods made under factory conditions which no one would tolerate in this country. As a result, 350,000,000 poor people in India are having to be content with goods of far rougher quality and more expensive. As my last figure I will give square yards, in case the significance of the total proportions is not recognised. From 1914 to 1934 we had this change, that Japanese imports increased from 9,000,000 to 349,000,000 square yards, British imports decreased from 3,000,000,000 square yards to 426,000,000 square yards, while India's production during the same time increased by over 2,000,000,000 square yards. It will be observed that this vital trade—it really is important, in spite of my Noble Friend—has been almost entirely lost to Lancashire.

The Fiscal Convention, of course, lapses with the lapse of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. The whole position is considered *de novo*, and surely this is the time when our National Government should consider national interests in connection with this great problem. We have before us now all the evidence of the Indian outlook on this matter. We have before us the evidence of the boycott, the whole Swaraj movement demanding the elimination of all imported foreign goods. We have had the exhortation of Congress that Indians should burn everything British except British coal. Was it surprising, in these circumstances, that the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, in drawing up their first evidence, before persuasion entered into the matter at all, demanded that real safeguards should be given in future? I submit that with these great changes now being discussed this is the hour when we should tell the truth to India. The truth, as I see it, is as follows. We have built up the prosperity of India with the cheapest credit that any country in the world has ever given to another. We have poured out our wealth in building up India out of chaos to the eighth greatest commercial trading country in the world. We are prepared to continue it, and to give India the benefit of our defence, that wonderful boon which no country in the world needs much more than India—defence in the air, on the sea and on land.

In bestowing this gift of self-government I suggest that we have every right, in justice to ourselves and to the stake that we hold in that great country, to insist that we should have a permanent basis of reciprocal trade as nearly as possible approximating to Free Trade between the two great countries. The power to impose revenue duties remains in the two countries, and I can quite understand that either might say "We must have a tariff of something like 10 per cent.," but when we are starting on this new path is it not a necessity that we should take a long view? Surely the long view, the view of statesmanship, is that we should, in building this structure, see that the basis is reciprocal, preferential and permanent, and say that we are not going to have a tariff war for all time with India. Instead, we have the Secretary of State and his colleagues contemplating, as far as I can see, possibly permanent high Protection against Lancashire and permanent Free Trade for Indian goods in this market. He called on Lancashire to disarm and rely on good will. Good will, when he knows perfectly well that Congress, which is based upon the antithesis of good will, will control India in the days to come. Good will, when Congress swept every Hindu seat in the recent elections for the Legislative Assembly. Good will, when only last week we had that definite warning from the Legislative Assembly by a majority being cast for repudiating the good will agreement which had been made between this country and India so recently.

Ministers come to this House wringing millions of money from the taxpayers of this country in order to help the

depressed areas, when it seems to me that by our failure to deal with this question, by our weakness and the whole outlook of this policy, we are condemning Lancashire to depression for all the years till she can find some new industry such as jam and pickles to employ her people. I venture to think the time has come when the people of this country are beginning to wake up on the subject of British trade. We have every good wish for the people of India, but we also feel that the interests of our own people are worthy of consideration, and I venture to think that if Palmerston, or Beaconsfield, or Joseph Chamberlain were sitting on that bench we should not have allowed this great sacrifice of Lancashire industry. I specially want to point out to my hon. Friends—if I may call them so—of the Liberal party who sit behind me that this fiscal policy which we are establishing in India is absolutely repugnant to all that they hold dear. In fact, from all quarters of the House we again and again hear criticism of foreign countries for erecting these barriers against trade and making it difficult, and yet they contemplate with equanimity a permanent barrier in a country of the British Empire. Surely it is time they were up and doing and beginning to take an interest in this affair, more especially those who sit for Lancashire constituencies.

Just one word upon the general issues. Are we or are we not imposing this policy in order to meet the aspirations of the Indian people? That is a question I should like answered during this Debate. If we are not, then what is the justification for pulling down what the Select Committee describe as the "Majestic structure of British rule and British administration"? If it is the real desire of the Government to meet the wishes of Indians and not to dash the cup from their thirsty lips, then I confront the Government with the fact that India, by the very machinery set up in 1919, has rejected that boon. Congress swept the board at the general election, and now, this evening, we have this momentous information, that the Legislative Assembly, by a surprising vote—74 to 58—has carried an amendment which makes the pursuance of this policy in this country, unless we are out against India's will, one which is really ridiculous. The amendment reads that the All-India Federation scheme:

"is fundamentally bad and totally unacceptable to the people of British India. It recommends the Government of India to advise His Majesty's Government not to proceed with any legislation based on this scheme."

That was proposed from an unexpected quarter, Mr. Jinnah. You see this combination. Out of a minority of 58—I believe I am right in saying this, although the Secretary of State does not know it because he has not had the figures in time to-day—out of that minority the proportion of the Indian Legislative Assembly is something like 44 who are official or nominated members. Hon. Members see that that is an overwhelming vote of the elected members in the Indian Legislative Assembly. They have said, "We do not want this policy," which we here are so obligingly deciding to confer upon India. There has never been anything like this in history: a Parliament endeavouring to force a measure of reform upon a people who have rejected the reforms by the electoral machinery set up by that Parliament.

I cannot conceive that this is a wise policy or that it is going to lead to peace. Is there anybody in this House now who denies, after making any real study of the question, that there is one course, and one course only, which can bridge the gulf between Moslem and Hindu, and that is the *Pax Britannica*, based upon the faith, hope and charity and the enlightenment that British rule has taken to all its possessions. That is why we have succeeded as no other conqueror in the world has ever succeeded. What has been the British ideal? To listen to some of the speeches of the Opposition you might imagine that we rule by force. We have never, since 1857, used force in our own defence or except to preserve peace between those two warring sections of the Indian community. The Indian Congress, Liberals and Chambers of Commerce urge you to maintain the *status quo*. Are we wise to go on pushing this policy forward when we realise that the feelings to which I have referred still exist in India? With the holocaust of Cawnpore and Moplah rebellion so fresh in our memories, I ask if we take a step unwisely, to what red hell will we lead the second greatest population in the world? When we have removed the police and the judges, how shall we preserve the peace that all the

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world has envied when we have no longer the power to keep it?

I do not like this opposition to His Majesty's Government. The hon. Member for the Isle of Ely (Mr. de Rothschild) spoke of us as a faction, but there are more of us than of the two other oppositions combined. We are concerned to support His Majesty's Government in other directions, and we are not asking Mr. Speaker's permission to sit on the Opposition Benches, but we think that this question is something immensely greater than perhaps the Noble Lady the Member for the Sutton Division of Plymouth (Viscountess Astor) realises. Many of us have forbears of long service in India, and I want her to believe that they think we have done a most marvellous thing in India. With our task far from complete, suddenly to say: "Although we know from all reports that Indians have not been successful in governing the municipalities—never mind; let them now run an Empire containing one-fifth of the human race," is engaging in a gamble such as the world may never have seen before.

Viscountess ASTOR: Rot.

Sir H. CROFT: I am not going to delay the House because a siren's voice seeks one to turn from the path. Men feel this subject very intensely, and I am afraid we cannot consider personal friendships or political attachments, or what even happens to ourselves. I still believe there is a path of honour which would be acceptable to everbody, and which would be far the wisest course. That is to say to India: "We have offered you this great gift in all good will"—as the Government have—"You have from every quarter rejected it. Very well then; we accept your verdict, and we will go on step by step in our own time to give government in the Provinces." Do that, even now at this late hour, and you will heal a wound which is festering, and which may well prove mortal to your political hopes. If you do that, I believe you will rally the nation once more, as you did in 1931, and you will be able to pursue the only great mandate which you received at the hands of the nation.

6.51 p.m.

Mr. GODFREY NICHOLSON: I am sure I shall have the sympathy of the whole House in following such a brilliant and practised Parliamentary orator. The deep sincerity shown by those who are opposed to the Bill demands an equal honesty and sincerity on the part of those who support it. If prizes for veracity and honesty were being distributed, a large number would go to what we call the Diehard opposition. I hope the House will not misunderstand me when I say that if I were considering prizes for political sincerity I should find the hon. Baronet the Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) very near the bottom of the class. I will ask the House to note what he has done in reference to India. He feels strongly on a certain question, very strongly; so strongly that he uses language which I might almost call intemperate of those who hold opposite opinions. Does the hon. Baronet take the trouble to fortify himself with a single fact as to the beliefs of the men on the spot? Has he the time, and does he dare, to go to India and find out what those who are and will be responsible for government and administration in India think?

When I was in India the other day I read the Debates that took place in this House in December, and I paid particular attention to the remarkable and emotional speech, the feeling speech, of th hon. Baronet—"I feel this," "I feel that." Last night the hon. and gallant Member for Wycombe (Sir A. Knox) said: "I feel in my bones that it is wrong." I do not wish to draw the obvious conclusion that if he were using his brains—[*Interruption*]—I am afraid it is not complimentary. In the whole of this opposition to the Government, sincere if you like, there has not been one single attempt on the part of the Diehard opposition to find out what Englishmen who are in the true line of tradition in India, bearing the burden and heat of the day, think about it. There has not been an effort to go to India, and find out.

Sir H. CROFT: I must point this out: We are in touch with not hundreds but thousands of men recently returned from India who have joined the India Defence League. I beg the hon. Gentleman to remember that. We are in daily contact with hundreds.

Mr. NICHOLSON: I am sure the House will allow me to say without self-satisfaction that, having just returned

from India myself, my impressions are exactly the opposite of those of the hon. Baronet. If he had managed to find time even for the shortest possible visit to India, he would have found that while opinion in India is divided over the Reforms, as it is in this country, there is almost unanimity on one point. Almost every Englishman in India will tell you that rejection of this Bill would be sheer folly on our part and would bring unqualified disaster to India in its train.

I only spent a few months in India, a ridiculously short time, I admit, and I shall not for one moment inflict upon the House my own personal experiences. I have not written a book and I am not going to do so. My one endeavour when I went to India was to get as many opinions as possible from as varied a selection of people as possible on this question. I ask the House to have the charity to believe that I am honest and that I went to India as unprejudiced and with as open a mind as I could. I ask hon. Members to believe that I am telling the truth when I say that I met all sorts of Englishmen—officers of government, junior members of the Civil Service, members of the subordinate services, business men, missionaries, journalists and so on, not to speak of Indian politicians—and I ask them to believe that I am capable of making an honest report to the House, not in a partisan spirit. If they will do me the charity to believe that, I ask them to attach some little importance to my definite statement—I give them my word of honour that this is true—that of all the responsible people I met in India—members of the Indian Civil Service and so on and all the people I have just mentioned—I met exactly one who said seriously that Parliament should reject this Bill. I do not for one moment want to give the impression that everybody in India is enthusiastic over the Bill, because nothing would be farther from the truth. Many people said to me: "It is a hateful business. You politicians have made a mess of it from the start."

Unlike the hon. Baronet the Member for Bournemouth, who is determined to stand no nonsense from facts, those people face facts, and they say that rejection at this moment would open the door to—words fail me to say to what it would open the door—strife, disaster, exacerbation, all the favourite words of the political speaker are inadequate to the occasion. Naturally there is a great variety of opinion in India. There are certain people, such as those in secretariats, who are paid one might almost say to support the policy of the government of the day. I ignore their opinions. They have got to hold them. I do not wish to impugn their honesty in any way. But there are other people who hold high posts in the administration and who are responsible and will be responsible in the near future. Their almost unanimous verdict was that it would be the greatest dereliction of duty on our part to reject this Bill. The vast majority of them not only considered that the reforms are inevitable but that the reforms are a right and wise thing to do and that they will lead to better government and better feeling in India.

Hon. Members may say that I am a fool and that I have been misled. They may even, in a Parliamentary way, say that I am a liar. I believe that I have enough friends to believe me when I say that that was my clear and honest impression after three months in India travelling widely and meeting hundreds of Englishmen. I sincerely wish that those in my party who are opposed to the Bill had visited India. I firmly believe that the hon. Baronet himself would have come back and voted for the Bill, and would have concentrated his energy in securing the Amendments which he would think desirable. I am glad I have had the opportunity of speaking after him. A few weeks ago I was staying with a distinguished Indian statesman who said to me: "When you get back to England, I hope you will speak to Sir Henry Page Croft and say to him that if he quotes me in Parliament I should be very much obliged if he would not quote me out of my context." In the Debates in December, the hon. Baronet made great play with a sentence taken from the speech of Sir Akbar Hydari who, I think at the third Round Table Conference, used some such words as "relentless pressure" exercised by the British Government to drive the States in to the Federation. When the context of that speech is read it will be seen—and I have Sir Akbar Hydari's own words for it—that the speech was

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directed not to show that the British Government had exerted unfair pressure, but to prove to the States that if they advocated Federation they would have the support of the British Government. What was in doubt then was whether the British Government were wholeheartedly in favour of Federation. I do not impugn the hon. and gallant Gentleman's sincerity but I do impugn his accuracy. I think I am entitled to impugn what I will call his political sincerity in producing an isolated sentence like that without, as I think, himself having taken the trouble to study the context.

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: I understand that the Simon Commission reported before the Round Table Conference and that they dealt very exhaustively with this question.

Mr. NICHOLSON: I am not very interested in what the Simon Commission said about Federation. Much water has flowed under the bridges since then.

Duchess of ATHOLL *rose*——

Mr. SPEAKER: I think it would be as well not to interrupt the hon. Member.

Mr. NICHOLSON: I do not wish to run down the Simon Commission's Report, but things have happened since then. History does not stop even for a dozen Simon Reports, and I leave it to the judgment of the House whether we are not dealing with the actual situation as it exists in February, 1935, rather than with the situation as it was when the Simon Commission reported. After what I have said about the prevailing state of opinion as I found it among Englishmen in India to-day, is it surprising that I shall vote for the Bill? I shall vote for it believing that it will succeed —in spite of any vote in the Legislature to-day. I believe that it will be worked. I have talked to many Indian politicians, and they have said to me: "Of course, we shall protest against these reforms; but when they come along we shall work them." One thing I wish to make clear to the House is that I shall not vote for this Bill in any spirit of apology or in any spirit of defeatism, but because I believe this Bill to be right and wise.

It is not for me to elaborate the reasons which have led the type of man I have referred to in India to advise me to support this Bill. I shall cover them as briefly as I can. I should like to say, in passing, that the phrase most constantly used to me was this: "When building a Constitution, and above all in the East, no power without responsibility." I was very glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman use that phrase yesterday. That alone to me is an adequate answer to all this by-play about the votes in the Legislative Assembly during the last few days. There are two ways of looking at the reforms. I think it is generally agreed that reforms on these lines are inevitable some time. I should like to point out that the very day when you allow freedom of criticism you have given birth to a movement that will one day reach manhood, a movement that will demand a large measure of responsibility. The real author of these reforms is not Mr. Montagu or Lord Chelmsford or Mr. Morley or Lord Lytton but Lord Ripon, who gave freedom to the Press in India. The universal view is that a benevolent bureaucracy, by its very nature and its very benevolence, is not a good form of government for a modern civilised country. If it is benevolent, it must allow a certain amount of freedom in criticism and action. For that reason I would ask the House to cling to the axiom: No power without responsibility. It must be remembered that you cannot have criticism without one day giving some measure of power if you are a benevolent bureaucracy—and I think most bureaucracies are benevolent.

The real point is: Why are these reforms necessary now? If I may presume to say in a few words what I think the consensus of opinion in India is on this point, I should say it runs something like this: You cannot insulate a civilised sub-Continent like India from world conditions and thought. Then India demands reforms. You cannot get away from that by saying that only a relatively small intelligentsia is politically conscious. It has been proved at least twice in the past 10 years that every adult Indian is potential fuel for political agitation when that agitation has a just cause. I refer to the non-co-operation movement and the civil disobedience movement. I do not think they were just causes; it was very

largely the weakness of the Government in India which allowed them to reach the dimensions they did reach. But I say that there would be a just cause for agitation if we rejected this Bill; and no self-respecting Government in India would or could expect its servants to repress with the necessary vigour the movement that would then arise. It is not a question of funk.

This is the question that has to be decided, and it has to be decided this year: What is our idea of our future relationship with India? Is it to be one of co-operation, as an elder brother? Or is it to be one of domination, as a proprietor? It is a perfectly simple issue. If the answer is that we wish to co-operate as an elder brother, then the proper treatment of a popular movement like the non-co-operation or civil disobedience movements is impossible. The proper treatment of these movements would need more severity than an elder brother could possibly claim to be allowed to use. If it is to be domination as a proprietor, then let us have the courage to say so. Do not let us have any half measures and say that our hearts are bleeding for the condition of the masses while still we are prepared to hand over every one of the social services. Is that going to be our attitude? No. I say distinctly that our very nature as Englishmen demands that our future relationship with India shall be that of the elder brother. There is an immense harvest of good will and co-operation to be reaped. Every Indian to-day is both anti-British and pro-British. A very slight change in our attitude will make the pro-British side of every Indian the dominant side and convert the anti-British side of him to self-respect and independence. Before leaving the purely theoretical side of this Bill I should like to ask the House a question. Is it not possible that this Bill indicates the future type of government for all countries where the application of democracy is, for whatever reason, difficult? May it not be that we in this Bill have stumbled on what will be the future line of development in all countries where democracy is difficult of application?

As to the Bill itself I think its success will largely depend on what I call visible and invisible safeguards. The visible safeguards are included in the Bill, and I consider them to be fairly adequate. There is one slight alteration I should like to make but on the whole I consider them fairly adequate. There are, however, the invisible safeguards, or imponderable. They are three in number. The first is finance. It is a commonplace in India that the Provincial Governments and the Central Government are as poor as church mice. I do not know if hon. Members realise it, but Bengal, with an area equivalent to that of Great Britain and a population bigger than that of Great Britain, has to balance its Budget at about nine crores, which represents about £6,750,000. Bihar and Orissa, which is very little smaller in area and population, has a Budget of four or five crores. I think that finance will be a very definite safeguard. The slightest divergence from the path of strict and upright government will show itself at once in the budgets. You will see it at once if your Provincial Governments are going off the rails. We have the same thing in England in a different way. The slightest mistake in Government here raises the unemployment figures. That is the thermometer here; the thermometer in India is finance.

Then there are two imponderables which depend very largely upon the tone we take in the Debates in this House. The first is the efficiency of the administration, by which I mean all ranks of all Services, British and Indian. It is often said that we in this country exaggerate the importance of efficiency. I maintain that the welfare of the masses is directly dependent on the efficiency of the administration. The Labour party suggest that we should safeguard the welfare of the masses by means of an extended franchise. This is their panacea everywhere. I do not accept it. I believe that the ballot box is only a mouthpiece, and that without an informed public opinion to speak through that mouthpiece to rely on the ballot box as a protection against exploitation and bad government is to rely on a broken reed. I firmly believe that the only protection against exploitation and bad government is the efficiency of the administration.

There are two methods only, in India or in any country in the world, of ensuring efficiency of administration. The first is by guaranteeing that there is no political interference with the adminis-

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tration—no interference on the part of the Legislature or Ministers or by Members with the administration or with the machine of the administration. In this country we accept it as the air we breath, that I, as the Member for Morpeth, do not appoint the Mayor of Morpeth or the police constables. We accept it that the President of the Board of Education does not promote or degrade teachers, and so on. We accept it as natural that the judiciary should be free from political influence. But we must face the fact that this convention is not as yet accepted in India. There are historical reasons for that. When Lord Ripon formed the district boards he put the district magistrates in charge of the district boards and there was inevitable confusion in the minds of the population between the functions of the district magistrate as an administrator and magistrate and his functions as a legislator on the district board. I believe that most politically-minded Indians have a faint suspicion in their minds that I, as Member for Morpeth, do have something to do with the appointment of the police constables and the mayors in my constituency. It is going to be perfectly easy for the Secretary of State and this House to give instructions to the Governor-General and to the Governors that they shall allow no interference with the administration. But that will be of little avail unless Indian political opinion accepts the convention of non-interference. Indians are very quick to learn, especially in the political realm, and it will depend almost entirely on the tone we take in these Debates, and on the number of times we reiterate our firm belief in the necessity for this convention, whether it is accepted by Indian political opinion. That is the first thing that we have to do in these Debates.

The second way of maintaining the efficiency of a civil administration is to see that the best men are appointed, by which I mean that, if the necessity for the non-political nature of the administration is accepted, the efficiency of the service must take precedence over such theoretical matters such as Indianisation. I met a very large number of Indians in the various provinces and I was deeply impressed by them. I say that quite sincerely. But in any case, owing to the very nature of the difficulties inherent in the Indian problem, a minimum of Europeans must be retained in an advisory capacity, or in an inspecting capacity. I think we are asking a great deal if we ask India to start and to run services which, after all, are purely Western in origin and conception.

I was very glad to see that there is a Clause in the Bill, Clause 234, which gives the Secretary of State the power of appointment, in case of necessity, in irrigation matters. I should very much like to see that Clause extended to the education services, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will seriously consider doing so. I consider that education is the most essential service of all. I feel that the Lee Commission made a most terrible blunder when they recommended the complete Indianisation of education. As the House knows, European recruitment for the Indian education service ceased in 1924. Under this Bill, education will be a purely provincial subject. Education is in a unique position. Deterioration in education is not immediately evident. Deterioration in irrigation is evident in five minutes; deterioration in the police is evident in five minutes; deterioration in almost any Service is evident in five minutes; but not deterioration in education.

I promised the House that I would not inflict upon it any of my own personal reminiscences. I propose to break my promise. From my own personal experience, I believe that continued recruitment to the ranks of the Bengal terrorists is directly due to inefficient inspection of the high schools in Bengal. I say that from my own personal experience; I shall not elaborate it. I should very much like to see inserted in the Bill some provision by which the Secretary of State, or the Governor-General, or the Governors, could appoint Englishmen in an advisory and/or inspecting capacity in the education service. I want also to see some method of co-ordinating educational services as between the different Provinces. I do not share the prevailing criticism of our educational policy in India. I think Macaulay was absolutely right. If we believe in ourselves and in our outlook on life, the least we can do is to give the best possible English education to Indians. All this talk about giving Eastern education to Easterners is, to my

mind, nonsense. It springs from a misapprehension of the truth that the wisdom of the East is the wisdom of an attitude of mind, and not the wisdom of book-learning. But be that as it may, the system we have given to India must be run efficiently.

My second imponderable is something far more important than Acts and Amendments and Constitutional Conventions, more important even than efficiency of the administration. I think the House will agree that two things are necessary in dealing with India—sympathy and definiteness. I see in this Bill a proof of our sympathy and understanding. Have we the definiteness? That is to say, are we sure of our faith in ourselves, and of our courage to shoulder the responsibilities we have undertaken? I wish I could say "Yes." If I had brought back a definite message from India—of course I have not—I should like it to be something like this, that all the Acts of Parliament in the world avail nothing if we are not sure of ourselves. It has been only too clear that, since the War, our Indian policy has been directed by a spirit of expediency and compromise. I found that throughout India the question was: "We will do what you tell us to do in India, but do you believe in yourselves? Does England believe in her mission? Does she believe in her destiny"? I said, of course, "Yes," but do we? I am not so sure.

What is the message that we, through these debates, will send to India? Is it that we regard India as a new Gallipoli, to be evacuated with a hasty and apologetic dignity? I am afraid that that is the message of some. Is it that these reforms are merely an episode in an inevitable series of rearguard actions? Is it that we calmly visualise the day, not far off, when England will have no role to fulfil in India? Is it that we believe that as elder brothers we are no longer essential to India? If I thought for one moment that this Bill was conceived in that spirit, every ounce of energy at my command would be directed towards securing its rejection. If any Member of the House believes that this Bill is conceived in a spirit of defeatism, I think it is his clear duty to vote against it, whatever the consequences may be. Almost the last prominent Indian that I met in India, four weeks ago to a day, used words to me which summed up my position with complete accuracy. He said: "What worries me is England's attitude towards these reforms. If you are not giving them with courage and faith in yourselves, you had better not give them at all. You must give them because you believe they are right, not because you are driven into them by cowardice or expediency." I remember reading the other day something that Queen Victoria said. She said, "Do not tell me what is expedient; tell me what is right."

My visit to India taught me two things—an abiding love of India and a renewed pride in the achievements of the English race. The achievements of England in India are not to be summed up in terms of sieges and battles, any more than in terms of canals and bridges. Our supreme achievement in India is that we have made the name of England synonymous with fairness, justice and peace, with kindliness and self-sacrifice. It is an extraordinary thing in India to-day that, while the extremist is arguing with you, when he wishes to condemn something most unequivocally, he says that it is un-English.

I wonder if I dare inflict upon the House a small personal memory. When I was in Delhi one day I walked along the historic Ridge, so full of memories of a gallant and contemptible little Army that, during the long-drawn heat of an Indian summer, withstood the attacks of scores of thousands. About a mile away I wandered into a little disused cemetery, where many of the officers and men who had fallen during the siege had been buried. It was full of other graves of soldiers, civilians, and, above all, of their wives and children, who died in the early years of the last century. In one corner was a monument to men who had fallen during the siege, and the words on it impressed themselves deeply upon my memory. They stated that the monument had been erected to the memory of so many officers and so many men who had been killed during the siege, "gallantly upholding their country's cause." Both England and India are full of the graves of men, women and children who have given their lives, their health, and their happiness to gallantly upholding their country's cause, in the service of England and out of love for the

[Mr. Nicholson.]

peoples of India. The greatest service that we have rendered to India is that we have served her with love—with love of the Indian people and with love of India itself. I resolved that I would never do anything that would be false to their memory or tarnish the glory of their achievements and their services.

It is because I believe that this Bill points the way to a future at least as glorious as our glorious past that I shall vote for it. It is because I believe that those who have given their lives to India in the past would, like those who are giving their lives to India to-day, ask me to vote for the Bill, that I shall vote for it. Finally, it is because I believe that this Bill is in the true tradition of the English nature, of English kindliness and courage, that I shall vote for it. The real criterion, surely, is this: In voting for the Bill, shall we be true to ourselves; shall we be true to the part that England has played in history; shall we be true to English kindliness and courage? I repeat that I wish I could say I brought back a message from India. I think that the message I should have liked to bring back would have been one that was written by Shakespeare nearly 350 years ago. He said:

> ". . . . to thine own self be true,
> And it must follow, as the night the day,
> Thou canst not then be false to any man."

7.29 p.m.

Mr. NUNN: This is the first time that I have had an opportunity to address the House on the question of the Indian constitutional reforms, and, if I may, I should like to make some personal explanation of my attitude. Ever since this question was raised in the House of Commons, I have been trying to maintain the ideal condition of the perfectly open mind. It has been immensely difficult. I have heard authorities on this side and on that. Men of great eminence have spoken in favour of the Government's proposals, and I have heard men of equal eminence speak against them. I have received on occasion what I may describe, I hope without offence, as a somewhat cheap and perhaps undignified magazine, which used to reach me regularly without my desiring it, and which struck me as bearing a strong family resemblance to certain propaganda publications put out on behalf of the licensed victuallers' trade. I gathered from that document, when I read it, that all the influence and experience of India was expressed in it. On the other hand, I have met on many occasions eminent men, both British and Indian, recently over from India—many of them retired, but many of them actually in service as civil servants, soldiers, judges, business men; and their story and their ideas were entirely contrary to those of the others. I found it extremely difficult and, after hearing the words of the hon. Member for South-West Hull (Mr. Law) last night, my difficulties were increased, because we have been told all through this controversy by the exponents of the White Paper policy that we have to listen to the voice of authority from India—recent authority, and not those persons who like myself have been away from the East for nine or 10 years but those who are still in the East or have only recently retired.

My hon. Friend took great pains to explain to us that those who knew most about India were the last persons that one should follow. It was unfortunate, because I was beginning to think I was getting my mind into a somewhat settled condition, and once again I was unsettled. But, obviously, the time comes when one has to make up one's mind. I am not and have not been a member of any organisation working for the defeat of the Government's proposals. I have kept myself entirely free from those organisations in the effort to maintain an open mind. But it becomes necessary to make up my mind; in fact, it became necessary last December that I should make up my mind. I have done so. I voted against the Report of the Joint Select Committee for two reasons. The first seems to me to be not unimportant. It is that, with all respect to hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, if there had been no opposition from the great party which constitutes the mass of members of this Government body there would have been no effective opposition against the Bill. One thing that has pleased me more than anything else about the discussion these last few days has been the good natured way in which exponents of the Government's policy have accepted opposition in the right spirit. We have avoided acrimony. We have avoided any form of mud-slinging. Without the

opposition that has been put up from this side of the House, there really would have been no effective opposition to the Government proposals, and, however good proposals may be, it is vitally essential, and it will be much more essential during the Committee stage of the Bill, that there should be a sound and a strenuous opposition.

My second point is more personal. One hesitates to say this sort of thing, but it has to be said. It is purely a matter of conscience. I do not feel, after having given the most careful consideration to the question, and having some little experience, though perhaps not so recent as that of the last speaker, of the East, that I can in conscience support this Measure. My own experience is not strictly of India, though I have been in India. I spent many years in the Far East in which the conditions of my service were such that I was very closely in touch with governmental processes. Those years were spent mainly in a small country where the processes of government were so much under one's eye that it was rather like looking at a very perfect small model of a very large machine. One was able to see the whole thing working. During the course of my years I had to play a considerable part in advising an Oriental Government, and my experience there may perhaps enable me to look upon this question of the constitutional reform of India from a somewhat unique angle. My work consisted mainly in trying to train those Oriental people who were connected with me to perform their own functions in government with as much efficiency and straightforwardness as possible. I should resent anyone's saying that the Oriental is not capable of being an efficient administrator. I felt, when I left my work, that many men who had passed through my hands had become really efficient and trustworthy administrators. But I should have hesitated very long during my time in the East to attempt to encourage in any of the people with whom I had contact a greater interest in becoming politically conscious. That is a very different matter. One may train, and hope to see success in training, people of another race to be efficient in the art of government, but anyone of my temperament hesitates very long—and I should hesitate in this country if it were not past hope—to encourage in anyone more political consciousness than there is at present.

I wonder very often how this present situation arose. Perhaps it is wrong of me to ask who it was who put the cuckoo egg in the nest but one wonders how it came there. After all, India had been going on very well in the last few years. A firmer system of government was showing its effect in better administration and one wonders why it became suddenly necessary to stir up all this trouble. It has left us in this position. Most of us have to consider, first of all, that we do not like the idea of further political advance in India, but, secondly, that we are faced with certain facts. The Noble Lord the Member for Horsham (Earl Winterton) suggested that those of us who are opposing this Measure believe that the British hand should be kept upon India and that we have no sympathy at all with any form of political advance. I do not believe that that is a correct statement of the case.

I and all those with whom I have now associated myself recognise that a certain amount of advance is necessary. We may wish it were not so. The hon. Member who spoke last referred to Lord Macaulay, who went to India determined in a matter of five or six years to make a sufficient competency to have set himself up as a politician in this country and who managed to secure in Calcutta the atmosphere of Clapham and achieved his end in the matter of four years. We might well wish that he had devoted his time to other things than establishing in India a system of education which, as the First Commissioner of Works said, was one of the greatest blunders that have ever been made in India. I know that that view is held by a very eminent Member of another place. I remember distinctly some four years ago hearing that Noble Lord lecture in the North of England upon the absolute killing of the possibilities of advance. However, that has all gone past. We cannot help it. We recognise that certain things have come about and that, the position being what it is, we must face it. But it does not follow from that that we must take desperate steps now to hurry on a movement which has already been to a large extent disastrous to India.

When one considers the report of the Joint Select Committee, it seems to me that its greatest outstanding character-

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istic was that fear was the watermark on every page. Throughout the whole of the document, and indeed throughout this Bill, one is impressed by the overhanging dread of the consequences of what the Government are doing. One is impressed by the insistence upon safeguards. I think it was the hon. Member for Chertsey (Sir A. Boyd-Carpenter) who thought that that in itself was something in the nature of an insult to the Indian people. But there it is. On page after page there is this expression of dread—a great overhanging fear. Accompanying the fear there are assurances. When I was a small boy, if I was going along a path and was a little nervous about myself and saw a nasty looking shadow ahead, and my companion assured me with an over emphasis of heartiness that it was only a shadow, if I detected in his assurance something of a ring of apprehension, my nervousness increased. That is the feeling that the assurances in the report of the Joint Select Committee gave me. We have been told that we must anticipate the success of democracy. I wonder why. In these days democracy has not been showing itself as a very thriving plant anywhere in the world. Even in this country it is beginning to croak and groan to a certain extent, and we have had a long experience of its working. We have heard Egypt referred to. We have seen something of the workings of democracy in Ceylon. I do not know that democratic institutions in Turkey are so flourishing that one wishes to refer to them too closely. We have been told at various times in the course of these Debates something about China. China has never been held up as an example of the success of democratic institutions.

I should like to dwell a little upon the Chinese situation. China lost its Imperial family in 1911 and immediately plunged into a sea of anarchy. For many years people died by the million, by starvation, flood, and famine. Warfare was constant all over the country, and it is only in the last six years or a little more that China has begun to recover, and now the Government controlling the Yangtse Valley and the immediate neighbourhood is begining to re-establish conditions of safety and security. That looks as if I had defeated my own argument, but it is really not so, because what happened is this. In 1924 the so-called Christian General took upon himself to abolish the last Parliament, and there has never been a Parliament in China since. The Government which has held power in China in the last six years is not a democratically-elected Government at all. It is merely the party caucus; more or less, it is the executive of the Comintern, and there is precious little democratic spirit in that with which these very able realists of Nanking are carrying on to-day. It is true that recently they produced a new constitution, but they have no intention, so far at least, of putting it into operation. It is a museum exhibit. Anybody who feels that he wants to see what the constitution would look like it entitled to go and see it, but they have no intention of starting upon the operaton of that constitution until they have got conditions straight. That is a very significant fact. The Chinese are great realists, and, being realists, they understand that they have to get their country into a good state and in a proper condition before they can indulge themselves in the luxury of extended democracy.

I am very sorry once again to refer to the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for South-West Hull. I make my apologies for criticising his speech last night, but he referred to the question of the intelligence of the masses of India, and in order to make his point, said that he had noticed, on one occasion at least, a certain lack of intelligence in his constituents. I felt that he was doing a rather dangerous thing in making that statement in the House. I hope that he will not hear about it, but I think that it is possible. Is he not rather confusing two things? He discovered a constituent of his who did not know his name and did not quite know his pedigree, but surely it is not correct to say that in this country the average constituent is unable to grasp a political fact? My experience of going round not only my constituency, but other areas where I am on very friendly terms with the people, is that one can go into almost any cottage at any rate in the north of England, or stand with any group at the corner of a pit road and hear the most intelligent discussions on current political affairs. To compare the electorate of this country

with the type of electorate in the villages of India, is a very unfortunate thing indeed. Really when one remembers how something starting as a wild and silly rumour, may rush through the community of India, one cannot compare it with what is, after all, the calm and dispassionate discussion of affairs in this country. I do not think that the comparison is at all relevant, and I should be very sorry to make it myself.

One wants to know, are we definitely abandoning co-partnership with India? Are we definitely placing ourselves not as the willing friends of India, but as definite outsiders? It seems to me that this Measure definitely places us in that position. Throughout the Bill, one gets the impression that we are only setting up machinery by means of which ultimately we shall allow ourselves not to be pushed, but, on our own accord, to go out of India, because in this Measure we are admitting that we are unnecessary and undesirable. The hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. G. Nicholson) referred to that cemetery at Delhi. I wonder what some of those men who lived about the Mutiny time would think if they could look down and see our proceedings to-day? I wonder what the old Anglo-Indian families would think about our present position with regard to India? What about our troops? What about the Lawrences, and what about Nicholson, and the other big families? How would they feel if they could look down on us to-day and see us discussing a Measure which definitely places us as aliens in a country where we have given our blood?

I do not want to assume an oratorical aspect, but really this thing moves one so much that one cannot control one's patience. We are definitely casting ourselves off from a great heritage. The Under-Secretary of State will probably reply to this Debate, and I want to know definitely, and the House is entitled to know, Are we now stating the limit? It is all very well to say that Dominion status is the ultimate aim. We have had several of these ultimate aims apparently pushed into the far distance, but in the course of time we find that, by some curious means or other, the moment seems to be near us. I do not believe that calling Dominion status the ultimate aim puts it very far from the present day. We cannot compare the relationship of ourselves and India with our relationship with any of our Colonies. Things are not comparable. Comparisons cannot be made. I dispute them, because they are not comparable.

I will say a few words about the question of administration. We have had ample evidence that political influence in the Provinces, where that influence has been uncontrolled, has nothing but bad effects. Anyone who knows anything about the social conditions of India—and this is very difficult to say, because one hesitates to convey the impression that one is in any way saying anything derogatory about Indian people—knows that those conditions are antagonistic to good, sound administration. It is not because there is any defect in the Indian and the Oriental character; it is simply and solely—and I disagree entirely with the ballad—that

"East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet."

—because you are dealing with the people whose development is lagging some 500 or 600 years behind the development of this country. It is not their fault. They have not been through the same stages. We are trying to impose upon India conditions suitable to us. We have developed through many generations. We are trying to impose conditions upon a people when the people themselves have not grown up sufficiently to meet those conditions. We have in India, of all countries of the world, the further obstacle of religion and caste. In addition to the great family system, it is plain that you can never get that coherent working and administration that you can get in China or in Siam. In both those countries you have no trouble about religion and about castes. You have not these great social divisions cleaving the whole of the country.

I very much question whether, when once the one independent factor in the whole system is removed—the British factor—it will be possible to get even a workable state of efficiency into the administration of India. I remember not very long ago asking a very eminent British civil servant who was speaking not far from this Chamber in support of the proposals of the Government, what would be the result of the application of these reforms

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in India? Ultimately, he replied, he thought there would be a serious deterioration in the administration of the government of affairs and that industry would be greatly damaged. But he added —I am not quoting his exact words; there are probably hon. Members here who were present at the time—that however bad the condition of affairs might be, he believed that the people of India would like it better, because it would be their own government. That may be true, but it does not relieve us of our responsibilities as trustees for India. Those of us who are parents would think that a pretty poor argument if it were put to us from the nursery that, however bad their conditions up there might be, they were the conditions they would like for themselves, and would we kindly stay outside. I do not think that it is a sound argument or one which anybody occupying the position of trustee ought to use.

In order to obviate all the dangers, which obviously the authors of this Measure anticipate, we are provided with safeguards. Those safeguards are based mainly upon hope. Although the safeguards may be statutory, hope is not, and I fail to see how hope can become a plain fact. The oustanding point about the safeguards is that they all depend upon the personality of a mere handful of men, the Governors in the Provinces and the Governor-General at the Centre. I hope that this country will always produce great men of the type that has been in India before, but even with the greatest, the question to be answered is, with all these safeguards, who is going to safeguard the safeguarder? In the history of this country it has not been uncommon for a man, honourably and bravely doing his duty in the face of dreadful odds, to find himself abandoned by the Government. There are instances which I need not mention. What is to happen suppose an honourable and brave man applies the safeguards which the Act will authorise him to apply, and suppose he is invited to return home as a result of having done his duty? The sudden vision of General Dyer might cut across his eyes when he was thinking about British safeguards. I do not think that it is fair that this heavy and awful responsibility should be placed upon one man's shoulders. Though I am prepared —I think that most of us are prepared— to accept a measure of advance which will give full autonomy in the Provinces, the Government should hesitate very long before they remove from the Central Government that system which will enable them to be drawn in if danger comes. I should like to see some means put into the Bill by which there should be associated with the Govenor-General other men who, if things go wrong, would have to be recalled as well as the Governor-General. The Government might bring one Governor home, but they might hesitate if they had to bring four or five home. I hope the Government will consider the possibility of that situation arising. I remember that Warren Hastings' life was made a misery by Sir Phillip Francis and his friends. The system of having a number of people at headquarters did not work. But we are living in different times, and it is not fair to place such an awful responsibility on one man's shoulders.

A mistake is being made in imagining that the Princes are going to provide a solid weight of Conservative opinion at the Centre. The Princes are doing something far otherwise. Anxious as they will be to retain their position, it is obvious that they know better than we what influence will be exerted upon their States once the Indian politicians get full charge, and it seems to me impossible to imagine that the Princes will not make friends as soon as possible with the people who will to their eyes appear to be their coming masters. I think the Government are making a grave error if they imagine that the Princes will provide any sort of additional safeguard in the interests of a steady government. I do beg that we shall consider well, before we allow this Measure to pass through, the provision of means by which we can maintain the Central Government more surely than this Measure provides.

We are told that India asks for this Bill. I have here a copy of the "Review of India" for November. I believe it is a journal of the European Association, which I understand does not oppose the Government with regard to the Bill. It appears that a certain Colonel Mackay wrote to the "Journal" contesting a statement made by a Mr. Villiers that the people of India wanted the reforms. It is not necessary to read the letter, but I should like to read a portion of

the footnote to the letter, which has been written, I suppose, by the editor of the "Journal":

"We can only say that we agree with every word Colonel Mackay has written. The association's conception of the Indian reforms is not based on any idea that the Indian coolie has any conception of democratic or any other kind of constitutional government."

That is a pretty tough statement coming from people who support the Government.

"On the other hand, we imagine that Mr. Villiers meant to convey that under modern conditions the village has been brought into closer contact with the outside world. The result has been greatly to facilitate the task of the agitator in arousing anti-Government feeling in the villages."

If that be the extent to which the people of India are concerned in desiring these reforms, it does not seem to me to be anything which the Government can feel to be helpful to them. What impresses me most about the attitude of India in regard to these reforms is a reminiscence of the period when the Joint Select Committee were sitting. In a house in Westminster one afternoon three Members of this House were present, and there was also present an Indian gentleman, who was a delegate to the Joint Select Committee. The Indian gentleman spent the greater part of three-quarters of an hour appealing to the three hon. Members of this House to do what they could to oppose the Government's proposals. It was pointed out to him that, however eloquent he might be there that afternoon, what he had been saying in evidence to the Joint Select Committee was exactly the contrary of what he was asking them to do that afternoon. His reply was, "I have to go back to India, and I have to live there." Those were his precise words. It is very difficult for anybody to believe that the people of India really do want these reforms, when something of that sort can happen and has happened very frequently. We all know how frequently it does happen.

Last night one hon. Member said that Warren Hastings had stated that India could be lost on the Floor of this House. It is that danger which we wish to avoid. Some of us feel from the bottom of our hearts that what we are doing now will lead to the loss of India, and we do beg of the Government before they finish with this Measure, to give an opportunity to the country still to maintain its trusteeship, at any rate at the Centre, and to retain power by which we can correct a mistake if it is made. We are not blaming the Indian people if they make mistakes, because they are new to the work. Surely it is better for us, with our long record of efficient and honourable work in India, that we should try to retain, at any rate at the Centre, the means by which we can set the country straight if they go off the rails. I appeal to the Government on those lines and ask them to believe that those of us who are opposing this Measure are doing so because we feel from the bottom of our hearts that they are going too far. All that we ask is for a braking power to be provided, and I trust that the Government will not forget that we are trustees. We took great responsibility with regard to India when we first entered that country 300 years ago, and we have never lost that responsibility. To-day we stand, not as people calculating how much we shall make for Lancashire or anywhere else, but as trustees for the helpless people of India who, whether they know it or not, have their destinies in our hands.

8.8 p.m.

Mr. CHARLES BROWN: The hon. Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Nunn) began with a curious apology for his opposition to the Government's proposals. He sought to justify that opposition because he said that from the official Opposition there was no real attack being made upon the Bill. Therefore, he felt that he ought to reinforce the ranks of those who are opposing the Measure. I do not know what he wanted us to understand precisely by the argument he used with refernce to China. I am certain that he knows a great deal about China, far more than I do, but I do not think he will be able to deny the fact that for very many centuries China had one of the most stable social systems that could be found anywhere in the world. China had an agricultural economy which had produced a state of equilibrium that lasted for many hundreds of years, and it was not until capitalist imperialism impinged upon China and her ancient civilisation that the anarchy that the hon. Member denounces began to make its appearance. It is true that there have been invasions of China in the

[Mr. Brown.]
past, but the invader has invariably been absorbed by the Chinese people in general, and the equilibrium of that agricultural economy, which allowed vast aggregations of populations to develop in that part of the world, was more or less maintained. The disturbance has been caused primarily by imperialistic capitalism impinging upon an ancient regime.

Mr. NUNN: I do not know that it is exactly germane to the question before the House to discuss China, but I would point out that although the long period of peace in China was interrupted by certain incursions from abroad, it is not correct to say that the invaders were always swallowed up. That long period was an intensely imperialistic and tyrannical period. There was no form of democratic government in China until 1911, and it was then that the trouble started.

Mr. BROWN: The hon. Member said that there never had been any democratic form of government in China and that even the events of 1911 did not lead to the establishment o a democratic form of government. The hon. Member was careful to point that out, and he also said that the Government was under the control of what he called a party caucus.

Mr. NUNN: I said that from 1911 to 1924 the Parliament in China did not function because there was anarchy throughout the country. It is only in the last six years that the party caucus has taken charge.

Mr. BROWN: I found it very difficult to understand the relationship between this argument about China and the Bill as I listened to the hon. Member's speech, and I find it more difficult after the two or three interventions he has made. It is very difficult for me now to associate the argument in any way with the Bill. The hon. Member made a remark about the educational system that was established in India by Lord Macaulay, and in commenting upon that event he regretted that it ever took place, intending his hearers to assume that if Lord Macaulay had not initiated that movement India would be much the same to-day as it was in the middle of the last century. That seems to me to be a most absurd argument. It does not matter very much in the long course of events whether Lord Macaulay introduced a system in India of that kind or not. India's contact with the outside world would have had much the same results whether or not the movement had been quite different from that to which the hon. Member referred.

Those who are defending the Government's Bill to-day have had one theme running through the whole of their speeches. In effect they say that the force of circumstances compel us to proceed with the extension of self-government in India, and they describe that force of circumstances as a brutal political consciousness in India. In the second place the supporters of the Bill contend that the Government, faced with those circumstances, have bowed to the inevitable and brought forward the Bill. In my view the Bill grants the minimum that can possibly do anything at all to conciliate opinion in India. The right hon. and learned Member for Ross and Cromarty (Mr. Macpherson) made an attack on the Labour party, because he said we were not out to create good will. He said that our speeches were calculated to make a bad atmosphere. If that be the result of our concentrating attention on the social and economic conditions of the people in India, if it creates a bad atmosphere, we cannot help it because it is the primary concern of hon. Members on these benches.

Many of my colleagues think that we are going to devote far too much time to the subject of India in the House during the next two or three months and that we might be spending some of our time in dealing with urgent political problems at home. I confess that in many ways the subject of India and the future of India fascinates me. Let me say how entertaining to me are the dissensions in the Tory party. I hope that as a result of these dissensions Indians will derive some benefit. I am not quite certain about that, although in my heart I hope they will. We have already reaped the first fruits of these differences, and if they can be intensified and deepened there is going to come to us greater advantages still. If advantages come to us through these differences in the Tory party, then I hope we shall be able to confer some advantages on the people of

India. But I am not so foolish as to believe that the Conservative party as a whole will seriously imperil their political future by continuing the curious quarrel which has developed in their ranks. When they feel the moment has arrived when their political prestige and property and financial interests are threatened they will join hands right enough, they will unite quickly, and the dissensions will entirely disappear.

I have listened to many speeches on the question of India with great interest, and only once during the five years I have been in the House have I ventured to take part in a Debate on India, and that was in order to call attention to some matters which were found in the report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India. The hon. Member for Ince (Mr. G. Macdonald) has called attention to the more important facts to be found in that publication, and therefore I am not going into any details. I ask myself one question in connection with the Bill. Everyone will agree that the machinery of government in India, I mean the machinery which has existed up to date, has not made as great a contribution as it should have done to the improvement of the lot of the great masses of the Indian people. There may be various reasons for this. I am not unwilling to admit that irrgitation schemes and the development of transport in its various forms has perhaps eliminated the possibility of famine which was once so frequent in India. But when I ask myself the question whether the machinery of government in India has done all that it could have done for the benefit of the great masses of the Indian people, I am compelled to answer the question in the negative.

Further, can the machinery of Government in any country be used to improve the economic conditions of the people? We believe it can, and there are many countries where the machinery of Government has been used and is being used for this purpose. The hon. Member for Eastbourne (Mr. Slater) said he regarded the Indian question as a constitutional one, that others regarded it as a political one, and others as an economic one. It may be useful on occasions and as a matter of convenience to split the matter up in that way in order to help us to clarify our thoughts, but really there is no distinction between these two things. Constitution, politics and economics are closely related. When I ask whether the machinery of Government in India has been used to lift the great masses of the Indian people, to improve their economic conditions, and have to answer it in the negative, I then asked myself is the Bill which we are now considering likely to set up government machinery which will enable the people to lift themselves out of the poverty and misery in which millions of them are placed to-day. Is the Bill likely to establish a constitutional system in which political parties can freely function in such an effective way as to use the machinery to improve their economic and social condition? What is wanted is a constitution which will give complete political freedom to alter the economic foundations of India, if that is necessary, in the interests of the poverty stricken millions of that country. I ask whether the Bill will give to India such a constitution, and I am bound to answer that I do not think it will. Within the framework of the proposals I do not think it will be possible for the Indian people to do what I should like to see them do.

The hon. Member for Eastbourne in his speech expressed some fears about the industrial development in India. India is now the seventh industrial nation in the world and the process of industrialisation is likely to go on. It is curious to listen to the speeches of hon. Members who are now afraid of the capitalism which they themselves have created in these so-called backward countries. They are really responsible for the industrialisation of India. The thing which they have called into being now fills them with fear and anxiety, and they are wondering what is going to happen in the future. Look at the process which has gone on. You could not go on sending cotton frocks from Lancashire to India indefinitely without the Indian people asking themselves at some stage whether they could not make cotton cloth for themselves. It is a question which they were bound to ask. It inevitably follows that they would answer the question "Yes we can, there is the labour here." Then the question arose, Can we get the machinery, and again they understood that they could get the machinery easily from the country which made it. The manufacturers of cotton machinery did

[Mr. Brown.]

not hesitate to send cotton manufacturing machinery to India. And when the Indians saw the machines they put a further question—and British capital is ready all the time to assist in this process.

Much of the opposition to the Bill comes from the fact that a very large amount of British capital is invested in India. Indians were bound to ask, "Can we make this cotton machinery for ourselves?" The answer again is "yes." And then they sent for the geologists who examined the strata and said, "There you will find coal; there you will find iron." And so they dig their coal, smelt their iron for their machinery and manufacture cotton goods. And now you complain of the menace to your industry of the very thing that you yourselves have helped to create in that great country. In spite of all the propaganda carried on by Mr. Gandhi, I am rather inclined to fear that the future of India is in the hands of the engineer with his leather jacket and not in the hands of Mr. Gandhi with his spinning wheel. It may be that in the long run that will result in benefits to the great mass of the people in India. But the benefits are slow in coming. Therefore, when I consider this Bill I ask myself, is it likely that the governmental machinery set up by this Bill will expedite the process by which it will be possible for the masses of the Indian people to raise themselves to a higher level of social conditions?

I see in this Bill a great menace to the future of India. Rather than being something helpful to the masses of the people I think it is calculated in some ways to injure them. What is it really, when you come to examine it closely? The right hon. Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) and his friends say, "You should have nothing to do with the extension of self-government in India. Let the British Government keep the upper hand. These people are not fit for self-government. Let them be ruled with an iron hand from Great Britain." The hon. Member for Finchley (Mr. Cadogan) shakes his head. He may dissent from the phraseology that I am giving; he may think it far too strong. But that is the effect of the words being used by the right hon. Member for Epping and his friends.

I have no illusions at all about Indian Nationalism. I do not want to be mistaken or misunderstood. I think the Indian Nationalist, the Bombay millowners, are quite as likely as the English capitalists ruthlessly to exploit the Indians. I do not think that the Indian Nationalist movement is Socialistic or Labour, for it is nothing of the kind. The right hon. Member for Epping says: "Push them out of the picture and keep control yourselves." The Government are more subtle than that. They say: "Oh, no, do not keep them out of the picture. Let us have co-operation with the Indian capitalists." That is really the basis of this Bill. It is meant to cement co-operation between the British exploiter, the Indian capitalist and the Indian Princes, who between them hold in subjection the mass of the Indian people, and there is no real intention to give a form of government or set up a machine of government through which the Indian masses will be able to liberate themselves. For my part I shall have no hesitation at all in voting against the Bill when the time comes.

8.29 p.m.

Colonel GOODMAN: I have listened to the Indian Debates in this House during December and on the two days of this month, and up to now I have not heard any right hon. or hon. Member lift up his voice on behalf of the people in India who have very few to speak for them and yet represent by far the largest population of that great Continent. I speak now for the Untouchables.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: They are not now called the Untouchables.

Colonel GOODMAN: Up till now I have scarcely heard the name mentioned. I know they are now called the scheduled caste. I prefer to call them the Untouchables, because during my experience of 18 to 19 years in India I mixed a great deal with them and I know quite a lot about them, perhaps as much as any European in England to-day. It is on their behalf that I am going to ask a few questions of the Government. Let me say first that the Secretary of State seems to be rather in a hurry about this Bill. He is trying to hustle this immense Measure, the most bulky that has ever been presented to Parliament, according to the Press. What are his reasons for the tremendous hurry? What does he give as a reason for wanting this done

so quickly. The first reason is undoubtedly that the opposition to these proposals has already gone too far. This view was expressed before the provisions of the Bill were made public and before Members of Parliament were made acquainted with the legislative proposals of the right hon. Gentleman. He says now that Members of this House should not discuss at any great length that which, at that time they had not been permitted even to see. I do not want to say too much on the point, but I think that even a Secretary of State might learn something from his leader about the principles of democratic constitutional government.

Why are we commanded to expedite this Measure with the terms of which we were scarcely acquainted 10 days ago, and in regard to the interpretation and the operation of the most important provisions of which we have no information whatever until a provisional draft instrument is presented to this House, and that will not be for a few days? Why? Because, according to the right hon. Gentleman's statement, in the view of the Viceroy and of the other Governors of India the changes in the Government of India to which the Bill will give effect are already long overdue. I make no observations on the propriety of bringing into the region of political controversy eminent men whose public and official responsibilities and duties place them outside the field of political criticism and discussion. It seems to me to be regrettable that a Mnister should find it necessary to look for support for his case by reference to those who hold official positions. In any event, whatever may be their view, the House of Commons is still entitled to discuss Measures which are brought before it.

The Secretary of State has a further reason for intimating that this House should pass his Measure almost *sub silentio*. Why, he says, should both Houses be asked to sacrifice for this Bill time that might be better spent in the discussion of domestic affairs? My right hon. Friend, a good Conservative as we admit him to be, has quite failed to assimilate the observation of a Conservative leader who said in another place:

"The majority and sovereignty, the spirit and vigour of your Parliament, the inexhaustible resources, the ingenuity and determination of your people—these are the keys to India."

I prefer to believe that the key to the solution of Indian problems is still in Parliament. For that reason I respectfully decline to accede to the edict of the Secretary of State that we should give only a hasty consideration to his Bill, so that, in his own words, we may grapple with the questions of work, wages, housing and taxation that affect so closely every British citizen. I am not prepared to admit that this question of India does not closely affect every British citizen. The suggestion of the Secretary of State that the British citizen should treat this problem as one which concerns only the experts and the men of affairs is not only misleading but dangerous. This Bill is full of provisions which put the ultimate responsibility for good government in India, even after it becomes an Act, upon Parliament. Should it become an Act and fail, as I honestly believe it will, Parliament and the British citizen will have to bear the responsibility of dealing with the chaos which will then inevitably ensue—not that great array of experts and men of affairs by whom the Secretary of State says we must now be guided.

The right hon. Gentleman's attitude to those of us who feel our responsibilities in this matter is to denounce us as wasting the time of Parliament. I sincerely trust that the Brahmins of the Treasury Bench will accept the humble disclaimer of those of us who are considered the untouchables of the back benches, that we are not actuated otherwise than by a sincere desire for the welfare of and a sense of duty towards the tens of millions of lower caste Indians, who are being condemned by this Bill to life-long political servitude to the higher castes. I do not know a single Clause in the Bill which brings a ray of hope of material or economic advancement or improvement to these toiling millions whose welfare is declared to be constantly in the minds of the Government. I ask hon. Members whether throughout this Bill of over 400 Clauses they can find more than one reference to the untouchables or the scheduled classes as they are named. On the contrary, if this Bill passes in its present form, the stranglehold of the Brahmins will be tightened round the throats of millions of the lower castes in India.

[Colonel Goodman.]

The Secretary of State loudly praises the provisions of the Bill relating to the untouchables, for whom, he rightly says, he has sincere sympathy. The untouchables could, I think, dispense with quite a lot of his sympathy in exchange for a little appreciation of the realities of their existence. He calls the evidence of Dr. Ambedkar as to the view of the masses of the people on their future prospects under this Measure. The right hon. Gentleman has not been very fortunate in his selection of a witness. What Dr. Ambedkar thinks of the prospects of the Depressed Classes is not exactly what the Secretary of State leads his audiences to believe. I quote an extract from a speech which Dr. Ambedkar made three weeks ago to-day:

"The Depressed Classes have been unjustly treated by the Select Committee in the changes made in the representation in the Provincial Second Chambers and in the Upper Chamber of the Federal Assembly."

Hon. Members will note that the untouchables or the Depressed Classes or the scheduled classes—whatever you like to call them—have no representation on the Council of State. He continues:

"The interests of the Depressed Classes have been flagrantly neglected and therefore it will not be possible for them to give their support to the present scheme."

He goes on to hope that the Government will modify the proposal, but that, I understand, the Government have no intention of doing. They bring forward this great array of experts and men of affairs and say: "This is the road recommended by those who are best qualified to know. Follow it blindly for there has never been a greater weight of experience behind any proposal or constitutional reform. There is no need for you to understand this huge and difficult problem. Leave it to us and the experts." Notwithstanding the views, for instance, of Dr. Ambedkar the Secretary of State praises the Bill for its recognition of the Depressed Classes, and tells us that under it, for the first time, they will have an effective voice in politics. Under the Bill the Depressed Classes will be represented by something like 10 per cent. in the legislative assemblies of the Provinces. The right hon. Gentleman, therefore, calls 10 per cent. an effective representation. All I can say is that he must know very little of the Depressed Classes and their relation to caste in the whole of India.

I recollect listening to the right hon. Gentleman's contribution to the broadcasting discussion on this Bill. He then ruled entirely out of consideration the opposition to the Bill in Parliament, as being unworthy of thought, because in the Division, only 25 per cent. voted against it, or rather 20 per cent. in the House of Commons and 25 per cent. in the other place. I fear the right hon. Gentleman has two definitions of what constitutes an effective voice in politics. He seems to be satisfied with 10 per cent. for the Depressed Classes in India, but he wants quite another ratio for this Parliament, where an opinion represented by 20 per cent. or 25 per cent. is regarded by him as so ineffective as not to be worthy of a moment's consideration. I, as one of the 20 per cent. minority here, genuinely question the effectiveness of the 10 per cent. minority in the case of the Depressed Classes in the Provincial Legislatures.

In our public life majorities have a habit of shrinking into minorities, and minorities of gaining in strength until they become majorities. The majority, therefore, refrain from exercising their strength unjustifiably or tyrannically against the minority, for fear of what may happen to them when their victims for the time being, eventually become a majority. Therefore, there is a spirit of compromise and in a rough and ready way justice is done as between contending policies. But in India no such transformation is possible. In India the Depressed Classes were Depressed Classes thousands of years ago and will still be Depressed Classes thousands of years hence. The differences are not political. They are religious. They do not depend on the chance of the ballot. They are governed by the principles of a strong and strict religious belief. The Depressed Classes can never ascend to a full and free political life as long as the principle upon which the Hindu religion is founded continues to obtain. Any idea that a candidate of the Depressed Classes will obtain the support of other castes is futile. It is not possible in the religion of the Hindus.

The hon. Member for Mansfield (Mr. C. Brown) said that the Constitution might, though he did not think it would, give

complete political freedom. Under the caste system it would be absolutely impossible. The Depressed Classes alone represent between 50,000,000 and 60,000,000 of the population of India. There are four great castes in India. There are the Brahmins, the Kshatrya and the Vaishya who are all styled "twice born." Then there are the Sudras who are regarded as only "once born," and no matter to what part the Sudra goes or to what sub-caste he belongs, he is always beneath and the servant of the three superior castes.

Mr. C. BROWN: Although I agree with the hon. and gallant Member that the caste system is a powerful factor, resting as it does on religious sanctions, in my view it really has an economic basis as well. May I put this to the hon. and gallant Member—does it not break down where industrialism has been established in India?

Colonel GOODMAN: I am not aware that it has broken down where industrial systems have been established, except to this extent that members of different castes may mix together there as they would not do elsewhere in the country. But it is a fact that although members of the higher castes may mix together they do not mix with the untouchables, and it is for the untouchables that I am speaking. There are from 50,000,000 to 60,000,000 of them, and it is impossible for them, under any Constitution, to have complete political freedom. In addition to the position of not being twice born, they are, and have been for thousands of years, the servants of the three senior castes. The depressed castes in the Legislative Assemblies in the Provinces are, under the Bill, condemned to a permanent minority of 10 per cent. What consideration does this House think they are ever likely to receive at the hands of the majority? In what way can their voice ever be heard in politics? The contention of the Secretary of State is really impossible and will not bear examination.

I notice that the Secretary of State made no claim that the Bill gave a voice, effective or otherwise, to the Depressed Classes in any of the Federal politics. I recognise his caution, but up till now I have heard no explanation or defence of the omission. Surely, if it be such a strong recommendation of the Government's scheme that the Depressed Classes should have an effective voice in Provincial politics, it would have been an even stronger recommendation for the Measure if those depressed and toiling masses were represented in Federal politics. But they are not, and they never will be. They have 19 out of 375 seats in the Federal Assembly—just 5 per cent.—and so far as I can forecast, knowing India, but not setting up as an authority in any way, not one of them will ever even get a sight of the seats in the Council of State. The lot of the untouchables, and even of the Sudra, politically in India is quite impossible and will never count.

In conclusion, I would like to say a word to the Secretary of State for India. He tells us—and I recognise his frankness—that the plan which he has brought forward has been received with a chorus of disapproval in India. He said there was bound to be an outburst of criticism, but the reason that he advances needs attention. The disapproval is expressed, he says, because no Indian public man can afford to be wholly satisfied with any scheme that contains safeguards or reservations, and that is only too true. I could not and I do not think anyone who has any connection with this opposition could advance any more convincing argument against it than can be deduced from that admission. So far as I can see from this amazingly frank utterance by the Secretary of State, it follows, first, that no Indian public man upon whom falls the responsibility for the working of this Bill has sufficient courage to face criticism, and, secondly, that no scheme that contains reservations and safeguards will ever satisfy those to whom the responsibilities for the good government of India are entrusted if this Bill becomes law. This is the type of politician to whom the Secretary of State and the Government are asking this House to entrust the destinies of a fifth of the whole world. These people really represent at least 66 per cent. of the whole of the population of India—there are from 50,000,000 to 60,000,000 Untouchables, and the balance is made up of the Sudras, the lowest of the four great classes—and I say emphatically that unless something is done for these people, this is not a Bill for India, but a Bill for Brahmins, and as such I could never bring it over myself to vote for the Government's policy.

8.50 p.m.

Mr. HAMMERSLEY: To-day we have heard a number of sincere and skilful speeches which have ranged over the whole sphere of the purpose of this Bill. I make no apology for the fact—and it will probably be a relief to you, Mr. Deputy-Speaker—that I shall not emulate those speeches. I hope to restrict my observations to the effect that the Bill may have on the close trade relationship between Lancashire and India, and I hope by that restriction and by my brevity to add a little extra weight to what I have to say. The Bill, impressive in its scope and affecting the conditions of hundreds of millions of His Majesty's subjects, a Bill resulting from many years of examination, study, and deliberation of the problem, is in principle simple. It seeks to make a great step forward along the road which will give the people of India their own self-government.

The first point that I want to make, speaking as a Lancashire representative, is that Lancashire has no hostility to that aim. The people of Lancashire, possessed themselves, as they are, of the utmost political freedom, do not consider that political freedom is something which should be reserved for a select few. They look upon it as a principle desirable in itself, a principle which is inherent in true democracy, and a principle which, if the British Empire is to remain, must form part and parcel of the common foundation of that Empire. In my view, the vast majority of the people of Lancashire regard the political aspirations of the Indian people as legitimate. They look upon the proposals in this Bill—to set up Provincial Parliaments, with an over-riding Central Administration of an all-India character—as far as it is possible for them to understand these proposals, as proposals of a comprehensive character which are designed to provide an outlet for those aspirations and at the same time to maintain the unity of India.

Lancashire, however, has a more direct interest than the mere theoretical consideration of a Constitution. There was a time when over 3,000,000,000 yards of cotton cloth left British shores in one year for India. Now there are less than 500,000,000 yards sent out there in the average year, but in spite of that catastrophic decline, India is still to Lancashire a valuable customer. Hundreds of thousands of British citizens depend for their livelihood on the maintenance of that valuable trade link, and they want to know: Is there anything in this proposed new Constitution which of itself is harmful to the trade of Lancashire and India? Will the passing of this Bill mean to them more unemployment? Will it add to the burden of an already overburdened county? The answer I give—and I give it to the best of my ability, after using such judgment as I possess—is that there is nothing in the proposals themselves which could automatically injure British trade. There is nothing that could add to the already grievous burden of employment in the County Palatine. In fact, the proposals themselves contain the germ of something which, if it could be brought to fruition—and that something is whole-hearted co-operation—would extend Indo-British trade.

It is worth while considering on what grounds British trade with India depends now and on what grounds it will depend when the Bill becomes law. Surely in the final analysis all trade depends upon the mutual benefit of those people who are engaged in it. It must be obvious that unless a transaction is considered to be favourable a trader will not enter upon it. The results of passing this legislation, if it leads to the growth of reciprocal trading interests between representatives of India and Lancashire, will be that Indo-British trade will grow. If, on the other hand, the steps which are now to be taken result in the new legislatures endeavouring to make British trade unprofitable by their subverting their power to anti-British aims, a further diminution of Indo-British trade is inevitable. It is clear that it is not in the giving of the new Constitution that the danger to Lancashire trade arises; it is in the working of the new Constitution. Surely we are entitled to expect that with the greater good will which the new Constitution should provide, we shall get better trade; certainly, we shall not get the repercussions of the situation which would result if we were to hold back from the Indian people the expectations which we have held out to them.

The hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) made refer-

ence to the fact that we had never used force in India since 1857. That is true. We have never conquered India. The danger is that if we do not take some step forward we may be faced with the problem of having to conquer India, and, whatever might be the result, we should not get much extra trade from a policy which would mean the military forces taking command of the whole situation. The Lancashire delegation which went to India 18 months ago learned there practically what they had been told before, namely, that politically-minded India is extremely suspicious of Lancashire. There is a belief among the politically-minded Indians that in some way Lancashire exercises a great political influence in this House, and that through that influence the wheels of government in India are caused to revolve to the benefit of Lancashire trade. There is no basis to that belief, but in days long past there was. When the original 3½ per cent. duty was put on Lancashire imported cotton goods, a supplementary excise duty was put on, and it was felt that things were done in this House to try and retain for Lancashire the benefit of the Indian market, quite apart from the consideration of the welfare of the Indian people.

One of the disadvantages from which Lancashire trade suffers to-day is that it has to labour against that atmosphere of suspicion. One of the results of the trade mission was to assuage that feeling. It did not do away with it, but I think that it mollified it. Certainly, as the result of the labours of the mission there was an atmosphere of toleration, if not of complete confidence. But the background of suspicion still remained. We in Lancashire made great efforts to remove that suspicious atmosphere. We have now induced the Lancashire cotton manufacturers to use greater quantities of Indian cotton. We have provided through the influence of the Government openings for Indian cotton manufactured goods in British Empire markets. These are real and substantial advantages, which have been given to India by the people of Lancashire in an effort to do away with the feeling of suspicion and to bring into existence a feeling of good will.

It was, therefore, with great disappointment that the people of Lancashire learned that the recently concluded Indo-British Trade Agreement failed to find approval in the Legislative Assembly. They felt that this failure to approve a principle which harmed no Indian interest, and which gave benefit to many, was the result of unfounded suspicions. I should be lacking in candour if I did not say that the first result of that information was a feeling of great resentment that so slight a recognition of the common interests of India and Lancashire failed to find acceptance. It is a difficult matter for two commercial communities, separated as they are by thousands of miles, to understand each other's minds.

The Lancashire people still feel that the good will which they are desirous of maintaining, on which they built up so much hope, and for which they have been prepared to make substantial sacrifices, must be continued. I believe I am correctly expressing the opinion of the county and of those concerned in the trade when I say that on reflection they hope that they are wrong in their interpretation of this rejection of approval, namely, that it rests, not on the merits on the proposal itself, but on the assumption that in some way the Government of India have affronted Indian commercial opinion. To sum up, Lancashire is disappointed but is not dismayed, and, in spite of the definite rebuff which failure to approve this Indo-British Trade Agreement has caused, Lancashire is determined not to abate by one whit the policy of good will and co-operation. Lancashire wants a friendly India; she wants a contented and prosperous population in India; and she welcomes every step which will advance India along the road of representative self-government. Lancashire's good wishes in that respect are not confined to her commercial community. I believe that they are shared by her political representatives, and it will be found, when the Division is taken on Monday, that in deed as well as in words Lancashire, commercially and politically, is carrying out her policy of good will.

9.4 p.m.

Sir WILLIAM DAVISON: The hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Hammersley) dealt with this Bill from the point of view of its effect on Lancashire trade. He said it was not on the new Constitution itself, but on the working of the Constitution, that Lancashire's trade depends. It is

[Sir W. Davison.]

to that point that I will address my remarks. Neither in the speech of the Secretary of State yesterday, nor in any speech on behalf of the Government in the three days' discussion in this House and the four days' discussion in another place of the Government's proposals for Indian constitutional reform, was any reference made to a basic and fundamental paragraph which appears on page 15 of the introduction to what is known as the White Paper proposals. I think that is very remarkable, as the paragraph lays down a primary condition without which the proposals for constitutional reform in India are valueless and could not be proceeded with. The paragraph says:

"The present proposals in general necessarily proceed on the basic assumption that every endeavour will be made by those responsible for working the Constitution"—

that is the point raised by the hon. Member for Stockport just now—

"to approach the administrative problems which will present themselves in the spirit of partnership in a common enterprise."

Though I cannot trace that those words exactly have appeared in the report of the Joint Select Committee, I cannot believe that if they had disagreed with what is described there as a basic assumption they would not have stated their reasons for such disagreement. Indeed, I think the contrary is the fact, because the Secretary of State yesterday referred to a paragraph in the Joint Select Committee's report which says that the Constitution will depend far more upon the manner and spirit in which it is worked than upon its formal provisions, and a member of the Joint Select Committee, the hon. Member for Bodmin (Mr. Isaac Foot), now signifies his assent to that. Therefore, I think I am right in saying that a spirit of partnership in a common enterprise is the foundation upon which the whole proposals for Indian constitutional reform are based. So far as I am aware, nothing has altered that fundamental assumption since it was first written in the introduction to the White Paper report, and the assent which has just been given to it by a member of the Joint Select Committee shows that it is still applicable.

The hon. Member for Limehouse (Mr. Attlee), in his recent broadcast speech on behalf of the Socialist party, said, rightly, that in giving a Second Reading to the Bill the questions which the House would have to decide were: (1) Will these reforms be accepted and worked by Indian politicians? And (2) Will they make for the happiness of the Indian people, numbering in all some 340,000,000 or 350,000,000? I accept that statement as expressing the duty which falls upon the House of Commons. Therefore, it is necessary for us to decide whether the Bill will commend itself to politically-minded people in India who have to work it. If politically-minded Indians are not prepared to work it, or will only work it in order to secure complete independence, and throw off all connection with this country, how can it be possible for the great masses of India, to whose happiness the hon. Member for Limehouse referred, to be better governed and in a better position than they are to-day? If it is not worked by them in the spirit of partnership, Great Britain will have deprived herself of the power to implement the first and most important of all pledges, that given by Queen Victoria, which was referred to by the hon. Member for Chertsey (Sir A. Boyd-Carpenter) so eloquently in his speech to-day:

"To administer the Government of the country for the benefit of all our people resident therein."

We have to make up our minds whether this Bill will or will not be accepted by the politically-minded classes of India. In what I have to say to the House to-night I am going to give them facts and not hopes. All the Government's case, so far as I have been able to understand it, is based upon hopes, and those are far too flimsy things upon which to base a great constitutional change affecting not only this country but the world. We cannot afford to base a great "international change," I will say, on hopes. Let us deal with facts. First, let us consider the politically-minded people in India. There has recently been an election and Congress has swept the board. I believe that with the exception of two seats Congress has won every single seat which that party contested. I would remind the House of the Congress party manifesto. Not only did they reject the White Paper proposals but they definitely stated that they would accept no Constitution that did not provide for complete independence. They

said that before they could accept an Indian Constitution it must provide that Indians should have full control of the Army, the police and finance, and that at such time as they obtained power they would repudiate the National Debt of India—money borrowed by Great Britain on behalf of India—and would then proceed to exclude from India all foreign, and especially British, goods. That is the policy of Congress, and they are the people who have swept the political board in India. In all earnestness I say to the House, "Is it not an amazing thing to give a Constitution which will either not be accepted at all by these people or, if they do accept it, will only be used to secure the complete sweeping away of all connection between this country and India?" If hon. Members think my statement goes a little too far I will quote one sentence from another broadcase address, which we heard a few days ago, from the Reverend Mr. Andrews. He is a university professor in India, well known to all parties in India and also an author of some repute. I took it down during his address:

"Congress representatives have everywhere swept the polls. They fought the election on the one issue of the rejection of the White Paper, which meant, of course, the rejection of the report. Therefore, there can be no doubt whatever concerning the feeling of the country. If there were a new election to-morrow on the question of the report every seat which was not earmarked as a special or communal seat would return an adverse verdict. . . . If Mr. Baldwin is right, as I think he is, in saying that the one safeguard needed is good will, then the absence of good will must surely lead to disaster."

So much for Congress. But the Secretary of State—and he says he speaks for the Government—says, "Oh, that is Congress; they are a party of extremists; we rely on the great middle classes of politically-minded India. We rely on the Liberal opinion of India." I will give the House facts, I will not give hopes. What is Indian Liberal opinion? A conference has just been held at Poona of the National Liberal Federation of India, at which they discussed the Joint Select Committee's Report at length. After this discussion, the right hon. V. S. Sastri, a man of great repute in India, a Privy Councillor of this country, a Companion of Honour and an LL.D., and Sir Chimaanial Setalvad, the barrister——

Mr. HOLFORD KNIGHT: And an ex-Minister——

Sir W. DAVISON: And a great many other appointments, as my hon. and learned Friend reminds me—those two gentlemen of high repute in India, representing the middle classes and the great Liberal party in India, who, we are told, really want these reforms moved a resolution. If the House will forgive me for a moment, I will quote the resolution, which was carried unanimously only a week or two ago. It was:

"The National Liberal Federation of India records its profound regret at finding that the Select Committee's report, instead of removing the glaring defects and shortcomings of the White Paper proposals pointed out by the Federation at its two previous sessions, has in utter disregard of almost the entire body of Indian opinion of all shades, including the British Indian delegation to the Joint Select Committee, introduced further highly objectionable reactionary features rendering responsible government in the Provinces and at the Centre, which the British Government profess to give India, wholly illusory."

It goes on:

"The Federation are convinced that any Constitution based on the lines of the Select Committee's report will be wholly unacceptable to all shades of Indian political opinion, and will, far from allaying, very much intensify the present deep political discontent in the country. The Federation, therefore, does not want any legislation based on the Select Committee's report"

That is the Resolution which was passed, and the "Times" of 31st December, in referring to it, says that Mr. Sastri, in moving the Resolution, said

"it depicted the general feeling of the Federation. It was impossible to contemplate with peace the enactment of the Constitution proposed in the Select Committee's report."

Then, referring to what Mr. Baldwin had said here, in the Indian Debate, it proceeds to say that Mr. Sastri said

"the Government of India and the Provincial Governments had assured the British Government that the new Constitution was not only workable, but that the people were ready to work it. So far as he (Mr. Sastri) could see, the Government would not be able to get the people to work the Constitution with contentment. There would be a continual wrangle between the people and the Government. It might be worked, but there would be no peace in the land, nor peace between India and England. Bitterness would increase. He agreed with Mr. Churchill, although in a different sense, that the new Constitution was unsuited to India, and would again plunge the country into agitation."

[Sir W. Davison.]

Remember the thesis which I am bringing forward. On this question of the working of the Constitution and partnership in a common enterprise, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, seconding the resolution, said, according to the "Times":

"He thought the Constitution would be worked with the object of forcing the pace and creating situations which would make it difficult to work the Constitution."

So much for that. Then we have the Servants of India Society, another society of very moderate people, passing this resolution a week or two ago:

"The Servants of India Society is constrained to record its considered opinion that the scheme embodied in the report is wholly unacceptable and that, on the whole, it will be better to remain under the present Constitution than to have the new one."

We are told that India will be furious if it retains its present Constitution, but those people say they would prefer to remain under it rather than have a new one. Secondly, they say:

"If the proposed Constitution is imposed on the country in spite of the protests of the progressive schools of political opinion, it is bound to promote communal and racial strife, to concentrate the energies of the principal political parties on a struggle for constitutional changes to the detriment of internal consolidation and economic and social betterment, and to embitter further the relations between England and India."

Those are exactly the points that we have urged. We say that this is not the end, but only the beginning of a bitter constitutional struggle that will for years stop the betterment of those great masses of India whose fate appeals to every section of this House.

Taking another section of India which has already been referred to—the Federation of the Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. They had a meeting, and they said that the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee were

"entirely unacceptable to the Indian mercantile community as a satisfactory basis for this country's march towards the goal of complete political responsibility."

That is the mercantile community. I need only remind the House of the three or four recent votes of the Legislative Assembly, showing the spirit of partnership when they turned down first of all the India-British Trade Agreement and, on the previous day, by 73 votes to 46, passed a resolution demanding that the Government should remove the ban on the Red Shirts. The hon. Baronet the Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) pointed out in his speech to-day that a telegram had only just come to hand saying that the Assembly had carried an Amendment declaring the Federation plan to be fundamentally bad and totally unacceptable. I have only to add that the distressed classes, about which an hon. Member referred in such eloquent terms, have also passed a resolution indicating that they receive practically no protection under the Bill, and that they cannot support the present scheme.

Mr. ISAAC FOOT: Are they the terms of the resolution?

Sir W. DAVISON: No. I am only speaking generally, because I have not the terms of the actual resolution. The other resolutions are verbatim as to their terms, but I have not the actual terms of the depressed classes resolution. Anyway, they have turned down the scheme as not being satisfactory.

Mr. FOOT: I think the position is that the depressed classes are not complaining in the slightest, in so far as the Provincial Parliaments are concerned—the ordinary lower Houses and the Central lower House. Their complaint is actually directed to the fact that in the upper Houses in the provinces and in the Centre they have no substantial representation. That is all.

Sir W. DAVISON: I accept that. All the other resolutions I gave were verbatim as to chapter and verse. I have reason to believe that the depressed classes were not generally in favour of the scheme. Anyway, they are not in favour of the provisions for the Federal Assembly and the Upper Chamber of Parliament. The scheme is not satisfactory to them; I put it no higher than that. I have been through every section of Indian society so far as I know, and there is not one of them which will have anything to do with the scheme. They say that it will cause unrest, that it will mean bitterness and that urgently needed reforms will be put off indefinitely. Lord Halifax, speaking a few weeks ago at Bedford, said that he went out to India as Viceroy with one principal purpose, and that was to retain India prosperous and contented within

the British Empire. It is rather funny that this Viceroy's idea was to keep India contented, while the late Mr. Montagu's idea was to arouse them from their apathetic contentment. It is certainly pathetic that the furious discontent to which I have just alluded, should have been the result of the reforms which were so urgently recommended by Lord Halifax. I have a great deal of sympathy with the views expressed by the Indian intelligentsia to which I have just alluded. They understood autocracy with advisory councils, such as we have had in India and, although they would have liked to have been the autocrats themselves, without grumbling a great deal they accepted the existing regime. When they were told by British politicians that they were to have democratic government, something on the lines of the British Dominions, and then they found that they were to have a scheme with all these safeguards, and were further told that the British intend to enforce them, they naturally are angry and they say, "This is a sham." I am bound to say that I have a great deal of sympathy with them. In any event, to return to my main theme, there is no evidence anywhere of political India showing any desire for co-operation in the government of India with Great Britain. I am simply dumbfounded by the statement made yesterday by the Secretary of State when he said: "Nothing has happened since I spoke in December to alter my view that this Bill will be worked by all classes in India"—I suppose as partners in a common enterprise. "We can never expect," he said, "to get more agreement in India for any scheme than for this scheme." All I can say is that if we cannot get more agreement than that, we had better govern India as we have governed her in the past, with a very considerable measure of success.

I submit that I have shown the House that the basic assumption of partnership in a common enterprise must be abandoned. There is no evidence, and no possible ground for saying, that the electors of India will administer the reforms on that basis. The only course therefore open to us, is, as was stated by the hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth, that we must force this Constitution on an unwilling India, while we have a National Government in power. The reason which is urged for that is that, owing to the ebb and flow of British politics, we may have a Socialist Government in power presently and they may do something far worse. They may remove all the safeguards and give a fixed term for the achievement of full Dominion status, under the Statute of Westminster.

Then it is said that we must remove India from British party politics. But will the passing of this Bill remove India from British party politics? Of course it will not. It will exacerbate the matter, not only in India but in this country. It will make this a bone of contention not only in India but in this country. The Socialist party have given notice of their intention to amend the proposed Constitution as soon as they obtain office by abolishing all safeguards and fixing a definite and unconditional time-limit for the giving of full Dominion status to India. How can it be said then that this Bill will remove the question from politics either here or in India?

If this Bill be passed now the path of a Socialist Government of the future is made plain and easy. Only a few simple Amendments of this colossal Bill will be required in order to do away with the Safeguards and to fix a time limit for the achievement of full Dominion status. That will be the end of our long and honourable partnership in the government of India. If that comes about, then indeed may Great Britain hang her head in shame at her cowardly abandonment of the first and most solemn pledge given by Queen Victoria to all the peoples of India, the pledge to see justice done to them all, whether Moslem or Hindu, Untouchable or Brahmin. The right hon. Member for Darwen (Sir H. Samuel), in an unguarded moment yesterday, said something that fully justified our whole case with regard to the Bill. These are the words, and the House will remember that I said "Hear, hear!" very loudly, as a result of which I have the honour of having my short speech recorded in the OFFICIAL REPORT. The right hon. Member said:

> "The long experience of the British Empire shows that these constitutional developments must proceed step by step, and that each step must be tested by its results."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 6th February, 1935; col. 1196, Vol. 297.]

Is not that our whole case? We say we have grave misgivings about all this

[Sir W. Davison.]
talk by Viceroys and Prime Ministers, talk at conferences, talk here and talk there. Let India, we say, get on with the Provincial Assemblies. There are grave doubts here whether that will be for the benefit of the people of India, but let them try it. If we are still in control at the Centre, we can put matters right if necessary. That is our whole case. When we venture to question the wisdom or the safety of this new experiment in Federation, all at once and not step by step as recommended by the right hon. Member for Darwen, and as laid down in the Preamble of the Government of India Act, 1919—with both of which I agree—it is said: "Who are you to question the wisdom of the opinion of the majority of the Select Committee, composed of men of such eminence and distinction as ex-Viceroys like Lord Reading and Lord Halifax and others?" I am not saying a word against their eminence, but I say that we all have our constituents to represent, and we are trustees in this great matter.

We cannot take the opinion of even the most eminent and distinguished men. I remember when I was at the Bar that the late Lord Russell of Killowen was once dealing with a case in which there appeared some expert witnesses. One rather bumptious witness said in effect: "The evidence I have just given settles the case. You will quite see that it is conclusive." Lord Russell said to him, "Sir, I am the judge to try this case, and you are only a person to tell me what will happen on certain conditions obtaining, or what should happen under certain conditions." In the same way we in this House of Commons are the judges. We are the trustees for the people of India, and we cannot accept the opinions of any other person, however distinguished or reputable he may be.

In conclusion, may I remind the House of the eloquent words of a great Liberal statesman who was Secretary of State for India, a man who cannot be dismissed as a Conservative or Tory "diehard," who prophesied how deplorable would be the result of a withdrawal of British rule in India:

"What anarchy and bloody chaos would follow from any such deplorable step as the withdrawal of British rule from India. How should we look in the face of the civilised world if we turned our back upon our duty and sovereign task? How should we bear the smarting stings of our own consciences when, as assuredly we should, we heard through the dark distances the roar and scream of confusion and carnage in India?"

Those were the words of the late Lord Morley. I earnestly beg Parliament to take heed of them before it is too late. Each one of us is a trustee for the fulfilment of Queen Victoria's pledge to the people of India. We have no mandate from the electors of Great Britain to absolve us from this great trust.

9.33 p.m.

Mr. EMRYS-EVANS: While I have listened to the speech of the hon. Member who has just spoken I have been wondering what would be the result in India if the Bill now before the House were withdrawn. Would it really lead to peace and good government such as we have given, or would it lead at once to an outbreak throughout the length and breadth of India? I have no doubt in my own mind that it would at once cause all those difficulties which have gradually died down during the last few years to arise again. To a very large extent I attribute the comparatively peaceful condition of India to-day to the fact that the Government of this country during the past few years have been steadily pursuing a consistent policy regarding India. There has been a consistent policy at last with regard to India. The hon. Gentleman said also that he deprecated the constant appeal to authority. Another hon. Member who spoke on the same side referred to the great administrators of the past, and asked the House where they would have stood to-day. I think I can answer that question; their names would have been on the Majority Report, so far as the Joint Select Committee was concerned.

The hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) asked what would happen to India if the judges and the police were withdrawn. I do not know that there is any Clause in the Bill which suggests that the judges and the police would be withdrawn. I think we must approach this question from an angle rather different from that of those hon. Gentlemen who belong to the same party as myself, but take a different view with regard to India. India, after all, is definitely a part of the British Empire; it is part of the British Imperial system; and I do not believe that it can be left out completely and dealt with as an abso-

lutely peculiar problem. There is, however, no real comparison between the problem of India and those twin problems which have been referred to so often during the controversies on this question—the problems of South Africa and of Ireland. Both of those questions were settled after a long and bitter estrangement. They were settlements between men racially akin, and the same civilisation. This Bill has been introduced in order to prevent what might easily come about—a long period of bitter estrangement between this country and India.

We are dealing, of course, with one of the most complex and complicated questions that have ever come before this House. The Peninsula of India is essentially a geographical unit. We cannot get away from that fact, or deal with India on any other basis. If it be possible, and within the scope of the Bill, we propose to separate Burma from India. Within this geographical unit we have the problem of different races, different religions, and different social conditions. There is no parallel to this problem in the British Empire, or, indeed, in the world to-day.

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) and his friends, in the many speeches they have made on this subject, have continually harped on that side of the problem which deals with democracy. They have pointed out that the democracy which was adopted in many countries of Western Europe in the nineteenth century has been abandoned during the past few years. That is true, and from it it is deduced that we should not try democratic institutions in India. But, if democracy is at a discount, nationalism is at a premium. It has swept over Europe, and is sweeping over Asia. In this Bill we are dealing not so much with the question of democracy as with a definite question of nationality for the British Government, by its efficiency and effectiveness, has given to India a cohesion, a national spirit and a patriotism which it never possessed before. It is not the same kind of patriotism that we understand in this country, but it is nevertheless a real thing, with which we are called upon to deal.

You cannot reverse the whole British Imperial process. Up and down the world during the last 100 years we have been engaged in creating nationalities. That is our system, and during the last 50 years that system has become established. Can we deny to the Indian Empire that advance towards nationality which we have encouraged in other parts of the world? The hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth said that we have never conquered India. I would refer him to a passage at the end of a lecture by the late Sir J. R. Seeley, who was a prophet of British Imperialism. He said that we had never conquered India, that we had never treated India as a conquered country; and he went on to say that it was useless to discuss that question, for, if we had tried, we should have failed financially long ago.

When we are discussing the question of a Constitution for India to-day, we are not necessarily discussing the setting up or development of democratic institutions. In the early days of the British connection between India and this country, the Government of this country was constitutional, but was not democratic. It was constitutional for a long period after the British connection began, and only gradually became democratic. The Bill does not propose to impose on India the same kind of Constitution which we have in this country, or which exists in other parts of the British Empire. We have no other means of taking any step on the way of constitutional progress than by our own method, and that is by setting up a Constitution. Of course, no one who sets up a Constitution can deny that it may very likely lead to further advance in democracy, but that need not necessarily be the case. In setting up in India the bodies which will be set up under this Bill, we are giving India the power to guide herself over the courses which seem best to her, we are not imposing our own ideas upon her.

Hon. Members who are opposed to the Government on this question have said that the Government are actuated by fear, and that those who support the Government are actuated by fear. They have said that the administrators and civil servants in India are to some extent actuated by fear. I do not for a moment admit that there is any fear in the action taken by the Government. It seems to me to be logical process of British Government. It seems to me an inevitable

[Mr. Emrys-Evans.]

step, the same kind of step that has been taken in every part of the Empire. Fear seems to come from those who are nervous about the next step, the people who are afraid to go forward. It was said by a distinguished Frenchman that Colonies fell like ripe fruit from a tree. They fell, I believe, because the men who controlled them treated them as plantations, treated them in the same way as the Empire of Spain was treated, as something to be sucked dry and not as living political entities. They were, therefore, incapable of bold and brave political action which forestalled the day of separation. I think every Member of the House, when he considers the Bill, must feel a certain amount of anxiety. We cannot deal with this vast complicated question in any light-hearted manner. There is anxiety and doubt in the minds of all of us in going forward. I hope we shall not be nervous but shall go forward boldly. I believe that is the road to success. I believe that is the road which will enable us to build a bridge where there might be a great division.

9.48 p.m.

Sir PATRICK FORD: I do not want to indulge in any picture painting. We have had some very lurid pictures drawn. I want in all humility to ask for a chart to guide me. I represent the point of view which was expressed by the Scottish Unionists in their conference in Glasgow. The real point of the resolution passed there was to urge upon the Government that it should be very careful in this transition period with regard to the method in which a change was made in the control of the services of the police and of the courts. I was rather disappointed that the Secretary of State gave us so little guidance on the question that exercised our minds in Scotland so much. His reference to the point was about the generous estimate of a fifth of a column out of 18 columns of his speech. He had a great deal of ground to cover, but I hope Government speakers before the conclusion of the Debate will clear up some of the doubts and difficulties that people like myself have. The right hon. Gentleman said:

"The question that will divide some of us will be this: Is it possible to have provincial autonomy without the transfer of law and order? My friends and I—and we are supported by the overwhelming majority of the Joint Select Committee—take the very definite view that it is quite impossible to give further and real responsibility to the Provinces without making the transfer of law and order, and that being so, the question arises for the House to consider, assuming that law and order are transferred, is the plan set out in the Bill the best plan to safeguard the moral, the organisation and secret intelligence of the police?—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 6th February, 1935; col. 1161, Vol. 297.]

That whole problem applies not only to the police but also to the courts, the High Courts, the Federal Courts and also to the district magistrates, because that is very intimately bound up not only with the administration but with the use of the police. Some of us feel that you are not really giving a complete democratic government to India. It is within the memory of all of us when we got manhood and womanhood suffrage in this country and we do not expect, as some hon. Members opposite seem to expect, that we ought to give that to the people of India. That, at this stage would only make confusion worse confounded. But we are faced with the fact that there will be an oligarchy, and there are grave temptations for an oligarchy to exploit those who are under it, and they will be the great mass of the Indian people. Without any reflection upon the integrity and the character of the statesmen and administrators of India of Indian birth and education, there are complications of religion, the communal difficulty, the caste difficulty and so on, which put big temptations towards exploitation for religious or other purposes, in fact, temptations not to hold the scales of justice in the courts or in administration evenly. That is to a certain extent admitted by the Government, because I, having some fear as to what might result, have welcomed what I consider was the Joint Select Committee's Report on what was to be done with regard to law and order as a great improvement upon what was originally in the White Paper.

I admit I am in a little difficulty in finding out exactly what the provisions of the Bill on this matter are and whether they are really up to the level of the report or have gone back to the White Paper or whether they are just on the report level. I will give one difficulty that I have in a rather technical part of the Bill dealing with the appeal to the Federal Courts from the High Court. It

seems, as far as I can interpret it, that practically appeals are only allowed on questions of the interpretation of the Statute of the Constitution. Many people may think it a great shame that you cannot take up your case from a Provincial Court, where there may be influences at work which may be overruled in a clearer atmosphere, but having regard to the practical point I do not find any fault in the Bill on this account because it seems to me that, if you have thoroughly reliable High Courts in the Provinces, it is in the interests of the poorer litigant that he cannot have his bluff called and be put to the expense of going up and up to the court above.

That is one of the difficulties with which we are faced, and, when we come to the status and position of the police, it seems to be recognised by the Government that in this transition period there ought to be effective British supervision of the police, and they have made the recruitment of the police on particular terms and have to a certain extent safeguarded them with regard to the laws and regulations, the postings and the promotions. Personally, I do not think that they met the pleas put forward by the representatives of the police before the Joint Committee. One of the things upon which they laid great stress was that there should be a Federal superintendence of the police in the Provinces. It is more a Committee point, but it is one of great importance which has been omitted entirely from the Bill.

I do not intend to labour all these points, but would merely say, as this is a Second Reading Debate, that our grave fear is that anything might be done to remove the hand of the British administrator from the effective supervision of the courts and of the employment and conduct of the police, and before the whole situation had settled down, in whatever period it might be wanted, and these people to whom we are proposing to hand over these grave responsibilities had really acquired the technique, the outlook and the experience to make these things a success as we have undoubtedly made that part of the administration in India to-day. It is the fear of the people for whom I speak, that whatever we may say against the Federal part of the question—and some of us have grave doubts—after all, we are committed.

It is no good, as did the Noble Earl on these benches, challenging us by saying, "You have your doubts, but go on." You may have doubts but feel so committed that you must go on. There is all the more reason to safeguard the process. If in the course of the Debate I could have a definite undertaking as to what the Bill at present proposes and to what extent the points of difficulty I have endeavoured to raise would be met, I should have less doubt—even then, I confess, I should have some doubt—in giving my vote to the Second Reading of the Bill. I am bound to say in all honesty and without any passion, but looking at the matter as a Scotsman interested in the administration of India, and coming from a country which has sent out a great many administrators and military men to India—speaking from that point of view, without heat and without passion, I want some assurances on the points which I have very indifferently and ineffectively tried to raise before I can in my conscience find myself able to give a Second Reading vote to this Bill.

9.59 p.m.

Major MILNER: I have sat through two days of the Debate on this Bill, and it is about time that one thing was made clear both to the public outside and to India. This is not a Conservative party debate. It is not a debate, as so many Members on the other side of the House would have us believe, as to the respective advantages and disadvantages of the policies advocated by the Government on the one hand, and by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) on the other. Nor it it a case of a bold, courageous and progressive Government taking their stand for the rights of the Indian people against the reactionary elements represented by the right hon. Gentleman and the friends who support him. There is in fact little difference in essentials between the programme of the Government and that of the right hon. Gentleman and his friends. The Government, and for that matter, the Liberal party, want to set up a Constitution where the wretched brat, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping termed the Bill, is bound hand and foot like Chinese children in the old days so that they could only hobble along.

[Major Milner.]

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping and his friends who really live in a world of unreality, a world of their own, would not even permit that kind of movement. The right hon. Gentleman, I believe, would, if he could, strangle the puny infant at birth. It is only this party—and I would call the attention of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Ely (Mr. de Rothschild) to the point—who have had the vision of imagination not only to desire to provide the means of a free and a happy future for the child, but by our help and encouragement to give the child the thyroid extract it requires to enable it to grow and to develop. That is the choice, not between the policy of the Government and the policy of the right hon. Gentleman, but between the policy of giving various degrees of minor responsibility grudgingly, ineffectively and unhopefully, and giving whole-heartedly and generously all that has been promised, all that India has been led to expect and all that will enable Indians to achieve in due time, but with certainty their full emancipation as a nation. That is what is meant by the vote in the Legislative Assembly to which reference has been made to-day, not a return to the *status quo* as the hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) would have us believe, but a carrying out of the various promises which have been made. In looking at some of those pledges, I make no apology for returning to the subject of Dominion Status because the position is still far from clear in regard to that matter. No one has stated it generally more clearly or with greater authority than Sir Frederick Sykes, who was a most conscientious and competent recent Governor of Bombay, when in the "Times" the other day, he said:

"Perhaps the main reason for the coldness of the reception given to the Reforms was the omission of mention of Dominion status, not only in the report, but in the subsequent discussions in the House. It has been sometimes stated that no assurances on this subject have been given. This is not the case. As long ago as 1921 the instrument of Instructions to the Viceroy contained the clause:—'It is Our Royal Will and Pleasure that the plans made by Our Parliament for the progressive realisation of responsible government as an integral part of Our Empire may come to fruition, to the end that British India may attain its due place among Our Dominions.'"

In 1929 we had the well-known pronouncement by the then Viceroy to the effect that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress was the attainment of Dominion status. Similarly, the Government of India in 1930 sent a strong dispatch on the report of the Statutory Commission, that:

"We have endeavoured to point the way to action that may be taken to place upon the Constitution the first but definite impression of Dominion status."

Therefore, there can be no question but that Dominion status has been definitely laid down as the goal, the time and manner of its ultimate attainment being in the hands of Parliament. What the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State said in effect yesterday was that the pledge had already been given and that he would tell the House why they did not make it clear in the Bill. They did not make it clear because they desired to avoid reiteration. And yet in this House, as hon. Members know, we reiterate and repeat words and paragraphs in every Act of Parliament we pass. It would almost appear as if the Government fear the official printing bill. They want to avoid mere reiteration. They stand upon ceremony and, either out of sheer stupidity or concentrated cussedness, decline to do one of the things which would appeal directly and most forcibly to the psychology of the Indian people. The Secretary of State said that the Government stand by the pledge contained in the 1919 Preamble, but that it is not part of their plan to repeat it, and that they also stand by the interpretation which the Viceroy put upon the pledge in 1929, on the authority of the Government of the day. But the Preamble of the 1919 Act does not mention the term "Dominion Status." All that the Preamble speaks of is the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation under Dominion status of responsible government in British India as an integral part of the Empire. There is not one word about Dominion status.

Mr. KNIGHT: Is that a paraphrase?

Major MILNER: The hon. and learned Member may have that opinion, but there are contrary opinions. "Responsible government" may be quite a different thing from Dominion status. As the hon. and learned Member has raised the point,

I would tell him that one of the reasons for suggesting that the term "Dominion status" ought to be put into the Preamble, is because the Preamble of the 1919 Act has been variously interpreted in the past. In a discussion in the Indian Legislative Assembly in February, 1924, the Leader of the Assembly, who was then Sir Malcolm Hailey, probably the most experienced Governor of a Province in India, an administrator for many years, said that the term "responsible government" as it appeared in the Preamble of the 1919 Act did not mean Dominion status. He said:

"If you analyse the term 'full Dominion self-government' you will see that it is of somewhat wider extent, conveying that not only will the Executive be responsible to the Legislature, but the Legislature will in itself have the full powers which are typical of the modern Dominion. I say there is some difference in substance, because responsible government is not necessarily incompatible with a Legislature of limited or restricted powers. It may be that full Dominion self-government is the logical outcome of responsible government; nay, it may be the inevitable and historical development of responsible government, but it is a further and a final step."

Responsible government and Dominion status are not the same.

Mr. KNIGHT: If you simply take out the words "responsible government," yes, but "responsible government" standing in the sense in which it stood in the Preamble of the Act of 1919, clearly points to Dominion status.

Major MILNER: Perhaps my hon. and gallant Friend will be good enough to read the facts which I am providing. I submit that, in the first place, Dominion status is not mentioned in the Preamble. In the second place, to put it mildly, there is very great doubt, amounting almost to certainty, that "responsible government" does not mean Dominion status. The Secretary of State said that he accepted the interpretation of the Preamble of the Act of 1919 given by the Viceroy in 1929, and that the Government stood by that interpretation. But it is agreed on all hands that the Viceroy's statement in 1929 does not resolve the doubt, because it has no validity whatever. A very eminent ex-Member of this House, an ex-Chairman of Committees, now in the other place, Lord Rankeillour, said, on the 13th December:

"The promise of the 1919 Act has been fully and amply redeemed."

Fully and amply redeemed, before this Bill was brought to the House of Commons

"The Preamble of the Act of 1919 binds us but nothing else. No statement by a Viceroy, no statement by any representative of the Sovereign, no statement by the Prime Minister, indeed, no statement by the Sovereign himself can bind Parliament against its judgment."

The hon. Member for Kidderminster (Sir J. Wardlaw-Milne), who is the Chairman of the Conservative India Committee, gave expression to a very similar opinion about the same time. Therefore, the position is this, that there is no statement of Dominion status in the Act of 1919, or in any other Act. The real interpretation is in doubt and the statement made by the Viceroy in 1929 has no validity whatever. In our submission the term "Dominion status" must be put into the Bill. We are not the only people who are of that opinion. The Aga Khan and other British-Indian delegates who submitted a memorandum to the Joint Select Committee said this:

"Indian public opinion has been profoundly disturbed by the attempts made during the last two or three years to qualify the repeated pledges given by responsible Ministers on behalf of His Majesty's Government. Since it is apparently contended that only a definite statement in an Act of Parliament would be binding on future Parliaments, and that even the solemn declaration made by His Majesty the King-Emperor on a formal occasion is not authoritative, we feel that a declaration in the Preamble is essential in order to remove present grave misgivings and avoid future misunderstandings."

There is also the authoritative opinion of Sir Alfred Watson in the "Weekly Bulletin," of the Union of Britain and India, which is supporting the Government's policy:

"If the two things, responsible government and Dominion status, are the same, why then boggle at the words which would make clear what was in the mind of the Committee? . . . Somewhere in the new Government of India Bill . . . it should be guaranteed, by the use of the words themselves, that there is no withdrawal of the vision of Dominion Status. Phrases like 'full responsible self-government' will not satisfy India. They may and do actually mean the same thing, but they will be interpreted as a whittling down of the full promise."

Sir John Thompson said:

"If nothing is being withheld, why withhold the phrase that has been used in the promises and which in the judgment of the

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Joint Select Committee is implicit in the Parliamentary pledge? "

I submit that the term "Dominion Status" should be, without question, put into the Bill. With that in the Bill it will be incontrovertibly on record, and by that simple act alone great bodies of Indian and other opinion will be very largely satisfied.

Take another of the promises, in the matter of an agreed Constitution. On the 1st December, 1931, the Prime Minister, speaking on behalf of the National Government at the conclusion of the second session of the Round Table Conference, said:

"It is vital to the success of the new Constitution that it should be framed on a basis of mutual agreement."

That is to say, that the new Constitution cannot be a success without some agreement. The whole of the Round Table procedure and that statement have been thrown overboard. No party in India has agreed with the proposed Constitution either in whole or in part. It is clear, as the right hon. Member for Epping and his followers say, and as we on this side say, that it is an imposed Constitution unacceptable to the Indian people, and does not carry out the pledges we have given. The hon. Member for Bodmin (Mr. Isaac Foot) in his broadcast speech implied that the Bill provided a Constitution of co-operation and consent. There is no consent, and the hon. Member knows that there is no consent. His article in the "Listener" is headed "Co-operation implies consent"——

Mr. ISAAC FOOT: I said that co-operation implies consent, but I also spoke with great regret of the way in which the proposals had been received in India, and pointed out what I thought were some of the things which the Indian people should consider in working so large a scheme. But I never said that they have consented to the proposals.

Major MILNER: No other implication can be put on his words than that which I have put upon them. He also said:

"The plain fact is that in this India business we must decide between government by autocracy and government by consent."

Mr. FOOT: Hear, hear!

Major MILNER: Is the hon. Member going to say that under this Constitution, which he and his party support, there is going to be government by the consent and good will of the Indian people?

Mr. FOOT: I say that unless there is consent to the working of this scheme then obviously it must fail. No one can work the scheme but the Indians themselves.

Major MILNER: The hon. Member must agree that there is no consent today, and therefore if he supports the Bill he is supporting a scheme which, on his own showing, must fail. The only scheme which will succeed is one which has the consent and good will of the Indian people. In my submission you are not carrying out any of these pledges or expectations. Are you even providing the means for any of these things to come about in the future? I say no. The case seems to me to be like this. It is the case of a father who brings his son into his business. The son has been trained, and guided, given a standard of conduct, a system to look up to; taught his trade, served his apprenticeship and has been encouraged throughout the whole of that period to expect a full partnership. Eventually, after much doubt, hesitancy and inquiry, the son is given not a partnership, not even a junior partnership, but a job at the most as foreman or departmental manager. Having made the son a manager the father does not permit him to manage. He sits in the boardroom or counting house with his ear to the telephone and his eye to the keyhole. The father gives to the son no opportunity or a very limited one for initiative. He keeps the books himself and allows his son no access to them. He still controls the clerks and commissionaires and never shows any signs of implementing his promise to give him full partnership.

What is the result? Obviously dissatisfaction, resentment, rebellion against authority, perhaps disaster to the firm, because the son recognises that until his father dies or he breaks away he can never grow to his full stature. How different if the son is really brought into partnership, a junior partnership at first if you like. He is given responsibility, given opportunity, given praise for what

he does and friendly help when he desires it, and a definite assurance freely offered that he may take over the whole business as soon as, in the normal course, he might reasonably expect to do so. In those circumstances with what pride does the son work, with what zeal does he care for the business, with what capacity does he demonstrate his fitness to control, and with what affection and good will does he regard the parent who has given him this opportunity?

That is the position which we ought to endeavour to take up towards India and the Indian people. Give them that junior partnership fully and freely and without stint and they will rise to the occasion. On the Franchise Committee, where I had the pleasure of serving with the hon. Gentleman who is now Under-Secretary of State, we met Indian gentlemen of all denominations, who served with us and could and did rise to the occasion. For example, in the India Labour representative I found a man who, as soon as he was satisfied that I desire genuinely to work with him and to be helpful and to work on an equal footing, gave me his confidence without reserve and trusted me to put his case in his absence. To him and his like I felt that I could safely leave India and Indian affairs with as much confidence as I could leave them to any compatriot of my own.

So it would be in the larger field. Give the Indian people as a whole, not a part of them, responsibility and opportunity, and they will rise to it. Deny such liberty and you will never be free of complaint, of resentment, perhaps of rebellion—rebellion which you can no doubt overcome for a time but rebellion which will leave its seeds behind for ever. Give responsibility freely and generously and with definite assurances for the future, and you do obtain that good will which is the condition precedent to success in the enterprise. Furthermore, give responsibility and, whatever its consequences, you will have done not the expedient thing in the opinion of some, but the right thing, the just thing and the big thing; and, as the Lord President of the Council once said, "You have then at any rate a chance of keeping India within the Commonwealth."

The matter of good will is all-important to our trade. Our exports and imports from India are to-day about equal. We heard something from the hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) about reciprocal trade and about having an agreement which would apparently last for ever. But there is reciprocal trade to-day; the interchange of trade between England and India is within a very few hundred pounds equal. India does a greater trade now with us than any other Dominion. Given a policy of greater good will, is she ever likely to do less? She will have no grounds for doing so. But refuse to create that greater good will, and to give that opportunity for the future, and as sure as night follows the day your trade and your common interests will suffer, and at the first opportunity the cord which binds India to us may break.

Let me speak of the hope for the future, if there be any, held out by this Bill. I agree that if the new Constitution set out in this Bill were at least a satisfactory starting-point, if it were possible to build upon it a superstructure, it might be wise to accept it. It has been laid down repeatedly that the Constitution ought to contain within itself, as far as possible, provision for its own development. I need only quote the Statutory Commission. They said:

> "The first principle we would lay down is that the new Constitution should, as far as possible, contain within itself provision for its own development."

Later in the report they say:

> "Those who have to work a temporary constitution tend inevitably to fix their minds upon the future instead of on the present. Instead of making the most of the existing constitution and learning to deal with practical problems under existing conditions, they constantly endeavour to anticipate the future and to push forward to the next instalment of reforms."

The Secretary of State says that this proposed constitution has within it the seeds of growth. That may be so but by the Bill the right hon. Gentleman proposes that these tender seeds, hothouse seeds, are to be planted in a cold house, in a steel frame, which will effectively prevent the seed developing as it otherwise might and ought to do into the open flower of full self-government. It will either die or burst the frame in which it is contained. There is no provision within the Bill for automatic development.

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To begin with, the franchise is fixed for 10 years. I for one do not believe that adult suffrage is practicable for administrative reasons in India at the moment. It cannot be given at present because it would not work. If however we promised it or provided for it in 10 years, in my opinion it could then be worked. I think the Under-Secretary would agree that it could be worked in the towns to-day and I certainly am of that opinion. The Franchise Committee whose report was substantially accepted recommended the enfranchisement of 43 per cent. of the adult males, and 10 per cent. of the adult females. They said, and the Under-Secretary agreed, that there was nothing inherently impossible about eventual adult suffrage. But while there is merely the power of revision in 10 years, on a petition being submitted, is it likely that those in power will be willing to petition to have their powers taken away or at any rate distributed more widely. I submit that that is not in the least likely. The franchise is rigid and fixed.

Moreover, the Constitution provides that the Princes always retain their representation of one-third or in the Upper House 40 per cent. of the voting power in the Federal legislature. There is always therefore a block of votes at the Centre impossible, without mutual agreement, of modification or alteration. Surely that again is binding India hand and foot and keeping her people as mere managers all their lives. On the matter of the franchise I desire to put a question to the Government. The Bill goes back on all previous recommendations in one respect, namely, in proposing indirect election. The Joint Select Committee in 1919 decided against indirect election. So did the Franchise Committee and the Government of India and His Majesty's Government themselves in the White Paper. Why this change? Will the Secretary of State or the Under-Secretary say why the Government of India have changed their opinion after so many years? Has pressure been brought to bear upon them? How many times were they asked to reconsider this question during the last year or two? I should like to have a specific answer to that question, because when in India I had some opportunity of obtaining the views of those in authority on this matter, and without exception the Government of India at that time, and before, and since, up to quite a recent date, favoured direct and not indirect election.

One further point, a further test of the hope and opportunity held out to the masses for whom we all profess to be concerned. I for one, and most of us in this House, will judge of the real sincerity in this matter of those who profess themselves to be so concerned for the Indian masses by the powers they transfer to the Indian masses in the discussions which will no doubt take place and in the votes which will be given on the question of the franchise. Then we shall see whether there is that real concern for the masses in India. To speak for a moment of labour representation, which in our view would best represent the masses, quite clearly it is inadequate in all the Lower Chambers. Worse than that, there is no representative of labour at all in either the Provincial or Federal Upper Chambers. Labour is not likely to obtain any there, because the general constituencies are formed, admittedly, of people having property or with vested interests, and where the seats are filled in Upper Chambers by election from Lower Chambers, there is no sufficient labour representation in the Lower Chambers to ensure representation in the Upper Houses. For example, in Bengal there are 27 seats to be filled by the votes of 250 members. It is obvious, therefore, that the minimum number to ensure election to one seat is 10, and the number of members is only eight. Representation in the Upper Chamber is therefore impossible. We are opposed to Upper Chambers, but if they have to be, common justice demands that labour should have at least a minimum representation therein.

There are other matters to which I had hoped to refer, but time does not permit. I will conclude by saying that there is no assurance in this Bill as to the ultimate aim of Parliament, there is no generous handing over of real responsibility or power, there is no hope of or opportunity for the masses ever obtaining that responsibility or power. It is as if the Bill had said:

"Abandon hope, all ye who enter here."

The Government are professing to take a long step forward towards self-government. Admittedly they have given some

important but really minor and unsubstantial extensions of power, but what body, what nation, what self-respecting people can you expect to receive, willingly, thankfully, and with any enthusiasm, a pretence of power without the substance, and without even a promise of the substance in even an approximate period of time? There is a motto or principle of conduct in one of our public schools: "Put yourself in his place." Let us put ourselves in the place of the Indian people. Should we accept a constitution so hamstrung and so grudgingly and patronisingly conferred? And why should we expect the Indian people, a people as proud and, given the opportunity, as intelligent, as resentful of domination, and with at least as long a tradition and history as ourselves, to accept it? Hence the vote at Delhi to-day. We on this side still hope, even at this eleventh hour, that better counsels will prevail, and we shall do our best in Committee to persuade the Government to accept them.

10.34 p.m.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Butler): In answering this Debate so far as it has gone over the two days that have hitherto run, in my capacity as Under-Secretary of State I have no doubt a certain belief in predestination. The House will remember the little rhyme:

> "He is a being who moves in predestinate grooves;
> In fact, not a 'bus, but a tram."

In this case I have to follow the very excellent grooves which have been laid out for me by the many speakers who have taken part in the Debate in the last two days. I may liken myself to a goods train following on the magnificent express in the shape of my right hon. Friend who spoke yesterday, and, like a goods train, my course will sometimes lie on sidelines. I shall, on the whole, avoid the main lines of policy. Nevertheless, I shall do my best to answer many of the interesting points which have been raised by right hon. and hon. Members. It seems to me that these points have centred round one main subject, namely, whether this Measure will be conducive to the future happiness and welfare of the Indian people and Indian masses. It is largely to that question that I propose to devote the few remarks I shall make. The hon. Member for Limehouse (Mr. Attlee) said that the Indian people have been left out of the Bill. The hon. Member for Middleton and Prestwich (Sir N. Stewart Sandeman) said that the majority have been handed over to the few. The hon. Member for Chertsey (Sir A. Boyd-Carpenter) said in his eloquent speech that we are not considering the proletariat and the people of India.

I shall try to review some of those arguments by studying the representation which has been given to the various interests in the legislatures. It gives me particular pleasure to follow the hon. and gallant Member for South-East Leeds (Major Milner), in view of the time we spent in India together considering some of these questions of representation and franchise. I was particularly struck by his simile of the father thinking of the son to whom he had not given sufficient responsibility. That father sat with his ear to the telephone and his eye on the keyhole. I can only recommend to the hon. and gallant Member that he should in future support the activities of the Postmaster-General in the National Government who is daily bringing television nearer. I feel sure that if he were to change his political allegiance, the father in question would save himself a great deal of inconvenience. The hon. Member for Limehouse raised the question of the omission of the details of the franchise from the Bill. He must have been aware that in the Memorandum accompanying the Bill this point was referred to. It is stated there that the franchise can be inserted in a schedule if desired. I would like to remind the House that there is a certain value in the procedure by Order in Council owing to the technical nature of the subject and the time that is taken to prepare all the necessary details in regard to the franchise; further, that an Order in Council can be discussed and amended by this House. However, I will reaffirm the statement made in the Memorandum and leave the matter for the time being.

I should like to mention the very great labour involved in preparing all the details about franchise and representation, and here I would like to refer particularly to the great work that has fallen on the draftsmen and officials who had prepared this Bill and have worked

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so long on this subject. They have lived in an incessant rush, which, for those chiefly responsible, has lasted seven or eight years since the Simon Commission went to India. They deserve all the tributes that this House can give.

May I say, in response to the hon. Gentleman, that there is certainly no wish to deprive the House of an opportunity of discussing any question of the franchise? In answer to the detailed points raised by my hon. Friend who has just sat down and by the hon. Member for Limehouse, I would point out that Labour will be represented not only by the special constituencies, which have been increased by a very large number under our proposals, but also by the provisions in the general franchise. If hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite will study the provisions of the general franchise and study the level of the franchise, particularly as regards house rent, in some of the great cities in India, and remember that Labour will be represented as well by special constituencies, they will see that Labour will have a definite opportunity of representation in the Legislatures of India in the future. Further, rural labour will be represented also by the level of the franchise suggested. In one Province, at any rate, the level of the franchise will descend to the smallest cultivator who pays two rupees in land revenue, and in other Provinces to those who pay five rupees in land revenue. Moreover, rural labour will be represented by the large amount of representation which will be given to the depressed classes.

My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Islington (Colonel Goodman) raised the question of the depressed classes, and feared that they were not getting sufficient attention from His Majesty's Government. I would only repeat the words used by my right hon. Friend, which must have shown the House that the depressed classes have received every consideration, and that it is our earnest desire that under this Constitution they should have an opportunity of improving their lot. Their seats are to be increased approximately to 151 in the Provincial Councils and 19 in the Central Assembly. Besides this they will have a differential franchise, and I feel certain there will be opportunities for the depressed classes under the new Constitution, and I support the view of the hon. Member for Bodmin (Mr. Isaac Foot) that their objections to this Bill are chiefly on details, with particular reference to the question of upper Houses in the Provinces and the upper House at the Federal centre. In the latter case I would remind the representatives of the depressed classes that the Governor-General will have the right of nomination which could be used in their interests. The hon. and gallant Member for Wycombe (Sir A. Knox) was concerned with the extension of the franchise to what he termed the uneducated classes. I had always thought that his chief objection to our plan was that it put power into the hands of the intelligentsia, but here is is telling us that we are wrong in putting the power of the franchise into the hands of the uneducated classes.

Major-General Sir ALFRED KNOX: The whole of my argument was directed to prove that the vote meant nothing in India—that you might extend the vote enormously, give universal suffrage, but that these people would not be able to defend their interests owing to the lack of civic sense.

Mr. BUTLER: I am much indebted to the hon. and gallant Member, and I hope to deal with that point in a few minutes, as I much appreciate his argument. The hon. Member for South-West Hull (Mr. Law), in the excellent speech he made yesterday, gave us the right impression of peasants all the world over. They have a shrewd sense, and know a good thing when they see one, and I am certain that by this extension of the franchise to the level which I have described we shall genuinely put power into the hands of the peasants; and I believe that those of us in this House, particularly in my own party, who have the privilege to be elected by rural voters, realise that we are following the path of wisdom in extending the vote so considerably to the rural classes in India. I would ask my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Wycombe what is his alternative to this extension of the franchise? Does he believe in keeping the present franchise, which has been openly declared to be in the interests of the urban voters and of the intelligentsia? Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who oppose our scheme are too often

prone to forget the alternative and to minimise the definite merits that there are in our proposal.

The hon. and gallant Member for Wycombe very rightly raised the question of whether the franchise will give any real power to the people in the countryside in the future Constitution of India. But that is very important. I believe if he will look at the recent legislation passed in some of the provincial councils and deduce from that the sort of legislation which may be passed in future, he will see that the rural council are gaining more and more power. I think that power will be very considerable under the new Constitution. I need only refer hon. Members to the recent legislation passed in the Punjab Council which takes up some of the points about moneylenders which were raised notably by the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Kirkpatrick) in the remarkable speech which he made on the subject yesterday. The provincial councils I am sure will have to consider rural interests in the future. We have only to reflect upon the preponderance of votes which rural interests will have. All of us as Members of Parliament can well remember that in any election we have to remember that classes of the community from which most of our support is likely to come. I believe that when an Indian Member stands for a provincial council he will take into consideration the rural interests very much more than he has done in the past, and I feel sure that there will be an improvement in the legislation of the provincial councils.

The hon. Member for Ince (Mr. G. Macdonald) questioned whether the Constitution will give a chance for labour and social legislation. Our view is that those questions are in India so much engrained in Indian life and customs that they are best tackled by the Indians themselves. There is nothing in the Bill which would stop those questions being tackled in the immediate future in India. The Opposition have raised the question of whether there is sufficient opportunity for co-ordination with the Centre. If reference is made to the proposals in the Joint Select Committee's Report which are carried out in the Bill for co-ordination and possible central control in questions of labour legislation and social questions, they will notice that there are, by the special proposal made for the second part of the Concurrent List, definite opportunities for central co-ordination in these matters. Our conception of the constitutional scheme does not imply a conception of strict central control or the idea of grants in aid from the Centre with a consequent power of inspection. I note that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) gave an appreciative grunt. I refer particularly to the very excellent evidence to which we had the privilege of listening from him on the Joint Select Committee. I will refer to the report of the Statutory Committee in which they say:

"... a system of grants in aid by the Centre to the Provinces ... would involve some measure of central control and would run counter to the whole trend of constitutional development which we are recommending. We are endeavouring to complete the process of decentralisation by constituting the Provinces as governing units in a Federation."

That is the conception of provincial autonomy which we are putting forward in the Bill.

The hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. G. Nicholson) made an excellent speech which I confidently recommend to all his friends in India, and I hope they will all read it in order to see how much he reflects the views of the younger generation in India in regard to Indian constitutional reform. He raised the question of co-ordination in such matters as education. There are provisions in the Bill for the establishment, if necessary, of an inter-provincial council, and this with the other proposals in the Bill will, I think, give an opportunity for co-ordination on such important matters as education and health and other questions which have been raised, and will be raised by hon. Members in the course of this Debate. I believe that this co-operation will be helped rather than hindered by the system of indirect election which the Joint Select Committee has recommended.

I had the privilege of sitting for over 18 months on the Joint Select Committee and reflecting upon the problems of Federation. I do not want to minimise the problem, and I do not think that any of us can afford to do so. I believe that the system of indirect election will have exactly the opposite effect from that expected by hon. Members of the

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Liberal party. I believe that its effect will be to tie the units together by representing in the Central Legislature more closely the representatives of the units, and this I noticed with interest was the view of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ross and Cromarty (Sir I. Macpherson). I do not believe that in the words of the hon. Member for Darwen (Sir H. Samuel) this system of election would encourage fissiparous tendencies. As for the question as to which is the better method of election, direct or indirect election, I prefer to regard this as a question of machinery, and I shall be quite ready to discuss it in detail when we come to the Committee stage. Both of these methods of election I think might have very grave difficulties in them, the question of direct election in the large areas necessary for the constituencies, and the question of indirect election in the small quotas of electors necessary to elect a member. I am fully aware of the difficulties and would prefer to go into them in more detail later and I shall be only too glad to give my contribution to the subject when we come to the Committee stage.

The question of trade has been raised by many speakers, and I think it was right that it should have been. The hon. Member for Eastbourne (Mr. Slater) and others raised the question of the position of the peasants in India and their purchasing power and the value of British trade to them. I would say that the new Central Legislature will no doubt represent the consumer of British India indirectly and the consumer in the agricultural States, and will thus look after the consumers' interests in framing tariff policy. That I hope and believe will be the safeguard for the consumer and will have an effect on its tariff policy. In reply to those who say that this Constitution is not in the interests of the peasants and the poorer classes in India I would only remind the House that if you take an indication which is usually taken to represent the confidence of certain classes of the community and take the post office cash saving certificates in India this is what you will find. Before the Statutory Commission visited India these certificates stood at Rs.30 crores. During all this period when the new Constitution has been fashioned the money invested in these cash savings certificates has risen to Rs. 65 crores which is more than double the figure reached before the visit of the Statutory Commission. That does not show any lack of confidence in the reforms we are proposing.

The hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Hammersley) made a very interesting and valuable speech on the question of trade. I find that those who discuss Lancashire trade may be divided into those who have a more recent and sudden interest in the subject and those who are associated perpetually with it. I do not want to impugn the genuineness of the motives of either class, because naturally in this House we are all concerned with the effect on British trade, as indeed we ought to be. But there is a radical difference between the point of view of the two classes—the recent and more sudden class and the perpetual class. The recent and more sudden class are apt to take a very gloomy view of our trade with India and to prefer coercion to co-operation; whereas the class who are perpetually involved in trade with India, such as the hon. Member for Stockport who have visited India, believe rather in co-operation. I would only remind the House of the very successful result of the policy of good will started by the Ottawa Agreement, and followed up in the recent Supplementary Trade Agreement. In the annual report of the trade commissioner in India, it is stated that "there is no doubt that the Ottawa Agreement has inaugurated a new era of closer and more profitable trade between the United Kingdom and India."

There are certain problems that I can only touch upon in the last few minutes. The question has been raised of the intervention of the Executive in certain cases of necessity, and the hon. and gallant Member for Ayr Burghs (Lieut.-Colonel Moore) raised the question of the Governor-General's intervention in questions of communications, a point which has been raised very often in the country. I would remind hon. Members that in Clauses 177 (4) and 178 (2) of the Bill there is provision for the Governor intervening and giving directions to the Railway Authority in cases of necessity. We believe that the policy of good will

must not only exist in the realm of trade, but in the realm of the relationships between the Governor-General and his Ministers, and between the Governor and his Ministers. We are surprised that, either on questions of trade or on questions relating to law and order, hon. Members who are opposed to us and who ask for further safeguards should tell us that the safeguards we have included show our mistrust of the Indians. We believe that a policy of good will, whether in trade or in the relations between the Governor-General and his Ministers, will be ultimately successful.

What of the future? The hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) raised several points about the position of India within the Empire. My right hon. Friend, in his statement yesteday, showed that His Majesty's Government believed in the continuity of British policy, and stood by all the pledges given to India in the past. I will confine myself now to reaffirming his statement, with this addition, that all pledges given were given to India within the Empire, and, therefore, there can be no question of the secession of India from the Empire being possible as a result of the reaffirmation of any of those pledges. I agree that many issues have been and can be raised on this matter. My right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney-General will be speaking on Monday, and it is perhaps more suitable and proper that he should reply to these many points.

In conclusion, I would like to take up the words of the hon. Member for Morpeth who expressed the hope that we had stumbled on a future line of development in regard both to a Constitution for India and, possibly, a model Constitution for the world. I believe that in this Constitution are the features of the strong Executive known to the East, and of the democratic form known to the West; and I sincerely hope that we have found a future form of government that will not only provide a possible modification of democracy which may work satisfactorily, but may also tie together the best in the East and the West.

Ordered, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—[*Captain Margesson.*]

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

SUPPLY.

REPORT [5TH FEBRUARY].

CLASS VI.

CIVIL ESTIMATES, SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1934.

Resolutions reported,

1. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £1,150,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1935, for a Subsidy on Sugar and Molasses manufactured from Beet grown in Great Britain."

2. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £50,950, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1935, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Overseas Trade, including Grants in Aid of the Imperial Institute and the Travel and Industrial Development Association of Great Britain and Ireland."

Resolutions agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS.

REPORT [5TH FEBRUARY].

Resolution reported,

"That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1935, the sum of £8,659,450 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom."

Resolution agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by the Chairman of Ways and Means, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Duff Cooper, and Captain Margesson.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (NO. 1) BILL.

"To apply a sum out of the Consolidated Fund to the service of the year ending on the thirty-first day of March, one thousand nine hundred and thirty-five," presented accordingly, and read the First time; to be read a Second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 26.]

The remaining Orders were read and postponed.

ADJOURNMENT.

Resolved, "That this House do now adjourn."—[*Captain Margesson.*]

Adjourned accordingly at Two Minutes after Eleven o'Clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 8th February, 1935.

[OFFICIAL REPORT.]

The House met at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. SPEAKER *in the Chair.*

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

RUMANIA (TRADE DEBTS AGREEMENT).

Captain DOWER (*by Private Notice*) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he can make a statement regarding the negotiations with Rumania for the payment of debts due to United Kingdom traders?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Runciman): I am glad to be able to inform the House that the negotiations on this subject with Monsieur Manulescu Strunga, the Rumanian Minister of Industry and Commerce, were concluded by an Agreement which was signed this morning. The text of this Agreement will be printed as a Command Paper, and in the meantime the House will no doubt wish to have the following details. The outstanding trade debts due by Rumania as at 1st November last were estimated at £2,500,000. It is proposed to liquidate these debts as follows:

First, the Rumanian Government undertake to pay into a Special Account at the Bank of England before 28th February next a sum of £400,000 to be used without delay for the payment in full of all trade debts not exceeding £20, and of £20 or 20 per cent. of the debt, whichever is the greater, as a first instalment of debts above £20.

Secondly, on the 15th of each month, beginning with the 15th April, a sum of £60,000 will be paid into the Account. This is the basic figure, but it is subject to variation upwards or downwards in proportion to any substantial increase or decrease of Rumanian exports to the United Kingdom as compared with 1934.

Thirdly, facilities will be granted under certain conditions for the payment of debts by means of so-called compensation exports in so far as creditors desire to avail themselves of this procedure.

The Agreement requires ratification by the Rumanian Government and subject to such ratification will come into force on 25th February next. In conclusion, I would wish to express on behalf of His Majesty's Government their appreciation of the willingness which Monsieur Manulescu Strunga and his Government have displayed throughout the negotiations to meet the point of view of the United Kingdom. I would, however, warn United Kingdom traders that they should satisfy themselves that in future dealings with Rumania adequate steps have been taken by their customers to obtain the necessary foreign exchange for the payment of United Kingdom exports to that country.

UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE (ADJUSTMENT OF ALLOWANCES).

Mr. LANSBURY (*by Private Notice*) asked the Prime Minister whether the Government had received a deputation from the Lord Mayor and City Council of the City of Sheffield in reference to unemployment benefit payments, and whether he would inform the House of the nature of the reply?

The PRIME MINISTER (Mr. Ramsay MacDonald): I understand that a deputation from the Sheffield City Council to the Ministry of Health, subsequently received by the Unemployment Assistance Board, proposed that the Council should pay over to the unemployed in the city whose allowances prior to revision are less than their previous rates of transitional payment, the amount of the difference in respect of the current week, on the understanding that the amount so paid over should be subsequently deducted from the arrears of allowances due to the applicant and reimbursed to the council. As regards payments of arrears generally, it is hoped by means of special arrangements that it will be possible to make

[The Prime Minister.]
these in most cases on the ordinary pay days next week; but, in view of the steps which the Sheffield Council themselves propose to take, the Government did not feel justified in withholding their concurrence.

Mr. LANSBURY: Is it proposed to leave the matter just where it is, dealing only with the Sheffield people? Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that the need for these payments is just as urgent in the other distressed areas? Will not the Government issue a general notice that local authorities desirous of following the example of Sheffield may do so, and on exactly the same terms as have been given to Sheffield?

The PRIME MINISTER: I am really very sorry but this question only came into my hands, only reached me at midnight last night. I am going to explain to the right hon. Gentleman why I cannot give him a definite answer to the question which he now puts. I have been trying all this morning to get into touch with the Departments. As a matter of fact, it was not a Government deputation about which I know anything. I only knew about it when I opened my newspapers this morning. As the whole matter was dealt with very adequately and properly by the Minister of Health, in conjunction with the Board, I am really sorry that I am not in a position to answer the Supplementary Question; but, if the Ministry of Health were communicated with at once, I have no doubt at all that the same sympathetic treatment will be meted out generally. It was not meant to be confined merely to Sheffield.

Mr. LANSBURY: It is impossible to debate the matter this morning, because even if we desired to do so we could not, I understand, move the Adjournment on a Friday. But we shall have to come back to the whole of these circumstances later. I put this to the Prime Minister: It is not a good thing to wait until there is some disturbance before we deal with a matter of this kind. There were disturbances the day before at Sheffield. What I am asking for is that whichever Minister is responsible, whether it be the Minister of Labour or the Minister of Health, whoever is the proper authority, should to-day let it be known that other public assistance authorities or municipal authorities desirous of doing the same as the Sheffield City Council has now done will be given authority to do it, that the same authority will be given them to carry out these payments to the unemployed as has been arranged for the City of Sheffield. I think it is imperative that that should be done, because the need is just as urgent in the one case as in the other.

Mr. GURNEY BRAITHWAITE: As one who took a certain part in these negotiations last night, may I ask the Prime Minister whether he is aware that these representations were decided upon by the Sheffield City Council irrespective of party before the disorders of last Wednesday, and that all that has happened is that the city council have placed temporarily at the disposal of the Unemployment Assistance Board their financial and public assistance machinery, and that it is open to other local authorities to make exactly the same offer.

Mr. ISAAC FOOT: Can the Prime Minister tell the House by what date it is likely that all the authorities will be dealt with on the same level? He will, of course, appreciate the sense of grievance that may arise in that direction. By what date will there be uniform treatment in relation to all the authorities?

Mr. TINKER: I would like to reinforce what was said by my right hon. Friend the Member for Bow and Bromley (Mr. Lansbury). If other authorities desire to give the advances just as Sheffield City Council have done, surely there can be no objection on the part of the Government, seeing that the Government recognise that it is in the right direction?

The PRIME MINISTER: My hon. Friend who put the last question quite accurately interprets what the Government would wish to do. I cannot answer a question as to dates and so on. That is really not part and parcel of my immediate responsibility, but a question put down or a communication made to the Ministry of Health will, I am sure, lead to the full satisfaction of my hon. Friend. Regarding what preceded this deputation

in Sheffield, I really do not know anything about it, but the Ministry of Health perhaps again will be able to answer that question if there be any importance attached to it. So far as the general question is concerned, I am perfectly certain that, if the Ministry of Health and the Board get the same assurances from and can come to the same arrangement with any other public authority like the Sheffield Council, they will be only too glad to facilitate the immediate payment of these sums that are ultimately to be recouped when the dated asked for in the Question of my hon. Friend opposite has arrived.

Mr. LANSBURY: The Minister of Labour is seated alongside the right hon. Gentleman, and the only point which I am desirous of making is that the appropriate Minister, whoever he is, shall communicate, either through a Press statement that can be published throughout the country, or in some other way, the fact that other local authorities may have the same assistance as that which has been given to Sheffield. I know that the right hon. Gentleman has said so from the Box just now, but we are not quite sure that that statement will get around, but, if publicity can be given to it in the ordinary way, then I shall be satisfied, though, of course, we shall discuss the whole business on another occasion.

The PRIME MINISTER: I can assure my right hon. Friend that all the publicity possible will be given to it, and I shall communicate with the Minister and see really how the matter stands.

BILL PRESENTED.

UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE (TEMPORARY PROVISIONS) BILL,

"to make temporary provision for securing as nearly as may be that the allowances payable under Part II of the Unemployment Act, 1934, to persons who, but for the operation of sub-section (2) of section fifty-nine of that Act, would at any time since the sixth day of January, nineteen hundred and thirty-five, have been entitled to transitional payments, shall not be less than the transitional payments that would have been payable to them but for the operation of the said sub-section; to postpone the second appointed day for the purposes of the said Act; and for the purposes connected with the matters aforesaid," presented by Mr. Stanley; supported by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Godfrey Collins, Sir Hilton Young, the Attorney-General, and Mr. Hudson; to be read a Second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 28.]

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

EMPIRE TRADE (FOREIGN MERCHANT VESSELS).

Mr. T. MORRIS asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he has information to show the names and owners of foreign vessels which are chartered in Empire ports to bring goods to this country, and, vice versa, from this country to Empire ports; and, if such information is not available, whether he will, in the interests of the British mercantile marine, obtain it for publication?

Dr. BURGIN: I regret that this information is not available, and it would not be possible to obtain it.

EXPORTS (COMPARATIVE STATISTICS).

Sir A. SINCLAIR asked the President of the Board of Trade the value of the exports of the following countries for 1934, or for the first 11 months of 1934 if the figures for the full year are not available for all the countries mentioned, and the percentage increase or decrease as compared with the same period of 1933: Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Greece, Austria, Jugoslavia, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Canada, Australia, South Africa, Japan, the United States of America, and the Argentine; and by what percentage the active or passive balance of trade has increased or decreased in each case?

Dr. BURGIN: The following table gives the desired information:

Country.	Unit of Currency.	Exports of merchandise.		Percentage increase (+) or decrease (—) in balance on merchandise account in 1934 as compared with 1933.
		1934.	Percentage increase (+) or decrease (—) in 1934 compared with 1933.	
Countries having an adverse balance on merchandise account in 1933 and 1934.				
United Kingdom ...	£'000	396,108	(+) 7·7	(+) 10·4
France	Million francs ...	17,822	(—) 3·5	(—) 47·4
Italy	Million lire ...	5,232	(—) 12·7	(+) 68·8
Austria	Thous. schillings ...	863,024	(+) 11·9	(—) 22·0
Norway	Thous. kroner ...	570,055	(+) 3·7	(+) 46·4
Sweden	Thous. kroner ...	1,293,896	(+) 20·0	(—) 73·0
Greece (*a*)	Million drachma ...	4,774	(—) 2·8	(+) 10·0
Japan (*a*) (*d*)	Million yen ...	1,932	(+) 16·3	(+) 60·6
Countries having a favourable balance on merchandise account in 1933 and 1934.				
Finland	Million marks ...	6,162	(+) 17·2	(+) 5·5
Canada	Thous. dollars ...	652,887	(+) 22·8	(+) 7·2
Yugo Slavia (*a*) ...	Million diners ...	3,417	(+) 10·1	(—) 66·8
Australia (*a*)	£'000	71,150	(—) 11·2	(—) 69·9
United States (*a*) ...	Thous. dollars ...	1,932,254	(+) 32·6	(+)179·5
Argentine Republic (*a*)	Thous. pesos (paper)	1,318,222	(+) 31·5	(+) 60·9
Union of South Africa (*b*).	£'000	67,413	(—) 13·6	(—) 65·3
Favourable balance in 1933 followed by adverse balance in 1934.				
Germany	Million Reichsmarks	4,167	(—) 14·5	(*c*)

(*a*) Figures relate to period January to November only.

(*b*) Figures relate to period January to October only.

(*c*) Favourable balance in 1933, 668 million Reichsmarks; adverse balance in 1934, 284 million Reichsmarks.

(*d*) The figures relate to the foreign trade of Japan proper only.

NOTE.—The particulars of exports of merchandise relate, so far as possible, to domestic produce and manufactures. The balance on merchandise accounts has been arrived at by relating these exports to imports for home consumption except in the cases of Australia and the Union of South Africa, for which the particulars are based upon total exports and total imports. For some of the countries imports and exports of bullion and specie have been unavoidably included.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA BILL.

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [*6th February*], "That the Bill be now read a Second time."

Which Amendment was, to leave out from "That," to the end of the Question, and to add instead thereof:

"in the opinion of this House, no legislation for the better government of India will be satisfactory which does not secure the good will and co-operation of the Indian people by recognising explicitly India's right to Dominion status and by providing within it the means of its attainment, and which does not by its provisions as to franchise and representation secure to the workers and peasants of India the possibility of achieving by constitutional means their social and economic emancipation."—[*Mr. Attlee.*]

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

11.18 a.m.

Sir ARTHUR STEEL-MAITLAND: I listened to nearly all the speeches delivered in this Debate yesterday—the exceedingly eloquent appeal by the hon. and gallant Member for Chertsey (Sir A. Boyd-Carpenter) who is heard far too seldom within these walls nowadays; the very brilliant reply by my noble Friend the Member for Horsham (Earl Winterton); the interesting speech, as his speeches always are, of the hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft); the speech, as interesting as it was modest and excellent, from the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. G. Nicholson), and finally the very able answer to all the points which had been raised—all too short for want of time but a perfectly admirable summary—by the Under-Secretary of State for India. I think everyone who heard those speeches will agree that they were worthy of a great occasion. Indeed, this occasion is a great one. We have before us a Measure of first-class magnitude. It confers complete freedom and self-government on the great Provinces of India in all the ordinary affairs of life in normal circumstances, and it sets up a Federal Government for all India giving a great measure of responsibility at the Centre. It is going to influence immensely the development of Indian administration and of India itself in the future. It is going to affect also the whole future of the British Empire. This is therefore, as I have said, a great occasion and a great Measure and to-day I wish to confine myself to the central and main issue which lies before us, namely: Is this Measure the best step which can be taken at the present time and under present conditions?

That is the great question before us. A Bill of this kind raises a large number of other individual questions many of which are of great importance but are yet secondary to the main issue. There are such questions, for instance, as the method of election of representatives to the Federal Assembly from the Provinces. These are important but secondary, and I ask the House this morning to concentrate on the main issue. Is this Measure the right step to take now? These other questions, however important they may be, whatever may be the answer to them, however they may be settled will not change the vote of any hon. Member from "Aye" to "No" or from "No" to "Aye." In approaching the consideration of the great main question at issue here, we must ask ourselves first which is the crux of the problem. I think it lies in gauging rightly what is and what is going to be the mentality of the Indians themselves in regard to this matter, in India generally and primarily in the great Provinces of British India. How are political leaders thinking and how are they going to think when, for the first time, they get complete freedom in all affairs of ordinary life under normal conditions? How is the development of the people of India going to progress and what will be the reaction of that development on the political leaders themselves? Whether we like it or not that is the question on which we really are intent. It is that which is going to affect the future and which ought to govern our decisions upon the Bill.

I have not had the advantages which were enjoyed by my noble Friend the Member for Horsham. I was not a Member of any of the Committees which dealt with this question or of the Round Table Conference. I read all their Reports and a great deal of the evidence, but I had not the advantage of hearing that evidence. My approach to this

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question is on rather different grounds. I was born in India and brought up in the Anglo-Indian tradition. I lived for a great many years in a completely Anglo-Indian atmosphere. What was being said and being done from day to day in regard to different administrations in different parts of India was the subject of the ordinary talk which I heard, much more than the differences and the problems of politics at home. In that respect I experience both an advantage and a disadvantage. It has this advantage, that there is imprinted on one's mind clearly the immense greatness and diversity of the different parts of India so that one is a little chary of generalising. But at the present time one has to make generalisations in order to pass judgment on the Bill. On the other hand, one has heard so much of the individual facts of one kind or another of Indian life that one approaches the question with those actual day-to-day facts in mind asking one's self what are the inferences which can be drawn from them and what are the conclusions to which they lead.

If one is to generalise, one must ask the question? How are the minds of the political leaders in India actually working? What is influencing them? Obviously, it is a mixture of considerations. I think anyone who knows India, either by personal experience, or by the talk of friends and relations who come home, or by study here, will agree that there is a great deal of very genuine feeling by which they are actuated. and that at the same time they are influenced also by a considerable measure of make-belief, which uses their own genuine feeling for individual purposes and ends. If that be so—and I think everyone will agree with it—it is not, of course, a unique phenomenon at all. It is true of politicians in all countries. In individual cases the proportions of the ingredients of genuineness and make-belief differ from one man to another, but it is true of politicians generally and of other people as well. If I were to talk to hon. Members opposite and ask them, they know quite well that leaders of employers and leaders of trade unions express in public opinions that are far more violent than the sentiments which they know they hold in private, and it is obvious that that is often the case.

That, I believe, is part of the great fact that one has to realise at present in trying to gauge how Indian politicians and others are thinking in India. I believe, from all I hear, that the feeling that they have on nationality with regard to India as a whole is very genuine and very real. The feeling of irksomeness which some of them have, the feeling of being restricted in their own freedom of action by the controls that are put upon them under the present system of dyarchy, is very real indeed. How could it be otherwise? And when one thinks of the spread of education in India, the establishment of schools, the establishment of higher education and of universities, why, of course, the tendency to resist any inequality of status becomes increased. When one thinks too of the hundreds of Indians that come over here to British schools and universities, where they are treated exactly on an equality with every white British subject in this country, when one thinks of those whom one has known oneself—I remember up at Oxford two people who were very popular indeed among all the other undergraduates, and one of them had a very distinguished career afterwards in India—can one expect that when they go back you will not have in an increasing degree a genuine resistance against control being put over them by those whom they regard as nothing more than their equals? I think those feelings are very genuine, and yet at the same time there is no question whatsoever that, like other people in other lands, they are vieing with one another at this time in denouncing British restrictions, in order that, by so doing, they may get Kudos or preserve their position at the least among their own fellows.

I do not think anyone would disagree with that brief statement, and yet what does it account for? I think it accounts in one way for the reception of this Bill. Great play has been made in one or two quarters with the vote which has been given in India against this Measure. Does anybody, when he really thinks of it, conceive that anything else could happen under present conditions out there? It is absurd to imagine that, the present conditions of India being what they are, you could get anyone to come out in the Provinces—I am not talking of the Indian States—among the politicians, and say he was whole-heartedly

in favour of this Measure because he thought it was a great advance in the direction that he wished. It is too much to expect of the courage of most politicians in any country, and therefore I cannot believe that the people who say they are affected by a hostile vote that is given in India with regard to the Bill can believe that their statement is a representation of their genuine belief that it is an honest rejection of the Bill.

I say that this state of mind accounts for that, and it accounts for something else. It accounts for what has made dyarchy work not so well as it might have done, and it accounts for the perfectly impossible demands and suggestions that are sometimes made in the Indian Legislature. Let me give the sort of instance that I mean, because it is one of those practical cases which illustrate the point. In one of the Indian provinces a great question arose about the opium traffic, and it was agreed among the Indians that they ought to make a demonstration against what was being done with regard to opium, so they threw out the Vote for the whole of the local provincial Excise, including the salaries of the Excise officers. They were confident that, as the existence of these Excise officers was necessary, the Governor would reinstate their salaries. Then they heard, what was perfectly true, that the Governor had said that in the circumstances he was not going to reinstate them, and that caused a flutter in the dove-cots. They had a second meeting, and when they found what was going to be the real consequence of their action, they passed the Budget, reinstating the salaries, and all went well afterwards. That is the kind of thing that occurs. In that case the bluff happened to be called, they had to face the consequences of their own action, and they took an entirely different line from that which had been embodied in their impossible demands.

I think that most people out there would say this: In themselves, they are anxious to get good government. You find Hindu and Moslem working together in order to try to get decent government, where they are not swayed and perverted by the need for agitation against British rule, and they are ready, I believe, if the circumstances need it, to show immense courage. One often thinks they will not do it, but I will take an instance to show what will happen when they have to act under a real sense of responsibility. Here again I can give chapter and verse for every case that I mention. I am thinking now of a case in one of the Eastern Provinces which I know, where a riot was imminent. The Mohammedan mob was there, ready to break out at any moment into an active riot and conflagration, and they were faced by a Mohammedan magistrate, who told the ringleader that he would count 30, and that if they did not begin to disperse by the time he had finished counting 30 he would give the order, which meant that the troops would fire. By the time he had got to 15 or 16 they began to disperse, and the affair passed off peacefully.

You get among the magistrates, the Indian magistrates, a willingness to face up to their responsibilities, showing the need for courage. Of course, I do not say that you get that in every case or that they are all alike. There are differences from one place to another and from one individual to another—there must be—but in the circumstances in which responsibility is put upon them, to say that they will not try to work for a decent government, that at least I cannot accept, because I think it is contrary to the inferences that could be drawn from the facts of everyday life as they are seen out there.

Let me pass to another aspect of the matter, and that is the people. We hear a great deal about the Indian peasant, and when I think of the Indian peasant and of my own relations and friends who have come back from there, it seems to me that it is impossible to generalise simply about the Indian peasant, when he differs, as everyone is aware, from the Punjab right down to the South of India and from the Far East to the Far West. Even in the Ganges Valley and along the tributaries, he differs enormously from one part to another from the closely grouped villages in the Punjab not far from where I was born and where my uncle went on tour as a Commissioner, to the scattered bamboo huts in the Brahmapootra Valley. In some cases, I have not the least doubt that the peasant is, as people say, poor, ignorant and powerless, but in some cases he is not. In some parts there is no question of the feeling that is stirring. It is a feeling of two kinds, as far as one can make out.

[Sir A. Steel-Maitland.]

On the one hand, there is a feeling which is vague and unanalysed, the feeling which set them in a glowing fervour about Gandhi when he first came forward as a saint and mystic. On the other hand, there is a stirring of a very practical kind in some places when it comes to matters that affect conditions of ordinary life.

Once again, an ounce of fact is worth a pound of theory, and I will give one or two instances. In one little Indian municipality the ordinary people were divided into two parties, much as they might be here. They called themselves the Clean party and the Dirty party. The Clean party were the people in favour of some system of drainage and sanitation which it was proposed to introduce, and the Dirty party were the people who opposed it because of the cost and the burden of taxation that it would bring upon them. It was not very different from what might happen in some parts of this country, and strife waxed keen between them. I remember another case. A very influential member of the legislature in one of the provinces lost his seat. Everyone was amazed, and they asked one another why he should have lost his seat. When they went to the villagers they were told, and they found the reason was quite simple. He had promised a lot of schools and did not get them, so they put him out. I take yet another case, which may interest the Front bench opposite. There was a landowner who had been in the legislature for some time, and it occurred to the peasants that he was not suiting their interests particularly. They ran one of their own people against him and put him in. I do not say that that is going to happen in every place. Of course it is not, and I am not suggesting that it will. But it does mean that things are stirring in a way that people often forget to realise.

People say you ought to give self-government in order that the Indian people may be able to deal with social reform, which it is not so easy for Europeans to deal with because they affect religions and other matters that go right down to the fibre of their being. The quickening of local interest is going to be speeded up when you get to reforms that involve religion such as the better enforcement of the laws against child marriage or to reforms in the towns which deal with the conditions of work and wages. Let no one think that some of the leaders of the workpeople in the towns, who are not heard at present, will not be ready to make their voice heard in the future. When reforms of this kind are proposed, there will be a general awakening of interest; and it is developing fastest in those parts of India, and particularly in the great Ganges Valley where political leaders are most active and their influence upon politics more powerful. If that be the case, what will be the reaction on the politicians of an active interest by villagers or town workers in reforms which vitally affect their day-to-day life?

If, on the one hand, the politicians and the political leaders get complete freedom, as they will, of self-government in the ordinary day to day affairs in normal times, and if, on the other hand, they are beginning to find that even their constituents are becoming more and more interested in these subjects, cannot we believe that the natural and likely line of development is that their interests will become concentrated more and more on the kind of problems that are before them, which are concerned with the actualities of life, and less and less on mere agitation if there is no change that really galls them in the matter of constitutional government? I put this forward for the consideration of my friends. I believe the right thing is to go forward, not from the defeatist point of view, but because we are following what is the natural and safe development.

I am entitled to ask again what the alternatives are. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition advocated in his broadcast speech immediate Dominion Status. I know that there is that school of thought, and it asks why there should be safeguards if we trust the people of India, and why we should not go further and trust them entirely. I would ask the right hon. Gentlemen to consider this. I beg the party opposite before they inscribe Dominion Status irrevocably on their policy to realise the effect that it may have on India. Suppose a mistake is made about some matter of domestic policy which does not matter much. The party opposite may, when they are in Opposition, put upon their programme

some measure which, when they come into office, they may find they are not able to carry out. I give as an instance from the past the old Washington Hours Convention. When they were in opposition the Labour Party said they would ratify it. After they came into office and looked into it, they said they could not do it without revision—a tribute to their good sense and their sense of reality and responsibility. That did no harm, but, while no harm may be done in regard to a domestic issue, there may not be the same effect if immediate Dominion Status for India is inscribed at once as part of their policy. If they came to power and did not carry it out, it might be considered a breach of a pledge, and not unnaturally, which might lead to an agitation in India which would otherwise have been perfectly unnecessary.

I am ready to go forward, but I do recognise—I say this freely, and friends of mine who take the opposite view about India may smile at my doing so, but one has to be frank—that in India and in all the countries of the world there are always elements of conflagration. There are the elements of conflagration on religious subjects, and, if it should break out under the regime that we propose, there is a need to have the safeguard of British power to help in putting it out. It is not only in religious subjects. It is also in racial questions. We all know that in India they have the non-fighting races and the fighting races. In England it is not so. The right hon. Gentleman the leader of the Opposition belongs as much, so to speak, to the general English fairly-combative but very good-natured stock as his opponent on the north-east frontier just over in Epping. There is not much difference among the English, but in India one finds the fighting races and the non-fighting races, and there is no question as to what the trouble may be if we let go the helm and the fighting races should get loose.

May I give a practical instance? My brother had a soldier servant in India who asked for and was given 10 days' holiday. When he came back my brother said "What sort of a time did you have?" and the reply was "First class, I bagged two of them,"—referring to two men in a part of the tribe against which he had a vendetta. Take another case. Just before a cousin of mine who was in the Central Indian Horse came back from India an old, old Sikh came to him and said—it has been said generally, and it was said in this particular case—"General, can you tell me whether it is true that the British are going to leave India?" My cousin said, "No, of course it is not true." "Are you quite sure?" further inquired the Sikh; "I hear so much talk about it." My cousin again replied, "No, it is not true." "Well," said the Sikh. "You know that I have been an old friend of yours, and I hope, if it should prove to be true, that you will really do the work of a friend and give me early word of it, so that I may be certain to be in at the looting." That is a quite definite instance.

Mr. CHURCHILL: And this is a speech in support of the Bill.

Sir A. STEEL-MAITLAND: As my right hon. Friend says, it is a speech in support of the Bill, and it is in support of the Safeguards. If I turn to the other alternative, which is that of my right hon. Friend the member for Epping, I would ask "What is his policy as the other alternative?" Are he and his friends going to take the Simon Report as the basis of their policy, or are they going to take the Montagu-Chelmsford settlement? Are they going to give law and order, or try to stand by things as they are. If one tries to stand by things as they are, what does it really mean? Dyarchy was not a success, and it will become increasingly not a success, as time goes on. If we try to maintain it now we shall begin to alienate the best friends we have out there, people who are not always vocal but who exercise an influence, and we may in the end begin to affect the very services by which we can carry out our administration. We have a loyal police and a loyal Indian Army, and yet we cannot prevent the feelings that are spreading right throughout the whole people from, in the end, having an effect upon them too. I say the other alternative seems to me to be unthinkable when one studies the real facts of the case.

We were asked by the hon. Member for Chertsey whether we were going to leave India and throw away the brightest jewel in the Crown—were going to leave

[Sir A. Steel-Maitland.]

India out of fear, as he said. It is unthinkable that he should put any question like that to some of us. I happen to have been born in India. My father was in the Indian Army and died on service out there, and my step-father commanded the Guides of the Frontier Force. My grandfather was out there and many of us—half our relations—have been there on service. We are not going to leave India out of fear. Not for a single moment should we think of doing that. It is almost an insult to suggest it. On the other hand, if he says "You are going to lose India by this step," and then states that America is no illustration in point, I reply that it is a very real illustration. It proves in the broad main general truth that if we try to maintain restrictions on another people which goad and which irk them, and which in the end we cannot maintain except by sheer force, we are much more likely to lose India than we should be under any other system—much more, certainly, than under this Bill.

We have got to face the facts. This situation has not arisen now. It is not caused by the Simon Report, nor by the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. The origin of it was not even under the Morley-Minto reforms. It goes back farther. It did not come even from Lord Ripon and the freedom given to the vernacular press. The seeds of the present situation were sown when we put into India the two greatest solvents that any one could put into an old-established civilisation—education and commerce. They are two solvents which were bound to cause a change. About 35 or 40 years ago some of the young men who went out to India in the Civil Service wrote home to ask what was the ultimate aim to be when they were applying this solvent to that old civilisation. They got no answer, otherwise, they could have guided Indian development and the situation to-day need not have been half so difficult as it is. No policy was outlined to them.

> "The Moving Finger writes, and, having writ,
> Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
> Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
> Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it."

It is no good trying to put back the clock now. When anybody says, as the hon. Member for Chertsey said, "Leave it to an open vote," I reply that I would withdraw my support from the Government if they did so. We know quite well that if his appeal were granted my hon. Friend would at once turn round on the Government and say, "You have not got a policy of your own in which you believe." I cannot say that I go forward without any apprehension at all. No one can look upon the future without anxiety and no one should under-estimate the difficulties. I have got anxiety; but it is in a spirit neither of wavering nor of pessimism that I support the Bill and ask all my hon. Friends to do the same.

11.53 a.m.

Mr. COCKS: With the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman just now about the position of the Opposition I feel a good deal of agreement, and I will say something about them in a moment, but when he went on to say that my right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition and my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) were almost exactly the same type of person, and then immediately followed that up by telling a story of a gentleman who went out with a rifle and said "I have bagged two of them", he was making a suggestion which I should think the House would find it difficult to support, because I should say that those two right hon. Gentlemen are poles apart. But his speech did illustrate one thing, that the welfare of India is the common concern of every Party in this House. We are all on common ground there. Although on ordinary subjects I am a strong party man I have never been able to see that the question of India is a party question at all. It is my view, and it may be shared by some people, that we are moving in semi-darkness towards the unknown. I feel very uncertain of the future. The question is a complex and difficult one. Nobody would say that this gigantic Bill is the Bill which any one of us, if we had a free hand and the Godlike power to draw up an ideal Constitution for India would produce. But, as the Secretary of State very rightly said, we have not got a free hand. We are not writing upon a clean sheet of paper. He pointed out, in a speech, which I think he made at Oxford, that we are writing on a palimpsest written over by the writings and

the blottings of previous generations, and writing in the light of hard facts of the present day.

Therefore, I feel that we should regard this problem rather as a scientist trying to discover some solution to a very difficult and complex problem than as a political swashbuckler leading a cavalry charge down upon the plains of the enemy. When I hear the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) asserting with great certainty that the result of this Measure will be destruction in India, I remember reading in a book the authorship of which I do not think the right hon. Gentleman will dispute, that he was just as certain how India should be governed on the day when, a young subaltern, he first landed in Bombay and on the very same night told the Governor of Bombay exactly what he ought to do. When I listen to the oratory of the right hon. Gentleman and consider what its effects on India may be, I feel I must parody a rather famous verse:

> "The East bowed down before the blast
> With patient, deep disdain;
> She let the periods thunder past
> Then turned to facts again."

When his friend, that very learned and intellectual friend Lord Rothermere, tells the Princes of India that, as a result of the passing of this Bill, they are going to become penniless wanderers over the face of the earth, recipients of the attenuated bounty of Lord Rushcliffe, I suppose, with one shilling knocked off their income for every member of their families over five years of age, that they will take the same attitude.

When I addressed the House a few weeks ago, it was to put forward a certain proposition which we think ought to be embodied in the Bill. All that has passed since then has amply proved that we were correct in what we suggested. Let us take this very important question—it is not merely a verbal question—of inserting the words "Dominion Status" in the Preamble of the Bill, and not merely doing it in a declaration as the Secretary of State made it on Wednesday in this House. This is a matter to which the Indian people and those who are to work this Constitution, the Indian political classes, attach the greatest importance. From the cablegrams that we have had from India since then, we learn that a great many influential bodies have stated that they will refuse to work this Constitution. The last to say that was, I believe, the Council of the Central Provinces, and the reason for that was chiefly based on the fact that Dominion Status was not inserted in the Bill. We hear that that great friend of the Government, the Aga Khan, Mr. Ghuznavi, the Moslem leader in Bengal, friends of England and of India and even such a staunch supporter of the Government as Sir John Thompson have expressed very grave concern because that phrase has not been inserted in the Preamble.

If the correspondent in India of the "Observer" is correct, those feelings are shared in more exalted quarters. This is what appeared in the "Observer" of 6th January, from their Calcutta correspondent:

> "It has to be recognised that practically all Indians, from members of the Viceroy's Council and Ministers in provincial governments to Liberals and what may be called 'extreme moderates' just this side of Congress, are deeply dismayed and dissatisfied at the apparent deliberate disinclination in Britain to reaffirm in the Report or the Preamble of the coming Bill that the goal is a self-governing Dominion. This is regarded as a solemn pledge with which the King and successive Viceroys were associated. Lord Willingdon, indeed, as recently as 19th December, reaffirmed it at the European Association dinner, but this is negatived by the home boycott of his language"—

whatever that may mean—

> "and Lord Salisbury's attempt to rebuke Lord Willingdon in the 'Times' last year is recalled. The British in India generally regard the omission as at critical periods arise from the inability in England to understand Indian psychology and cloud the whole horizon."

In a critical position like this, a failure in psychology is almost the worst of mistakes. It is the sort of mistake which one rather associated with German diplomacy than with our own, a sort of insensitiveness of touch which I certainly do not expect to find in the India Office. It is for that reason, because the Indians, as everybody knows are a very sensitive people and feel that their honour and self-respect are involved, that I beseech the Government again to reconsider the question which I believe, and according to the "Times", they have already considered, of inserting those words in the Preamble.

If I may take the time of the House for a minute or two longer I would ask

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how it is that this question has arisen, or rather why it is so important. In the years 1928 and 1929, the position in India was critical. The Simon Commission were touring India and there was a feeling against them of dissatisfaction in regard to the wishes and intentions of the British Government. Congress had met and had boycotted the Commission, and even the well-known charm of the Foreign Secretary failed to soften the hearts of Indian statesmen. Congress was even threatening open non-co-operation and refusal to pay taxes. In December, 1928, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, the chairman of the Indian Liberal Federation, appealed to the Government to make a bold effort to regain the good will of Indian public opinion. In January, 1928, Lord Irwin, the present Lord Halifax, speaking at the opening of the Assembly at Simla, said:

"I tell this Assembly again, and through them India, that the Declaration of 1917 stands and will stand for all time as the solemn pledge of the British people to do all that can be done by one people to assist another to attain full national political stature, and that the pledge so given will never be dishonoured."

That did not have the desired effect, and the Viceroy determined that it was necessary that he should come home and consult the Government as to whether something else could be done. Before he left India, speaking at Simla on the 20th June of that year, he said:

"What are for me the two governing pronouncements of British hope and purpose: the familiar Declaration of 1917 and the Instrument of Instructions which every Governor-General receives from the King Emperor when he assumes office, wherein His Majesty affirms that 'above all things it is Our will and pleasure that the plans laid before Our Parliament for the progressive realisation of responsible government in British India as an integral part of Our Empire may come to fruition, to the end that British India may attain its due place among Our Dominions.' I earnestly pray that, as the future unfolds itself, we may see the sure realisation of that hope."

He then left India to come home here, which in itself was an almost unprecedented thing at that time for a Viceroy to do during his term of office. He consulted the Government, and on his return he made, on the 31st October, the statement, which has so often been repeated in this House, on the authority of the Cabinet, that it was

"implicit in the Declaration of 1917 that the national issue of India's constitutional progress, as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion status."

Why was that statement made? It was made for a definite purpose. It was made to create a favourable atmosphere for the Report of the Statutory Commission and for the inauguration of the Round Table Conference. Does the right hon. Gentleman deny that?

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Sir Samuel Hoare): Yes.

Mr. COCKS: All I can say is that the then Secretary of State for India, Mr. Wedgwood Benn, said so definitely in this House. Referring to the fact that doubts had arisen in India as to the sincerity of British intentions in the matter of the Montagu policy he said,

"The Viceroy said that these doubts existed and that for the removal of these doubts it was necessary to issue a clear declaration of existing policy . . . . He said 'The Statutory Commission is going to report, and we want if we can to make a good atmosphere for the Report. We want to have an atmosphere of good will, and that will be better secured if we can clear up the doubts which exist in the minds of Indians who have been assisting the British Government and co-operating with us and helping the work of the Montagu schemes, and remove the webs of distrust which it is necessary to clear away.—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 7th November, 1929; cols. 1326-7; Vol. 231.]

Surely it is clear that one of the reasons for that statement was to create a good atmosphere for the reception of the Statutory Commission——

Mr. CHURCHILL: Actually, its effect was almost to invalidate that Report, and it was felt deeply by the Commission at that time that this declaration should have been made, bringing in the question of Dominion status, which the Statutory Commission had decided not to mention.

Mr. COCKS: I am speaking of the facts; I am not talking about the intentions, and I am pointing out that the then Secretary of State definitely said that it was done in order to create a good atmosphere for the Report. For the time being that effect was created. Anyhow, it was said to have been done for that purpose, and for the time being—for a brief period—it did create a very good atmosphere, because even Congress passed a resolution thanking the Viceroy

for that statement and expressing their satisfaction and their belief in its good faith and sincerity.

Duchess of ATHOLL: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but he is trying to set out the facts. Should it not be remembered that, within two months of Lord Irwin's declaration on Dominion status, the Congress party, in their Conference at Lahore, pulled down the Union Jack, replaced it by the Congress flag, and declared for the complete independence of India?

Mr. COCKS: That may be so, but, as I said before, the reason was this that Congress had got the view that that statement really meant that Dominion status would be granted almost immediately, but when Mr. Gandhi interviewed the Viceroy he was informed that that was not the case. There were many debates in England at that time which caused a great deal of mistrust again to develop, and, as a result, the atmosphere which had been cleared for the time being, darkened again. That statement was deliberately made, and the recent book on "The Rise and Development of British India" states that it entirely altered the view of the Indian people. They considered that their status had been changed, and that is why they pressed that Dominion status should be embodied in the Bill.

That declaration was made as a deliberate act of State policy, for a certain purpose. Whether it was mistaken or not is not for me to say, but we cannot go back on it now. Any attempt to go away from it, or even appear to go away from it, would be very discreditable, and a thing which the House of Commons could not tolerate for a moment. Therefore, I feel that the Government should again consider putting it in the Preamble. I am very grateful to the Secretary of State for what he said in this House on that subject, but we must remember that many constitutional authorities have said quite recently—it was stated in this House by the hon. Member who, I believe, was the Chairman of the Conservative India Committee, and by the hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) yesterday—that no declaration of a Secretary of State, or a Viceroy, ar even the King Emperor himself, is binding on Parliament, but only the words of an Act of Parliament.

Lord EUSTACE PERCY: Do I understand the hon. Member to argue as a constitutional proposition that the words of an Act of Parliament are binding upon future Parliaments?

Mr. COCKS: No, I did not say that, but they are binding as long as they remain on the Statute Book. For that reason, although I am very grateful for the declaration of the Secretary of State, I say that it is not enough, and that the Government should go a little further and embody the words in the Statute.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: Is my hon. Friend aware that the Statute will be binding on all future Parliaments? This, however, is a question of the Preamble.

Mr. COCKS: I do not know to which Statute the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is referring. The Bill, which he has in his mind, is not binding, for it has not been embodied in legislation. When it is passed, it will be binding until it is repealed. I am anxious to find out what are the objections to embodying these words in the Bill. I have very carefully considered them as far as I have heard them, and I have come to the conclusion that they are chiefly pedantic, and based on the fact that it is difficult to define exactly what Dominion status means. A similar objection, which was very satisfactorily disposed of by the Secretary of State, was made to the Federation of India. The right hon. Gentleman pointed out early on that people said, "We have never heard of a Federation like this, of different bodies having different powers." He disposed of that by saying that there had been many kinds of Federation. Taking the example of Germany, he instanced the case of Bavaria, which kept its own duty on beer. But it did not prevent federation, and he said something like this—that there was no need for a neat and exact uniformity running through all the units. There is no need, either, at the present time to define Dominion status with any meticulous exactitude. Just as there are very different types of federation, so there are different types of Dominion status. In the "Manchester Guardian" there was a very interesting article pointing out that the position to-day in New Zealand and Australia is not exactly the same as in the Union of South Africa, the Irish Free State, or

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Canada, and undoubtedly in India, when we have the Princes coming in with a special kind of treatment, the position will be still more different. At the meeting of the Joint Select Committee the representative of the Chamber of Princes said that the Princes whom he represented would

"favour a Constitution for India of Dominion status in the shortest period of time, consistently with safeguards."

This was said by Mir Maqhool Mahmood, in answer to Question 2953 put by Mr. Jayaker. In the circumstances of the time, theoretically some other word would be more appropriate. The "Times" suggested the word "nation," but the phrase "Dominion status" is one which the Hindus want. It is a phrase which has been embodied in our Declaration, and, as the right hon. Member for Epping knows,

"words are living things, and walk about in the hearts of the people."

Although the Secretary of State for India at the Joint Select Committee personally was against these general declarations in Preambles, there was no question one way or the other about using these words. If there is no question of principle involved, do not let us allow a mere question of pedantry to stop us. After all, surely the good feeling of India is worth, I will not use a terminological inexactitude, but a suspension or postponement of definition.

I want to pass very quickly to other points. I was rather criticised last time by the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetlands (Sir R. Hamilton) for saying that this constitution did not contain in itself the seeds of growth, that it was too rigid and the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India himself said on Wednesday that it was a rigid constitution. No one is going to deny that if this constitution works, the result will be a great growth in experience and authority on the part of Indian Ministers. That will have a great educational effect on the whole of India. No one disputes that, but our point is that the constitutions of Dominions in the past have been varied from time to time by altering the Letters of Instruction—not by altering the words of the Statute. That has been done, as I understand, on the authority of the Government alone. But under this Bill that cannot be done. It can only be done by the issue of any alteration of the Letters of Instructions, and only if it is laid before both Houses of Parliament and passed by both Houses of Parliament, by means of an Address. It means that the future development of India, as long as another place exists, if it is not swept away by an indignant British democracy, lies entirely in the hands of the party opposite. They alone control the growth and development of the Indian Constitution. It may be a very pleasant feeling to them, but Members on this side and people in India cannot be expected to regard it with the same kind of pleasure and equanimity.

Sir S. HOARE: The Indians actually asked for this procedure.

Mr. COCKS: I do not quite know whom the right hon. Gentleman means.

Sir S. HOARE: The Indian representatives at the Round Table Conference attached a great deal of importance to the Instrument of Instructions, so much so that they said it was essential there should be Parliamentary sanction.

Mr. COCKS: I accept what the right hon. Gentleman has said, and I am sorry that in the course of the two years I was on the Select Committee I was not aware of that. It shows that some of those at the Round Table Conference were not animated by the same kind of feeling we have. After all, if there are 20 or 30 of that opinion, they are a small number out of 300,000,000 people. The Indian representatives on the Round Table Conference said that the development of the Constitution of India could only be advanced when the right hon. Gentleman and his friends are in power, and not when we are in power. In the same way that Royalty used to imagine that foreign affairs were their particular affair, so it seems that the Conservative party still regard India as their own concern, and nobody else's. I do not want to add anything to what I have said upon the action of the machinery which has been set up. We are going to say a good deal about it on the Committee stage. But I would like to ask the House to consider that things like mines, factories, workmen's compensation, trade unions, industrial and labour disputes, health insurance, old age pensions are all on the Concurrent List, and can be

settled by an indirectly elected board controlled by a council of State which will be—I do not want to use decorative language—the most reactionary body that will exist in the whole world. Therefore, I do not think the House will blame us if we say that we are going to fight tooth and nail against that machinery, and that we shall try to improve it.

The Noble Lord the Member for Horsham (Earl Winterton) attacked us yesterday. I am sorry he is not here; he has retired after firing his shot. He said that our attitude towards the Bill was that we did not object to the Constitution except on the ground that Indians would not work it, but that if they do work it, they will not work it in the way the Labour party would like to see it worked. All I can say is that I sat on the Select Committee for nearly two years with the Noble Lord, and not only sat there with him, but next to him. It was said of the late Joseph Chamberlain —I do not say it of the Noble Lord— that his mind was rather like his face—he thought very little, but very clearly. I do not say that I agree with that, but I would say of myself, that although I do not think very much, I do think clearly and do not try to conceal vacuity of thought in a mist of hazy words. Therefore, I do not think I shall ever become a Prime Minister. I am very surprised that in all that period the Noble Lord has not ascertained what our objection is. I do not think it is due to us. It must be due to him. Our objection is not that the Indians will not work it as we should like them to work it, but that we are not giving the masses of the people sufficient representation and that we are weighting the Constitution in favour of wealth. I am afraid the Noble Lord must be like those to whom the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Darwen (Sir H. Samuel) referred, who only hear what they say themselves.

Then we had yesterday from the hon. Member for Chertsey (Sir A. Boyd-Carpenter) a speech which I very much admired for its passion and sincerity. He rebuked the Lord President unfairly, as I thought, for suggesting that, when we have finished our trusteeship, our *régime* will come to an end. Surely that is not an unreasonable thing to say. If we are in India in the position of trustees or guardians, when that work is accomplished, when the child has grown up to manhood, there is no further reason why we should keep on our trusteeship. He said something also which I thought extraordinarily surprising coming from one of his name and family. He said there was no alternative to death. I thought there was. I thought the alternative to death was eternal life. [HON. MEMBERS: "After death!"] Not after death at all. The alternative to death is eternal life. There is no reason why our association with India should ever be broken. Although the hon. Gentleman was sincere, I felt that his speech was animated by the spirit of ascendancy. We could tell that by his reference to Egypt, when he said how much better the Egyptians were when we were there. What right have we to be in Egypt at all? We only went there to defend the interest of the bondholders. He asked why we should leave India after all the sacrifices we have made. I quite agree with him as to the fine work that has been done by Civil servants, but for anyone to say that we went to India purely for the benefit of the Indians——

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: Does not their work benefit the Indians?

Mr. COCKS: I said so, but, if you read the history of the last century, we went to India merely for plunder, and we remained because India is valuable to us. We have large investments there. There is a good market for us. Does anyone believe that, if the Government of India cost the country £100,000,000 in taxation, we should be very keen to stay there? I think not. Although we are doing good service there, the hon. Member's speech, sincere as it was, was really animated by the spirit of black hypocrisy which makes this country hated and detested in other countries.

We are all anxious for the welfare of the masses of India. It is mentioned not only in our Amendment but in that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping and his friends. Therefore, I expect their support when we move our Amendments on that part of the Bill. I believe it is one of the principles of democracy that it is better to govern yourself inefficiently than to be governed efficiently by someone else. I accept that principle, though I admit that if it is

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carried out in every detail and in every condition great hardships are involved. I do not suppose the Romanised Britons felt very gratified when the last departing Roman centurion said: "We will leave you to the mercy of the barbarians from Germany." I do not suppose the ryots of India will feel very pleased when we tell them that they have been given self-government and that they are to be handed over to oppressors of their own race. Not that they have much protection now, but surely, if you are going to have a new Constitution, you must give them all the powers you can and let them defend themselves by the power of the vote.

Industrial conditions in India are not of a very high standard. I am very anxious not to use exaggerated language, and I shall deal with official figures. If you read the Report of the Labour Commission, you find some very ghastly information. There are not very many statistics in that book, which in itself is a criticism of industrial legislation in India. In the coalfield in Behar and Larissa the wages of a coal cutter are 15s. to 22s. 6d. a month. When you find that in Bombay, as the Simon Commission says, 70 per cent. of the tenements are one-roomed tenements with over four people in each room, you will admit that there is need for reform and legislative protection there. Thousands of women still work underground in the mines. Two hundred thousand women die every year in child-birth. Out of every 1,000 children 179 die before they are one year of age. Surely there is need to give the Indian women the power to protect themselves and to alter those conditions. In his fascinating book on the Punjab Mr. Darling says the wages of the labourer are £9 15s. a year. It would be more effective if I could give such terms in weeks, but I have not had time to work it out. The gross produce of the peasant proprietor having six acres of land amounts to only £15 15s. a year.

It has been said by an hon. and gallant Friend behind that the peasant is illiterate. As the Simon Commission and the hon. Member for South-West Hull (Mr. Law) say, you must assume that he has the deep wisdom of the ages, and I am sure that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping will appreciate that. He has the patient wisdom of the man who works on the surface of the earth, and the practical common sense of people who work with their hands, although he may be illiterate and cannot read papers in India of the standard of the "Daily Mail." [An HON. MEMBER: "Or the Daily Herald?"] I do not know the favourite paper of the right hon. Gentleman. As Mr. Darling said, if the interests in the land are universal interests, they are the things which affect his own interests. Therefore, if he is given the vote, the people who are to get his vote will have to do something for him. We ought to extend the franchise to all these three classes further than the proposal of the Government, and, when we propose this Amendment, I expect support from every Member in this House.

No one can predict the future. The Secretary of State talks about this gigantic ship which it has taken seven years to construct. We do not know what will happen. It may settle down in the ooze, or be lifted on the ordered tides of liberty and sail the seas of the future. I ask the Government, before the ship is launched, to give the Indian people some more tangible proof of their good will in order that the ship may be launched in an auspicious atmosphere. I ask them to reflect upon the views which I am putting forward on behalf of our party and on behalf of millions of people in India, and to give them support. And then perhaps the Government will have their reward. I believe that the Indian people, admitted into a free alliance with us, will bring to us those great gifts of intellect and of spiritual understanding which they possess, and will work out with us, equal partners, the social and economic problems of the future, and indeed be ready to hold their part of the continent of Asia for the British Commonwealth of freedom-loving nations and for the twin causes of the progress and peace of the world.

12.38 p.m.

Mr. BERNAYS: I hope that the hon. Member for Broxtowe (Mr. Cocks) will not think that I am casting any reflection upon his very interesting speech when I say that the trouble about these four days' Debates in the House is that hon. Members sometimes tend to make

their speeches four times as long. In making this tribute to brevity at the beginning of my speech, I hope that it will not be a tribute merely of lip-service. I should as a Liberal at the outset like to congratulate, if I can do so without presumption, the Conservative leaders on the way in which, with peculiar and powerful temptations to the contrary, they have stood by the main structure of self-government to India. I can speak for a Party who know something about Party splits, and we know what disastrous affects they have on Party fortunes. The Conservative party are deserving of the thanks of two continents for having gone forward with this policy so boldly even at the risk of a split in their own ranks.

My only substantial objection to the policy of the Government is their conversion, after some vicissitudes, to the principle of indirect election. I cannot think that the proposals that the members of the Central Legislature should be elected by a handful from the Provincial Legislatures will make for democratic or for efficient government. Will not those narrow electorates open the door to that very corruption which even the best friends of India fear may accrue from the new Constitution? We have an example in our own history. It was when constituencies were small that British politics were most corrupt, and it was only with our extension of the franchise until finally we had manhood suffrage that personal corruption was completely rooted out. I suggest that there is a real danger if the Government persist in indirect election that we may be turning new Delhi into Old Sarum.

Sir FRANCIS FREMANTLE: May I ask the hon. Gentleman if he considers that personal corruption went on in this country until 1923?

Mr. BERNAYS: I think that personal corruption went on until 1918. However, that is a question we need not discuss.

Mr. CHURCHILL: It was during the Liberal epoch.

Mr. BERNAYS: The right hon. Gentleman knows a good deal about the Liberal epoch, because he derived very great benefit from it, and benefit which Members to-day are not likely to get. I was very glad that the Under-Secretary promised his sympathetic consideration to the views which those in favour of direct election may desire to put forward on the Committee stage. The essential thing is that there has been no retreat by the Government on this central structure of responsible government. Where there have been concessions, they have been in the direction of conciliation at the Centre, and not in the direction of conciliation at the right. Where there is retreat it seems to be from the opponents of these proposals. Where do they stand? It is very difficult to get an answer from them. I believe that my hon. Friend the Member for Mid-Bedford (Mr. Lennox-Boyd) will be speaking later, and I hope that he will deal very clearly with this point: whether they believe in democracy or whether they do not; whether they are prepared to go forward with provincial autonomy or not; whether they are in favour of provincial autonomy as recommended by the Simon Commission, or whether they make important reservations? It is difficult to find out where the Die-hards stand on this question, as it was, last week, to find out whether the Labour party was or was not in favour of flats. The Die-hards simply will not say.

Viscountess ASTOR: The Die-hards are flats.

Mr. BERNAYS Sometimes they appear to go forward, sometimes it appears they wish to stand still, and sometimes that they wish to go backward. The hon. Baronet the Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) is apparently in favour of reversing the engine. He pleaded yesterday that we ought to go back beyond 1920 and that we ought to take away from India its power of fiscal autonomy. I hope that we shall hear on Monday the views of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) on that question, because I think he was a prominent Member of the Government that gave that fiscal autonomy in 1920, and it will be very interesting to hear if he now proposes to take it away. I cannot imagine a policy more likely to produce an explosion than the policy of ruling India in the interests of Great Britain and of Lancashire. It is a policy of selfishness, naked and unashamed. That is cheered loudly. In the next sentence they say that we are

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wantonly sacrificing Indian people, and that it is cheered loudly. Where do we stand? Are we in India for India's good or for our own? You cannot have the one without the other. You cannot say that you were there for India's good when at the same time you are doing your utmost to remove from India the power to protect her industries as she desires. There is no answer to that.

Sir BASIL PETO: Does the hon. Member suggest that it is necessary for the maintenance of an agricultural and pastoral community of 300,000,000 in India that they should have a high protective tariff for the benefit of the millowners of Bombay?

Mr. BERNAYS: Not at all, but I think the best judges of India's economic interests are the Indians themselves. They have to make up their minds, and if they think it is for India's good, then we have no right to exploit India's trade for our own economic interests. The very eloquent speeches which are made about the plight of the Indian peasant reveal to my mind an extraordinary confusion. The hon. Baronet the Member for Chertsey (Sir A. Boyd-Carpenter), in his eloquent speech yesterday, said that the lot of the peasant would be worse in future than it has been in the past. Then, why do the opponents of the Government scheme propose provincial autonomy? If popular government in India is against democracy, why are the opponents of the Bill proposing an extension of it? If the policy of the Government is so bad for the Indian peasant, why extend it? I entirely fail to understand the argument of those opponents of the Bill who say that we are delivering the dumb millions of Indians over to the Indian politician. That is precisely what they are going to do if they are in favour of provincial autonomy. In regard to the government of the dumb millions, drainage, sanitation, social reform and taxation are all provincial subjects and will come under the exclusive purview of the Indian politicians. The only logical position that the opponents of the Government scheme ought to take up is to have no extension at all, no democracy at all, but that is a position which they are afraid to take up.

We are warned that to go forward with this Bill exposes us to the gravest dangers. Here, there is another confusion in the attack, because at one moment we are told that we are embarking on a bold and reckless experiment and the next moment we are told that we are the victims of craven fear. Dangers! Do the opponents of the scheme ever consider for a moment the dangers inherent in their policy? There is quiet in India now. Civil disobedience is for the moment dead. Why? Because the Indian politicians believe that we mean to stand by our pledges. What would happen if we went back on our pledges now? There would be an outbreak of civil disobedience of a character that would make the last outbreak a picnic in comparison. I saw something of the last civil disturbance movement, but if ever a supporter of the Bill says that he has had experience of that movement in India there is always a shout of Paget M.P. It is better, surely, to have been in India for six months recently than not to have been at all, or not to have been there since 1898?

It was extraordinarily difficult for the Government to deal with the civil disobedience movement. I remember one day in Bombay when Congress decided to hold up the whole of the traffic. It was done by getting their female supporters to lie down in front of the trams. That brought traffic to a standstill. As fast as the police came along and removed a woman from the front of one tram other women ran up the street and lay down in front of another tram. It is an appalling business dealing with passive resistance. The hon. and gallant baronet the Member for Bournemouth said yesterday that force had never been used in India except in the case of a communal riot. That is not true. On many of these occasions it was necessary to fire on the mob. I do not say that the police were not justified in doing so, because they were, but it is a horrible and ugly business and something which this country is very unlikely to tolerate.

Brigadier-General Sir HENRY CROFT: I think the hon. Member misrepresents me. What I said was that we never used force except to keep peace.

Mr. BERNAYS: The hon. baronet said:

"We have never, since 1857, used force in our own defence or except to preserve peace between those two warring sections of the Indian community."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 7th February, 1935, col. 1384; Vol. 297.]

Yes, between warring sections of the Indian community. There were no warring sections of the Indian community during my time in Bombay. They were warring against us. I do not say that we could not suppress rebellious mobs in India, but we should have to adopt the methods of Hitler to do it. We should have to suspend the right of public meeting, to stifle free speech, to suspend all Parliamentary institutions and to establish concentration camps from one end of India to the other. The Government would be forced to adopt measures which would repel and disgust the electors of this country; methods that no Government would willingly take up, not even a Conservative Government. If Labour got into power they would never stand for such a policy, and we should have that disastrous alternation of coercion and conciliation which produced such a terrible state of affairs in Ireland.

The opponents of the Bill talk of the dangers of the Government's policy. Those dangers are nothing compared with the dangers of their policy. The right hon. Member for Epping talks of the insecurity of India. There would be no country in the world more insecure than India if the right hon. Gentleman had his way, unless perhaps it were Fascist Austria. A great deal is made of the wild utterances of the Congress party. What are the opponents of the Government's scheme going to do with the Congress party? Exterminate it? Are they going to Copenhagen it, to destroy it as Nelson destroyed the Danish fleet? That seems to be the only alternative. Indian politicians may make wild speeches now, but I suggest that it will be very different when they are in responsible positions. Responsibility has a tremendous sobering effect. We have seen the effect of responsibility on the Party opposite. What the Labour party say in Opposition is very different from what they do when in office.

Mr. COCKS: What about the Liberals?

Mr. BERNAYS: We always do exactly the same thing in office as in Opposition. That is why we had our great triumph before the War. We have not had a chance since. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition said at the Wavertree by-election: "I am an out and out Pacifist." But that will not prevent the right hon. Gentleman when he is in power voting for all the Army, Navy and Air Force Estimates and for any cruisers that happen to be wanted by the Admiralty. We see what a sobering effect responsibility has upon the right hon. Member for Epping. What the right hon. Gentleman says when he is sitting on the Front Bench is completely different from what he says when he is sitting, fortunately for the welfare of the country, on this bench. I think it is fortunate that the right hon. Gentleman is sitting in his corner seat and not on the Treasury Bench.

I do not think that the politicians will refuse to work the Constitution. I remember when I was in Delhi at the time of the Gandhi Pact that Mr. Gandhi accepted in writing the main principles of this Constitution—Federation, Provincial Autonomy, Responsibility and Safeguards. I admit that there was a proviso that the safeguards should be in the interests of India, and I submit that the safeguards in the Bill are in the interests of India and will never become operative as long as Indian politicians show that they are able to work self government. Self-government is a certainty; the safeguards are mere contingencies. Is it too much to hope that the people of India will not recognise this for the great and generous gift it is? When they read this Debate they may get the impression that our attention is concentrated on the safeguards. That is not so. The great central body of opinion in this country, which is always in power whatever Government is in office, is in favour of taking this step in no mean and niggardly spirit, and its future depends on how the great central body of opinion in India is prepared to accept the gift.

The Government of India Bill is an attempt at a final settlement, an attempt to create conditions by which India can in the end obtain the status of a Dominion. We who support the Bill are sometimes attacked for the apologetic tone we use in its support. I do not use any apologetic tone. I never felt more certain about anything, in all the

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nicely calculated balance of advantage and disadvantage that shrouds so many of the political problems which we have to decide in this House, than that the Government were taking the right and only course. Diehard proposals in the past have always proved disastrous. They have been proved disastrous by that tribunal from which there is no appeal, the inexorable logic of events. They have been wrong in every problem they have touched throughout history. They were wrong in the case of the American Colonies. They were wrong in the case of Ireland. They were wrong in the case of Ireland most of all. The shadow of Ireland is now over all our debates. It presents the most terrible "if" of history. If only there had been a little generosity in 1886 and 1893 there would have been no surrender in 1921.

What makes the situation so different to-day, and of such hopeful augury for the future of India, is that the great bulk of the Conservative party, instead of being against self-government, is in favour of it. One of its most foremost supporters is the right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Sir A. Chamberlain) whose father took such a decisive part in the rejection of Home Rule over 40 years ago. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham has had the courage to look at what has happened since and to say that if he had one vote which he would undo it is the vote he gave against Home Rule for Ireland. I recall, in closing, the words of Mr. Gladstone when moving the first Home Rule Bill in 1886, when with a prophetic instinct he looked down the vista of the years and said:

> "Think long, think carefully, think not for yourself but for the years that are to come, before you reject this Bill."

1.1 p.m.

Mr. LENNOX-BOYD: My hon Friend the Member for North Bristol (Mr. Bernays) is always interesting. It is always a pleasure to listen to him and his performance this morning has been no exception to the rule. It is some 10 years ago since my hon. Friend and I first crossed swords in the Oxford University Union on questions of not quite the magnitude we are discussing to-day but questions which, nevertheless, at the time appeared to us to be of great importance. My hon. Friend congratulated the Government on the courage with which they are concentrating on their proposals and running the risk of splitting their own party. I must pay him this compliment, that he himself, despite some personal disadvantage and a break with the party to which he was affiliated, has taken in this House a singularly patriotic and courageous line. But having paid him that compliment I cannot allow him to imagine that I accept without question and denial the various assumptions he has drawn and the various charges he has made against the diehard element in this House. I am not going to attempt to recapitulate the many times in our history when a warning from the Right has been disregarded to the nation's great disadvantage, but I would most earnestly ask him to read again in the pages of the "National Review" what that Prince of Die-Hards and Scholars, Leo Maxse, wrote in warning this country as to what would happen if the German menace was not met and conquered. We emphatically deny that Ireland is not an example which we can cite in support of our case.

My hon. Friend asked where we stood. I have one or two observations to make of a rather novel kind and I do not wish to be drawn into an argument which I had not intended to develop, but I would refer my hon. Friend to the Minority Report issued under the signatures of various members of the Select Committee and ask him to accept from me our view that, with certain slight alterations of detail, it represents the view of those on whose behalf I am speaking. We are democrats in that we accept the democratic sytsem as being the most suitable to the genius of the British people. We are Parliamentarians in that we believe that this country which first fashioned Parliament shows an ability to work it even in the distressing circumstances of the modern world. But, we are neither democrats nor Parliamentarians when we approach the problem of India until the Indian people, by a sense of responsibility, have proved to us that Western institutions of this kind are suitable also to the genius of the East. It is in no sense a reflection on the Indian people. They are not inferior to us. They have a civilisation far older than ours, going back some 4,000 years,

and no sensible Indian should regard it as a reflection on his self respect if some of us hold the view that they have not yet established the case that they can work Parliamentary institutions. The speech of my hon. Friend would have been well enough if there was agreement in India on the proposals, but it falls to the ground completely when we read the daily denial, not only on behalf of the Congress party but of Liberals as well, of any intention to work the Constitution in the spirit of partners.

These remarks bring me inevitably to the speech of the right hon. Member for Tamworth (Sir A. Steel-Maitland) who referred to the Anglo-Indian tradition. I feel some hesitation in referring to my right hon. Friend because I was brought up at Oxford in what I hope the Rules of Order will allow me to call the Steel-Maitland tradition. Anybody who has played some part in that university has been confronted on almost every occasion by the athletic, political and academic record of the right hon. Member which it was impossible to emulate. My right hon. Friend said that the test we ought to apply is what is going to be the mentality of the Indian people. Now we are fully prepared to accept that test. We consider that in 1919 an opportunity was given to men of good will in India to prove whether they could work Parliamentary institutions. We had no bias at all against democracy in the East. If they showed ability to work it and a readiness to give and take which is inseparable from Parliamentry life, if there emerged a great body of middle opinion in India essential to Parliamentary institutions, we would be the first to recognise that our fears are groundless and that the Parliamentary institutions of this country are suited to India as well.

The hon. Member for Broxtowe (Mr. Cocks) in a very long speech—it was almost as lengthy as the Bill itself—made some reference to the question of Dominion Status. I am not going to take that up except to say that we do hope very much that the Chancellor of the Duchy, who I understand is to wind up the Debate to-day, will make some statement clearing up the doubts in our mind as to the exact legal implications of this phrase Dominion Status, in the light not only of the Statute of Westminster, but, just as imperative and far more recent, in the light of the observations made by the Secretary of State two days ago. I wish very much that this vital point should be cleared up. While we have no desire whatever to impede the swift progress of Parliamentary business, we are determined to know exactly where we stand before we facilitate any Clauses in the Bill.

We have heard a great many generalisations on the subject of the Government of India Bill, and in the country as a whole, by means of the broadcast, an attempt has been made to educate public opinion. I should be very glad if the Chancellor of the Duchy would answer certain question that I am now going to put to him bearing on a very remarkable broadcast made by Sir George Schuster on the subject of finance in India. Sir George Schuster desired—it was a perfectly proper desire—to show that financial considerations would not prevent Provincial Autonomy and Federation being set up at the same time, but in the course of that speech the late Finance Member made one or two observations, some of which are not strictly accurate and most of which are very incomplete. He started by saying, as a proof of the situation in India:

"We set aside £6,000,000 sterling for reduction of debt."

My hon. Friend the Under-Sectretary knows that that refers to the 1933 Budget. In the last Budget they did not set aside £6,000,000 but only £2,500,000. Sir George Schuster absolutely ignored the loss to the Central revenue, by the remission of the Princes' Tribute, rising, said, Sir Malcolm Hailey, to £750,000. He ignored also the loss of currency receipts due to the setting up of the reserve bank, of about the same amount, and most strange of all he ignored the emergency surcharges amounting to very nearly £10,000,000. Sir Malcolm Hailey, in his admirable but damning memorandum *said of these surcharges*,

"A reduction of the present high rate is generally considered desirable."

Next he ignored the pay cuts in India, which amount to some million pounds and of which he himself said last year in the Assembly:

"'The Government is not really meeting its full obligations so long as it is not paying the fixed rate of pay to its own officials."

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Sir Malcolm Hailey in his memorandum defined three objectives on which the Government must concentrate. The second objective was to secure to the Provinces as a minimum the amount now available to them. The first objective, which must be accomplished first, was to provide the Centre

"with a secure means of meeting the normal demands on account of services for which it is responsible, together with an adequate reserve power to raise from its own resources the additional sums which these services may in an emergency require."

And he added:

"Before this first principle can be regarded as satisfied it might be necessary to stipulate at least that the pay cuts should be remitted (costing £1,000,000), and the emergency surcharges withdrawn. They are worth £10,000,000.

In the course of the same broadcast the late Finance Member made no reference whatever to the increase in the cost of the departments, some 20 per cent. since the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms; and no reference to the decline in the last two years of the central and provincial revenue; no reference to the impossibility of further economies by debt conversion, and the very rare chance of a reduction in civil expenditure; no reference at all to the impossibility of a quick improvement in non-tax sources; no reference to depletion of railway reserves, which Sir Malcolm Hailey said should be made up; no reference whatever to the report of my noble Friend the Member for Hastings (Lord E. Percy) on the question of opening up new sources of revenue; and no reference at all, strangest of all, to the fact that the Provinces' revenue is largely inelastic, about half of it being land revenue and therefore often fixed, and some £11,000,000 Excise, on which the native politicians are concentrating in an effort to secure its abolition.

The Finance Member when speaking in India deplored discussions on finance being conducted in at atmosphere of unreality. Yet when he came over here and addressed an audience of some millions through the wireless, we claim that he dealt with this matter in an atmosphere of unreality. How differently he spoke in India. There he said:

"Here we are just able to balance our budget although our imports and therefore our Customs revenue stand on a level many crores higher than is justified by the position of our exports of merchandise. Yet even with that purely adventicious assistance we are only just able to balance our budget."

And then he spoke of the "vast amount of additional burdens" the new Constitution would bring. The Secretary of State when he is dealing with arguments of this kind is perfectly frank. He says, I do not deny that there are awkward facts and hard facts which must be faced, but India is very resilient and will respond very speedily to world recovery. Secondly he argues, We do not intend to implement all these proposals until the financial position has improved. We should consider those two observations, for they are very significant indeed. It is true that India is resilient. It will be a misfortune if she is not, seeing that her exports have dropped from £245,000,000 on a 10 years' average to £100,000,000. But it is undeniable that most of the central revenue of India is derived from Customs. I would ask the Chancellor of the Duchy how he proposes that a revenue system based in the main on Customs duties can be adapted to a policy of economic nationalism. Sir Malcolm Hailey is perfectly frank about it. He did his best to warn the Committee that they could not count on a very great increase from Customs duties. Secondly, the Secretary of State says, We do not intend to implement these proposals until the financial position has improved. I suggest in all humility to this House that there can be nothing more fatal than to put on the Statute Book a Bill of this magnitude and then to hold it up for purely financial reasons. You will have the fury of politicians in India, who will claim that they have been betrayed, that we are manipulating the financial situation for our advantage.

I suppose that what would probably happen, should this Government unhappily give place at some future date to another, is that that Government will take the risk and will carry out the proposals even if the financial situation has not really improved. They will say to themselves? We cannot afford to stand the bitterness that we seem to have aroused in India; let us hope that everything will smooth out well. These are some of the anomolies inseparable from a federal system. If the Provinces must start financially independent—as they must—

and if the revenue of the Provinces is inelastic, where are they to look for fresh money?

I would draw the attention of the House most earnestly to the position of the Army in India. Before I make some brief references to the financial side of the Army in India I would like to say that I imagine a very large number of Members have received private letters from soldiers serving in India, many of them in high commands, deploring the fact that they are generally associated *en bloc* with the Government's proposals—even by the Lord President of the Council. They maintain, "We are, after all, plain soldiers sent out here to do our duty. We are told to carry out the orders of the Government. We in no sense associate ourselves with these proposals but we have our careers to think of and our responsibility to our families and we cannot, out here, make a public stand against proposals which we deplore."

The Army Estimates in the 1933-34 Budget were about £34,000,000. The total Budget of the whole centre in that year was £58,000,000. The pensions account was £2,500,000; debt interest and reduction represented nearly £12,000,000 so that some £49,000,000 out of the centre Budget of £58,000,000 will be outside the purview of the native Ministers. Many of us have been profoundly impressed by the argument of the Foreign Secretary that you cannot have provincial autonomy without allowing law and order to pass under Indian control. We have accepted willingly the view that if you leave law and order in the hands of a non-elected Minister, you will then concentrate opposition on that reserved department. How much more does that argument apply to the Army under the proposed new Constitution? No less than £49,000,000 out of the £58,000,000 with which the Centre Budget deals may be outside the control of the Indian Ministers.

Is it seriously believed that they are going to facilitate the collection of such large revenues over the spending of which they have no control? It is perfectly obvious that the inevitable result will be non-co-operation at the centre. Though the graphic illustration of non-co-operation given just now by my hon. Friend cannot actually be repeated by the Indian Chancellor, the same result will be achieved on the central stage. In proportion as you reduce the number of reserved subjects you increase the opposition to such subjects as remain reserved. Cannot hon. Members imagine in a few years time, if it has not been possible for the Centre to make a grant, the Indian politician answerable to his electorate saying, "The Noble Lord the Member for Hastings said we wanted £10,000,000 from the Centre to get the Provinces going comfortably but we cannot have that £10,000,000 because they are still spending £34,000,000 on their Army"?

Lord E. PERCY: Not £10,000,000.

Mr. LENNOX-BOYD: I apologise to my Noble Friend if I am wrong but I understood that his report was to the effect that £5,000,000 more for the Provinces would enable them to start but that to be really comfortable they would need that increased to some £10,000,000.

Lord E. PERCY: No, I reported that I thought 5 crores was the minimum, but that if 7½ crores could be distributed, then the distribution could be on a logical basis. That is rather different from what the hon. Member has said.

Mr. LENNOX-BOYD: I agree with my noble Friend that it is different and I assure him that I am making no attempt to deceive the House but evidently I had fallen into a mistake about the figures. None the less I think he would agree—and I accept his figure—that to enable the Provinces to work comfortably 7½ crores ought to be added to the Provincial income.

Lord E. PERCY: What I reported was that if you were to get a scheme of automatic distribution of income it would only work automatically on the basis of 7½ crores. That does not mean to say that I thought that sum necessary for the working of the Provinces as a whole. I do not—at least I did not at that time.

Mr. LENNOX-BOYD: I, of course, accept at once the statement of the noble lord. If the Army is strong enough—and at the moment the Army in India is cut to the bone—to withstand the attacks of the politicians who have collected the

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revenues for it but are not allowed to control the expenditure, the only other possible new source of income will be taxes in the Provinces, and this brings me to my last point. In some ways the most remarkable observation in the broadcast speech of Sir George Schuster was this:

"It is wrong to create the impression that every outlet for expansion is closed and that the only hope is to deprive the Centre of taxes on income."

These may just have been comfortable words designed to allay the growing feeling of alarm among certain sections in this country but, if they mean anything they mean that the Provinces can provide by taxation greatly increased sums of revenue. I think by noble Friend the Member for Hastings will not dispute that after a very full survey he came to the conclusion that the excise on matches was about the only feasible plan at the moment.

Lord E. PERCY: That was Federal not Provincial. We came to quite a different conclusion about the Provincial taxes.

Mr. LENNOX-BOYD: The Finance Member when he broadcast that speech threw over the warning put forward by Sir Malcolm Hailey and went back to the very exaggerated statements made before the crisis by Sir Walter Layton at the time of the Simon Report. Sir Walter Layton spoke about a sum of no less than £21,000,000 coming from Provincial taxes for Provincial social services. My hon. Friend who spoke just now quoted very appositely from the writings of Mr. Darling and I am glad to feel that there are some people in his party who have read the works of that excellent civil servant and admirable writer. If more of the people who support the Bill took the trouble to read the words of the rank and file of the Indian Civil Service who are in daily and intimate touch with the peasantry of India I venture to think that they would come to a different conclusion on the subject of Indian Constitutional Reform. It will be remembered that Mr. Darling presented in the form of a diary the results of tours which he made among the peasantry of the Punjab. We often hear it said that this weighty Bill is a reward for military services rendered during the War. My hon. Friend will remember no doubt the chapter in the Simon Report dealing with that question. In the year during which the Foreign Secretary's Commission went out, the Punjab sent 86,000 men to serve in the Army and Bengal did not send a single man.

When we are asked to take account of the contributions which were made during the Great War we should remember that out of a population of 45,000,000 the vast Province of Bengal sent 7,000 soldiers while the Punjab out of a population of 20,000,000 sent a contribution of 350,000 men. I suggest that when we talk about rewards for loyal service to the British Crown in an hour of crisis we ought to remember these relative contributions. Does the hon. Gentleman who referred to Mr. Darling's book recall those passages occurring on almost every page in which Mr. Darling describes what happened when he spoke even to literate Indians and asked them questions as to where they thought Government resided and how scarcely one in fifty went further than to say that it was in the local officers? Does he remember how they spoke to Mr. Darling about the difficulty of selling wheat at 11s. 6d. a quarter and paying 36 per cent. to the moneylenders when they wanted to raise money for local weddings? They killed 34 moneylenders in that Province in one year but there will be plenty left to take over when we withdraw our own authority.

I earnestly ask Members of the House to read the reports of the 1919 Measure, and particularly some observations made by a right hon. Gentleman who is now in the Cabinet, on that Act. He summed it up in the phrase "Putting the rich man to rule the poor man." In the Punjab Mr. Darling found scarcely anybody who had even heard of the Round Table Conference, and when they were asked about Mr. Gandhi, they said, "It is Gandhi's fault that this great cheapness has come." The Lord President of the Council told us the average Indian goes to his own race for help and advice, but that was answered, I think, yesterday by the hon. Member for Chertsey (Sir A. Boyd-Carpenter). I think there are countless officials in India who, if they had the literary skill, could write books as admirable as that of Mr. Darling which would entirely disprove what I believe to be an

unsound fallacy. Burke, who has often been quoted in Indian Debate, once said:

"The happiness or misery of mankind, estimated by their feelings and sentiments and not by any theory of their rights is and ought to be the standard for the conduct of legislators towards the people."

The Punjab peasant says, "I only know about my work." If you say, "Is not Gandhi a Saint?" he will answer, "If Mr. Gandhi is a Saint, let him raise the price of our corn." As to the Round Table Conference, only one in about 25 had heard of it or knew anything about it, and even they said: "Big men have gone to England for their advantage; for us poor wretches there will be trouble."

It used to be written on the back of Government of India Bills, in the old days before the Conservative party accepted the view, that good government is no substitute for self-government:

"An Act to make provision for the better government of India."

We have dropped all that now, and the Bill that is presented to this House is:

"A Bill to make further provision for the Government of India."

There is no reference to "better" in the Title, and I earnestly ask Members of this House to refuse a Second Reading to a Bill which even its promoters do not claim will add anything at all to the material or moral benefit of the great peasantry in India.

1.27 p.m.

Mr. ERNEST EVANS: It is clear that there are many Members of this House who speak with great knowledge and experience of India and its affairs and people. At one time I felt that the discussion of the Second Reading of this Bill should be left to them, but on reflection I had thought that that was not the right one, and I say that for this reason, that every member of this House must be prepared to share in the responsibility which will attach either to the passage or to the rejection of the Bill and the incalculable consequences which will ensue in either event. Therefore, although I cannot claim any of that exceptional knowledge which is generally, although sometimes erroneously, attributed to specialists, I want to explain my attitude to the Bill and to justify my vote, which will be in favour of the Second Reading. The trouble that confronts the ordinary Member, in so far as any Member of this House can be said to be ordinary, like myself, is that the experts themselves disagree. The experts are not confined to the Conservative party, nor indeed are they confined to this country. They also exist in India. It is true that there are many people here who claim to know India, and it is also true that India claims to know many people here. Unfortunately the people happen to be the same crowd very often, and it is also unfortunate that that claimed knowledge seems to have created suspicion rather than to have aroused sympathy.

There were two considerations with which I approached this Bill. One was the consideration whether this Bill proposed anything which departed from its pledges in a direction which involved unfairness or danger to any of the interests, national, Imperial, or even world interests, which this House might legitimately be expected to protect. As far as the pledges are concerned, there is no doubt about them. They are incorporated in the Preamble to the Bill. I agree that too much importance should not always be associated with the Preamble to a Bill. It is, what it describes itself as being, a Preamble. It might be compared with a Motion to suspend the Eleven o'Clock Rule, or that the Chairman should report Progress and ask leave to sit again, but sometimes importance attaches even to such a Motion. As far as the Act of 1919 is concerned, I remember hearing many of the debates on that Measure, and I can say that special significance attached to the Preamble of that particular Act. In that Act Great Britain, not a mere Government, committed itself to the policy of proceeding towards self-government in India by gradual stages, and that is a pledge which I think this Parliament is bound to honour.

In view of the findings of the Simon Commission and subsequently of the Joint Select Committee, there is no doubt that we have no option but to face the fact that we must take some steps in order to implement that pledge. I gather that even those who oppose this Measure do not quarrel with that statement, and are themselves prepared to admit that a certain degree of provincial autonomy must be granted. If that be true, it

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seems to me that a great deal of the weight which one would attach to their arguments disappears, because if provincial autonomy is to be granted, two things follow. One is that provincial autonomy must be real, and the second is that if it is to be real, it cannot be granted without some measure of control at the Centre as well. It seems to me that that is the logical conclusion. The noble Lord the Member for Aldershot (Viscount Wolmer), in a speech which he made last December on these proposals, himself agreed that provincial autonomy must be taken as a step, but he did not agree that the step involved many of the implications which are included in this Bill. It seems to me, however, that the logical conclusion of granting provincial autonomy is that there must be responsibility at the Centre in that respect.

I would like to reinforce the appeals which have been made by speakers from this bench, and by my hon. Friend the Member for North Bristol (Mr. Bernays), that the Government shall reconsider the question of elections. I do not think the provisions which are contained in the Bill with regard to indirect election really fulfil what is required by the logic of the establishment of Provincial Legislatures. I think they ought to face the fact that this system of indirect election does no really meet the situation, and they ought to be prepared to make a change in that respect.

The other question or consideration with which I approached this Bill was: "Is there anything in it which imperils interests which the House ought to protect?" One thing which concerned me very much was the question of the control of the police. I had gathered from speeches which I have read and observations which I have heard that this Measure proposed to hand over the police to a body of subversive influences and destructive control, but I cannot find that in the Bill, and I think the opponents of the Measure have failed to distinguish between control of the police and maintenance of law and order. It is obvious that you cannot set up any Government with legislative powers, if it is to be anything, more than mere machinery of local administration, without giving that Government a great deal of power with regard to the maintenance of law and order. I think that the Bill does that in regard to the future Legislatures but it does not hand over the police to a subversive authority.

The other question which has struck me is that of Lancashire, not because I am in any way associated with that county, but because I was impressed by the arguments that have been adduced by several speakers in regard to conditions which prevail in that county. I cannot find, however, that this Bill has anything to do with the complaints which they put forward. The grievances from which Lancashire is suffering are those which have occurred under the present regime, and I cannot find anything in the Bill which will of necessity add to the economic, financial and industrial difficulties which are facing Lancashire at the present time.

I am rather disappointed at the very scanty reference which is made to education in either the Report of the Joint Select Committee or this Bill. A complaint has often been made that the Indian people have not shown many gifts of either legislation or administration. If there be any truth in that complaint, one of the questions to which the Government should direct their attention is that of education. As far as I can gather from this Bill, that is entirely left for the moment to the Provincial Legislatures, and I think that, with a view to improving the general state of mind and capacity of the masses of India it might be advisable for the Government to include that subject in the appropriate Schedule in order that they may be able to provide for a co-ordination of the essential educational services of the country.

I am not much interested in the dissent that exists in the Conservative party on this Bill. I try to approach it from the point of one who has no prejudices or preconceived ideas in the matter. Having examined it from that point of view with the assistance of the Reports of the Simon Commission and the Joint Select Committee—documents which deserve to be accounted two of the most important State documents that have ever been published in this country—I have definitely come to the conclusion that this is a Bill which we must support in its main essentials. I am not interested in its effects

upon a particular party, but I think it is a Bill which everyone who wants to maintain the position and prestige which Great Britain has attained in India ought to support. In view of the commitments which have been made in the past, commitments not based on individual statements of Secretaries of State or Viceroys, but commitments based upon the declared policy of successive Governments of this country, it seems to me that we have no option but to cast our bread upon the waters in this respect. I believe it will return after days, which may be many in number, but which will represent only a very short chapter in a nation's story.

1.40 p.m.

Sir B. PETO: The hon. Member for Broxtowe (Mr. Cocks) said towards the end of his remarks that he should claim on the Committee stage the support of all Members who took the view that I do on some of the proposals, because in our Amendment on the Paper we refer to the welfare of the masses, and that they are referred to in the Amendment of the Opposition which the House is now considering. It is argued by the Opposition that this Bill is wrong, because it would give insufficient opportunity to the mass of the people in India to look after their rights and advancement and would not give them enough votes. If the object of the Amendments to which the hon. Member referred is to extend the franchise among the illiterate peasants of India, I should not agree for a moment that that would be the way in which their rights and advantages were likely to be protected. You cannot get that close association between the Member and the constituency which is necessary to the work of a democratic western form of Parliamentary Government under conditions as they are in India, and we are not likely to do it in the course of many generations.

The principal point to which I want to devote myself is the question of the responsible Federal Government at the Centre. In the Amendment which I and my friends have placed on the Paper that is mentioned as one of the reasons why we should not support the Second Reading of the Bill. It appears in these words, that we are

> "of opinion that the success of responsible government in the Provinces should be proved before the establishment of an Indian Federation."

The Secretary of State told us the other day that he thought nine members out of 10, and, he might say, 99 out of 100, would be in favour of the objective of Federal Government. In my view, Federal Government is an ideal under certain conditions, and it is only true on proof that it is in the interests of the heterogeneous parts that you propose to federate. The second condition is the one that we lay down in our Amendment, that the success of responsible government in the Provinces proves that that form of government at the Centre is a safe experiment. The third is that a workable plan can be devised for recruiting the Central Legislature which will fairly represent the federated parts. None of these three conditions are met in the terms of this Bill. The Secretary of State said in the previous Debate on 10th December, when we were discussing the Motion on Indian Constitutional reform, that the parts it was proposed to federate, that is to say, the Indian States and Provinces in India were no more diverse than those constituting the German Empire. The hon. Member for Broxstowe has already referred to that speech. The right hon. Gentleman added:

> "There was the federation of the old German Empire—a federation that remained in being for more than half a century"

—not very hopeful for the future Constitution set up under this Bill—

> "a federation in which there were great autocracies, small city States, bureaucratic governments, and in which there was every kind of disparity in the treatment of the various units."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 10th December, 1934; col. 54-5; Vol. 296.]

I think, on the other hand, that there is no true comparison between the diversity of the units in the German Empire and those we are preparing to federate in India. A true comparison would be a federation of Europe, and no one would maintain that Europe, accustomed as its many parts have been to Parliamentary Government and including as it does many democracies, is ready for federation at the present time. Consider what the right hon. Gentleman said in his speech on Wednesday:

> "It is clear that we can only reach the end we have plainly set before ourselves

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when India has succeeded in establishing the conditions upon which self-government rests."

He went on to state what were the principal difficulties which it would have to surmount before it reached that state:

"The first and most conspicuous problem which India has to solve is her cleavages of race caste and religion. Again, until India can safely assume in much larger degree the responsibility for her own effective defence an Indian Government cannot be in the full sense of the word autonomous."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 6th February, 1935; col. 1173; Vol. 297.]

That is rather hopeless from the point of view of the people in India. To the politicians, who are discussing Dominion status and looking upon it as something they ought to realise almost immediately, it will be somewhat disappointing, probably, to find that the Secretary of State defers this full autonomous State to such an immensely remote period. I might remind the House of those incomparable lines of Tennyson in "Locksley Hall" where he says:

"For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see, Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be."

And then, a line or two later:

"Till the war-drum throbbed no longer, and the battle-flags were furled,
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world."

In that sense federation is an ideal of everybody, but the federation of Europe, which is comparable to the federation proposed in this Bill, is only a remote possibility of the future. When considering this question of federation we should remember that we have had some practical experience of it already in the British Empire. At this moment Western Australia has delegates over here asking that she may secede from the Australian Federation. I have read the statements which they put before Members of this House, and from them I find that Western Australia was given a Constitution in 1890 and in 1900 pressure from the Imperial Government drove Western Australia into Federation. The majority for it was only obtained through the enormous immigration into the Western Australian goldfields, which had raised the population from 24,000 to 100,000. The new men from the towns outvoted the old agricultural settlers. Six years after federation a motion for secession was carried in the Western Australian Parliament. I will quote two short passages from a speech made to us upstairs on the 5th November last by the Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch, Agent General in London for Western Australia, because they are apropos of this question of federation.

"Our experience has varied in detail, but not in principle, from that of other federations and has proved to demonstration that under a federal system, covering a large area, it is impossible to preserve State Sovereignty: impossible, in particular, to protect the financial and economic freedom of the less populous States."

The next statement to which I wish to call attention is this:

"From the centre of population in Western Australia to the federal capital is further than from London to Moscow. Distance and paucity of representation—we have only five Members in a House of 74—render the State almost powerless in Federal affairs."

It would be very wise for the Indian States to consider this statement of Western Australia as to how federation has actually worked, because the situation is very applicable to Indian Federation. Take "distance and paucity of representation." I have considered the case of Travancore, which happens to be the part of India I have visited most frequently and with which I am most familiar. Travancore is entitled to two seats on the Council and five seats in the Federal Assembly. The Federal Assembly consist of 375 Members—not 74, as in Australia. So Travancore, a State with more than 5,000,000 population, will be entitled to representation by only five members in an Assembly of 375. On the question of distance, from the capital of Travancore to Delhi is almost exactly 1,600 miles. It happens to be almost precisely the same distance from the centre of population in Western Australia to Canberra which, in the passage I have just read to the House, is stated to be equal to that from London to Moscow. All three distances are just about the same. Therefore, what we are proposing is the federation of a part of India as far away from the centre as Western Australia is from Canberra, and thus at the very moment when Western Australia wants to get out of the Federation, one of the main reasons put forward being that she is so remote from the centre and has such small representation in the central body.

The contention of Western Australia is that her pastoral areas, with low population, are swamped by the towns. I venture to think that is exactly what will happen in India. In Clause 6 of the Bill the conditions under which the States are to enter the Federation are very clearly laid down, but so far as my researches into the Bill and the information I have received from those who sat on the Joint Select Committee have carried me, I find no provision for their getting out of the federation. The members of another federation in the British Empire are having to seek a special Act from this Parliament to enable them to secede. Surely we should be wise to put some provisions in this Bill for the States who come in and do not like the experiment to get out. As the Bill is drafted it is not an experiment or a venture in which they are asked to join, but an irrevocable step which they are asked to take.

The next point to which I wish to call attention is that under democracy the majority rules, but under the proposals of the Bill—in Clause 18—the Indian States are to be in a permanent minority both in the Council of State and the Federal Assembly, a minority of 3 to 2 and 2 to 1 respectively. At first the minority in the Council of State may be as great as 3 to 1, which would happen if the States deciding to enter the Federation were only the minimum number to entitle them to 52 seats instead of 104. I would call attention to the fact that all the great cities and the centres of population and all the great industries are centred in British India. We are told therefore to increase the quota by giving this population the forms of western government, and that the interests of the agricultural population will be looked after. I come to exactly the opposite conclusion. The whole of the power will be given to those who will want to work the taxation, the revenue, the import duties and everything of that kind entirely from the point of view of the centres of the industrial population and not from the point of view of the country at all. Self-government cannot be a reality unless you have nationalities to whom, as an ideal, it has some meaning and who are capable of understanding it and desiring it. It is entirely contrary to the conception of government or Raj in the minds of at least 300,000,000 of the population of British India and the Indian States. To them the Raj is something powerful and remote. They desire it to be just and condusive to their safety and prosperity, and that the representatives of Government in their various district should be friendly to their interests and just.

Sub-section (2) of paragraph 741 of the Summary of the case for Western Australian Secession puts this point extraordinarily clearly. It says:

> "If self-government is to be a reality, it must be applied to political units of a suitable size, after taking into account all relevant considerations. Representative democracy, as it is understood in Great Britain, and in British communities, depends for its success on the possibility of a close contact between elector and elected person. Unless this is secured, it is not real representation at all."

Nobody who has read the Report of the Franchise Committee, or who knows anything of the state of affairs in India in the provinces and in the country districts, would maintain for one moment that close contact between elector and elected person is possible, or that self-government can be in any sense a reality there. Even if you had more electors you would not solve communal differences and things of that kind.

If the House will permit me, I would like to tell very shortly a most enlightening experience which happend to me only three years ago when I visited one of the Indian States. I do not think there is any harm in saying that it was the State of Cutch. I was driving through the second principal town of that State with the Maharaja, and I asked him what was the division of population in the State between the Hindus and the Moslems. He told me that it was about three Hindus to two Moslems. I said: "How do they get on together? Is there any trouble here?" We had been hearing about communal trouble and riots all over India. He said: "Oh no, not at all. When there is a subject of congratulation they visit each others homes, and in the case of a death or anything of that kind they offer their condolences. I said: "To what do you attribute that peaceful state of affairs?" His answer was "Why not? there are no votes there." If you try to give India more votes you will not help matters.

It has been said that there is no comparison with Ireland to be drawn in connection with the present proposals relating to India. Those of us who spent the

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major part of our political life in fighting Home Rule for Ireland are entitled to remind the House that all the time the Opposition Benches were crowded with, I think it was, 85 representatives from Ireland under the leadership of Mr. John Redmond, when we talked about separation from this country and about republicanism and the rest of it being what we should ultimately have to face, we were always told that we were wrong and that it was merely a neglible minority who were in favour of separation. That was true, yet it has come to pass that the dreads which we expressed at that time were perfectly justified.

We are doing this now, and the only organised party in India is out for complete independence. We have been told to-day that all the trouble about refusing to work the Constitution is simply because we have left out the words "Dominion status" from the Preamble of the Bill. Why do they attach importance to that? Because they believe it gives them the power immediately to secede from the Empire and become independent. If it were not for that, they would not attach any special importance to those words or concentrate the whole of their attention upon them. We are offering this enormous advantage, including a Federation of the vast continent of India, to those heterogeneous bodies, so different from the autocratically governed States and from the great Provinces of British India, and there is no disguising that the very people who are to be asked to work the machine in India are out for complete separation and that the only organised body of political opinion in that country will stop at nothing short of that.

I would now ask the House to consider for a moment the question of the defence of India by British troops under those conditions. What right have you, if you are going to do that, to ask British troops to go to India? What are you going to ask men to fight for when you have already handed over to Indian politicians the whole of the government of India and have said, as the Secretary of State said, that as soon as certain conditions are fulfilled—it may be a matter of opinion as to whether they are not very difficult conditions to fulfil and therefore indicates a very remote period—Dominion status will come, but in the meantime we are to ask our troops not only to defend the frontiers of India but to hold themselves in readiness to risk their lives in order to settle communal disturbances, and matters of that kind, in any part of India. It seems that the position of the British Army in India, with the co-operation only of an Indianised native army dependent on posts, railways, telegraphs, roads, communications and police entirely controlled by Indians, and all under the control of the Indian politically-minded classes who are bent on complete separation, is impossible, both in the event of internal disturbance and of invasion.

Some of my hon. Friends may say that we are not going as far as that at present because there are safeguards which give special responsibilities to the Viceroy and the Governor. When I view these safeguards as a whole, and the position of the Viceroy as it will be under this Measure, I am reminded of the simile of an old stage coach. The driver is on the box at the start of a long and difficult hill, and you take the reins away from him and say: "It will be all right, because you have always the brake. You can jam that on if anything goes wrong." The fate of that vehicle with four horses galloping down the hill would be as nothing compared with the attempt on the part of the Governor suddenly to reverse the whole thing, jam on the brake, take this immense power into his hands and, in a moment, convert the government of India from a democracy into an autocracy. I do not believe for one moment that this part of the scheme will bring peace and prosperity to the Indian masses; if I did, I would vote for it. I would remind the House that federation did not prevent civil war in the United States of America on the very question of the right to secede. I think that really the Secretary of State if he wants the great illiterate masses of the Indian people to understand the nature of the gift that he is offering to them in this Bill when it becomes an Act of Parliament, should stamp the Act of Parliament with the figure of the Hindu Goddess Kali—Kali the Destroyer, Kali the Goddess with the sword dripping with blood. I believe that then these illiterate voters would understand the nature of the gift you are offering when you propose to withdraw British control from the Government of India.

2.6 p.m.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir ARNOLD WILSON: In so long a Debate upon so vast a subject, perhaps the best contribution that I can make is to strike at the outset a personal note. I was for 18 years in the harness of the Government of India from 1902. When the then Secretary of State for India—the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Sir A. Chamberlain)—resigned his office in 1917, we learned the news with dismay; but had we known the direct consequences of that act we should have felt the loss even more keenly. In 1919—the next key date in my memory—the Government of India Bill was published, and we in Mesopotamia, where I held a position of some responsibility, followed very closely every move and every instalment of the proceedings and the debates.

We regarded with real alarm, which was shared by the vast majority of our colleagues in India, the steps that were being taken to introduce Western democratic systems into India and the repercussions which they must have in Mesopotamia. I felt bound to oppose the introduction of representative government into the country with which for the time being I was responsible. Looking back after 15 years, I now see clearly that, while the system did not give the fruits that its sponsors hoped for, it has not had the evil results which I then prophesied. It has not been followed by the bloodshed which I anticipated would follow; it has not broken down. It has become an oligarchy with, indeed, certain undesirable features, but it has withstood grave strains. It withstood the death of the distinguished monarch under whom it began, and the accession of his son a young Prince of whom we have high hopes. I feel entitled to draw the moral that those who prophesy we in India with such certainty are perhaps not on very sound ground.

I recant nothing of what I have said upon the dangers and inconveniences of introducing Western democratic methods into the East, but I am compelled to admit that secular changes and trends of events have occurred of which we are bound to take cognisance. A realistic outlook upon the scene in India must take into consideration, a public opinion which has been taught by us to regard these western democratic systems as desirable. There is much in this Bill to afford profound misgiving, but provided that it is regarded as something definite and final, and that it will be the task of the future Government of India to devote itself, not to further political discussions, but to the social reforms which are so urgently needed, I feel, on balance, that these proposals are worth supporting, earnestly and with all the influence we can bring to bear to make them a success.

I do not under-estimate the opposition which the Bill itself is incurring in India, but I have seen the very same opposition in Egypt, in Turkey, in Persia, in Mesopotamia, and in other Eastern countries, to constitutions which are now working fairly well. That opposition is bound to arise, and it is apt to be magnified. I do not attach anything like the same importance to Reuter's telegrams announcing differences of opinion in the Congress that I do to those announcing improvements in the crops. We should not discuss this Bill in too great detail or too long. Once we have decided on our course on Second Reading, we had best get through with it, quickly.

The following letter was read in this House on the 5th June, 1919, when the other and greater Bill was being discussed:

> "In these circumstances I am only concerned to express my profound conviction, held before I arrived in India and deepened still further in the months that I have been in India, that time is a factor of vital importance in the whole question of reform. I am convinced that delay is a greater danger even than an imperfect scheme, and those of us on whom must fall the heavy responsibility of putting a reformed scheme into actual operation would be better able to work an imperfect scheme with the good will and confidence of all concerned, than to operate a more perfect scheme if one could be devised, if confidence and good will had been broken and alienated by disappointment and delay."

That letter was written by Lord Lloyd, and it was read in this House by the late Sir Donald Maclean on 5th June, 1919. I had some knowledge of Lord Lloyd's work in India, and I had a profound admiration for him. The position in India then was much more difficult than it is now. There were high prices, there was demobilisation, storms were threatened in every direction; the whole atmosphere was clouded by suspicion. Lord Lloyd

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not only rode the storm, but he was, if I may say so, the one man at that time who knew how to handle Mr. Gandhi, and he handled him successfully. When I read that letter in the Official Report in my office in Baghdad, it went far to convince me that we should do well in Mesopotamia, as in India, to go with the stream, and to try to guide events rather than oppose them.

Exactly six months later, on the 5th December, 1919, this House took a decision far more vital even than that which it is asked to take now. The Measure was irrevocable, and, whatever might be said in the Preamble, we knew, as every officer of the Government of India knew, that there could be no turning back. We were bound to go forward from that time on a course to which, however much we might dislike it, we were committed by our own acts.

Major-General Sir ALFRED KNOX: In view of the very interesting personal statement that the hon. and gallant Gentleman has made, could he tell us why, less than two years ago, he applied for the paid post of chief organiser to the India Defence League, and what it was that caused him to change his opinion in the last two or three months?

Sir A. WILSON: I will deal with that question, if I may, in two or three minutes' time. In the meantime, may I continue my argument? Kings who abdicate may be wise or foolish, but there can be no question as to the folly of those who, having abdicated, seek to resume the sceptre. I do not, however, admit that we have abdicated. We are seeking to transfer power into hands—Indian hands—which I believe will be worthy. The whole question is whether the Bill will enable us to do so. That Indians are capable of exercising the firmness to govern as well as the grace to obey, I have no doubt. I have seen too much of the East not to believe that we may, under a wise system, put power into worthy hands.

But I must sound a note of warning. When the Bill of 1919 was being discussed on Third Reading—and the Debate only occupied one day—the right hon. Gentleman who is now Minister of Agriculture made a speech the words of which I have almost by heart. He said that we were handing over the poor men of India to the rich men, and we must be careful lest we in this House abrogated the powers which we already had to protect the poor against the rich. He went on to say:

> "The traditional policy of the proletariat in all ages has been to strengthen the Central Executive . . . The man at the bottom does not look to the man in the middle, but to the man at the top for his remedy . . . The Labour party will yet live to regret the day when they weakened the authority of the Central Executive in favour of the wealthy people who will hold for many years to come the local power in India."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 5th December, 1919; cols. 815-6; Vol. 122.]

That was said on the Bill of 1919, but, in my judgment, this Bill has substantially strengthened the centre exactly as the right hon. Gentleman the Minister of Agriculture desired, and we have greatly strengthened the judiciary under this Bill as compared with the White Paper. That, to me, with such experience as I have of the East, is an improvement of prime importance.

I turn now to the Amendment on the Order Paper in the name of the right hon. Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) and his followers. I do so, first, in no discourtesy to the front Opposition bench, and to their invisible followers—at the moment invisible—but for a personal reason. The hon. and gallant Member for Wycombe (Sir A. Knox) has asked me, without any notice, a question. I will reply. He asked me why, two years ago, I applied for a paid post as Secretary of the India Defence League. The answer is that I did not apply for a paid post. I was asked whether I would care to consider it. I have no records, papers or letters, but I can say that I attended by invitation a meeting at the House of Commons at which certain members of the India Defence League were present. I was asked whether I was prepared to accept the post. I said that I would consider it. The question of pay was not mentioned. I explained at that meeting that while I had considerable sympathy with and confidence in Lord Lloyd, who was present, I should find it difficult to accept the guidance or to follow the views of the right hon. Member for Epping. The matter was carried no further.

Sir H. CROFT: May I suggest that no such question ever arose? The right hon. Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) was

most friendly towards the hon. and gallant Member, and himself suggested that he should fight North Hertfordshire.

Sir A. KNOX: May I also intervene as I was present? My recollection exactly follows that of the hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft).

Sir A. WILSON: I can only say that, to the best of my knowledge, that was what I said, and that the question was not, in fact, pursued further. So far as the suggestion that I should apply for a constituency was concerned—and I apologise for being compelled in a Debate on the better government of India to have to discuss such matters—I can only refer the right hon. Gentleman and his followers to a letter which appeared in the "Times" from the Chairman of the Hitchin Conservative Association, in which he assured the public, as he had already assured me, that he had received no references whatever as to my credentials or suitability from the India Defence League from which he had not, in fact, heard, that his Committee had considered my name along with that of other persons, and that I was selected, as he was good enough to assure me, upon the merits of the case, and, as I am free to say now, with an earnest hope that I might not finally commit myself in the matter of India.

Sir H. CROFT: Might I ask the hon. and gallant Gentleman whether he ever considered the constituency of North Hertfordshire until I suggested it to him, also with Lord Lloyd's consent?

Sir A. WILSON: Again I must apologise to the House. I have no recollection whatever of having had any conversation with the hon. and gallant Member, whom I had not met before. The actual suggestion came from another quarter, and I was entirely in the hands of fate. I can only say this—and with reluctance—that before preparing my election address and my adoption address, I was at pains to show the text to two Members of the India Defence Committee, and to secure their approbation of those documents explaining I was not prepared to go further. I think the text of the election and adoption addresses must be regarded as excluding any previous communings. With your permission I will leave that matter there. I should be very glad to pursue it elsewhere, should those immediately concerned so desire.

To revert to the question before us. After sitting 18 months in this House listening attentively to the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Epping and his followers, I realised for the first time that the right hon. Gentleman was no longer the man whom I had so admired, whose career I had followed with such intense interest from the moment I left school. He was not the man who in December, 1905, preferred not to accept Cabinet rank but to take a subordinate position as Under-Secretary for the Colonies in order that he might take a part in the pacification of South Africa. He was not the man who had shown vision and courage at the Admiralty, and with whom as the Secretary of State for Air I had been associated in a subordinate capacity, in devising a system of air control for the Middle East. He was not the man whom I met at Cairo, who, as Secretary of State for the Colonies, was handling Palestine and the Zionist problem with such courage, foresight and vision. I realised as I listened to him that he had suffered a sea change, and it might fairly be said of him as was said of another great orator of this House, that he was one

> "Who born for the Universe, narrowed his mind,
> And to party gave up what was meant for mankind."

He was in the Cabinet in 1919, and I then marvelled, that no word of comment or criticism escaped his lips during the debate on the India Bill of that year, but

> "The oracles were dumb.
> No voice or hideous hum,
> Rang through the arched roofs with words deceiving."

He was then content to remain silent under the heavy responsibilities of office, and it is late now for him to cry as his followers do cry—for this is really the substance of their cry—"Give us back our eleven days"—a slogan which echoed through the streets of London, and perhaps Wavertree, over 200 years ago. That slogan recalls circumstances so apposite as to deserve elaboration. A group of far-seeing men, after much inquiry, had discovered that the world was going round

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much faster than anybody expected, and they found it necessary to propose a radical change in the English calendar in order to meet cosmic needs. It was opposed by men of the greatest ability, brilliant writers who found no lack of followers to cry in the streets, "Give us back our eleven days." The head of the opposition was Joseph Scaliger. We have forgotten his objections, but we remember his brilliance, and I hope in time to come we shall remember the right hon. Member for Epping, not for his opposition to this Bill, but for his brilliant achievements in other spheres. I sometimes think, when listening to him that he has been so busy making and writing history that he has had no time to read it.

May I now turn to the Bill itself. Clause 171 is an exceedingly bad example of legislation by reference. It says that a subject may sue the Federation or a Province to the same extent as the Secretary of State might be sued if this Act had not been passed. I look back and find that he may sue and be sued as if the Act of 1858 had not been passed. When I ask distinguished and eminent lawyers what that means, I am told that they do not know. It is not right, in imposing a Constitution on India, to be quite so vague as to the rights of the subject against the Crown.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: On a point of Order. Is not that rather a Committee point?

Sir A. WILSON: I do not think it is a Committee point, because the whole principle of whether we are or are not to apply the English principle that The King can do no wrong or whether we are to apply the older Oriental rule that every subject may have the right to sue the Crown in the courts. It is a matter of first-class importance and I hope it may be tackled by constitutional lawyers. The number of agents of the Crown in India is greater by far in proportion to the population than in any other eastern country. They are all agents of the Crown and a subject should be able to sue them to a greater extent even than at present. John Milton in his essay "Against Prelaty" likens that Royal prerogative to Samson's locks falling about his God-like shoulders. "So long as they remain unshorn he may with the jawbone of an ass, that is with the word of his meanest officer, suppress and put to confusion the thousands of his enemies. There are many thousands of such servants of the Government, and we ought to give some protection to the subject against them.

The second point must be dealt with in detail in Committee. I do not think that science has at all an adequate status under the Bill. Scientific research is going to do more for India than the Constitution. Scientific research is the very basis of all secular progress, and I am by no means satisfied that in the Bill as it stands, or even in the Report of the Joint Select Committee, there is adequate provision for the co-ordination of research and for the exchange of really first-class men as between this country and India. Research is constantly moving forward on a broad front, and I should like to see some statutory *liaison* between the federated Government and the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research under the Lord President of the Council. We have a branch of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research in Australia. I should like to see one with interchangeable staffs in India as well.

The third point has relation to the status, the emoluments and pensions of Governors under the new scheme. The Governors will have responsibilities even greater than those that they have at present. They will be men of as great responsibility as the Prime Minister of this country, and it is essential that we should make quite sure their emoluments and their expenses and all the attendant circumstances of their appointment should be such as to make it possible to select men, without regard to their private means, who have been eminent, whether in government or in business or in this House or elsewhere, so as to be able to select the best men without the constant reference to *res angusta domi*.

I have urged the need for speed. May I urge right hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition bench to consider carefully whether they should not withdraw their opposition to the Bill and let it go through without opposition on Second Reading. Never before in the past hundred years has this House divided upon an India Bill on Second Reading. I have listened to—or read—with the greatest attention

every word that has fallen from the lips of Opposition speakers. There is nothing that they desire for the masses that the whole House does not desire. Our first consideration is the welfare of the masses, and we have earnestly striven to improve their lot. No one on these benches would wish to place the masses of India in a less favourable position in the future than in the past. I believe the Bill will do as much for them as any Bill can do.

The only hope for India is the development and the spread of science through education and otherwise, and, finally, a period of rest from politics in which Indians can get down to their own problems. I urge speed. I believe that every month that we spend otherwise than in discussion of the first order will be wasted. In the words again of Burke to his constituents in 1788

"may I just hint to you that we may suffer very great detriment by being open to the attacks of every talker. It is impossible to imagine how much of service is lost from spirits full of energy, full of capacity, who are constantly pressing forward to great and capital objects when you oblige them continually to be looking back. While they are defending one service they are defrauding you of a hundred. Cheer us when we run, console us when we fall, support us when we recover, but let us pass on, for God's sake let us pass on!"

2.33 p.m.

Commander MARSDEN: The House always listens with respect to my hon. Friend who has had such great experience in the East. He talked very much about the scientific point of view. The full purport of that will probably dawn on me later. I do not quite see what it has to do with the situation at present. I was getting rather sorry for him for the personal note that was interjected into the early part of his speech, but that was completely neutralised by his attack on the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill). What the majority of those who support the Government would do without the right hon. Gentleman I do not know. The Secretary of State never starts a speech of any description, whether in this House or elsewhere, without bringing in the right hon. Gentleman, but he can take it and he can hand it out, and I am sorry that he is not here now.

I should like to say something about my own position. I believe in the present Government, and it is with the utmost regret that I shall vote against them, as I shall have to do on the Second Reading of the Bill. In great matters like this personal considerations must be subordinated to what we think our national duty. There are Members of the Front Bench who are held in the deepest respect, including the Lord President of the Council, who have appreciated that fact. I have analysed my own feelings from day to day, almost from hour to hour, trying to persuade myself to support the Government. But there is much in the Bill that leaves me in such a position that I could not honestly do so, because I do not feel it to be in the best interests of India or of this country. I believe we are right in mentioning Dominion status as the ultimate goal. In my delves into history—I have not had the advantage of a historical education as so many Members have who speak so eloquently, but I do my bit of reading on quiet nights and find out things—I was very much struck by a statement by Lord Shaftesbury in 1876. He said that the time may come—the Secretary of State will not like this—when, after a long course of happy rule, you will surrender India to natives. He gives a lot of other talk, but ends up by saying:

"The deepest thought and the noblest expression of a genuine Britain is to fear God and honour the King."

That is the end of a sequence of qualifications at which Indians must arrive before they are fit for Dominion status. The difference which I find between the utterances of statesmen of those days and the utterances of statesmen of these days, is that in those times they all made it perfectly clear that India had to rise up to a certain position before Dominion status could be achieved. Nowadays it is a sort of turning the hour-glass, and when the sands run out there is Dominion status whether they are fitted or not fitted for it.

Just after the War the big step was taken, and, whether we like it or not, it was the commencement of what we may call the present era; the continuation of that education of India to which we set out hands. It beats me why we should be told that this great step should be taken, now, at this moment, not next year or the year after or in two or three years, but now, and that if it is not done at this moment India will be lost and the

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whole Empire disrupted. I do not see it in that way. I try hard to find out. I hear the opinions of all parties. I listened during recess to all the speeches on the ether—extraordinary speeches, but very few of them about India. One was from the hon. Gentleman for Bodmin (Mr. Isaac Foot). That was a grand speech. He left out the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping, but went for Lord Lloyd, and arrived at a certain moment, when, needless to say—it is hardly necessary for me to tell the House—he brought in Cromwell of all people. I should have thought that Cromwell would have been the last of all people to bring in in any dispute, question, or arrangement between England, the Colonies or the Dominions. Even now the shadow of Cromwell stands between us and happy feelings between England and the South of Ireland. He went on, after finishing with Cromwell, to read a sort of sermon which, in a most extraordinary manner got rather merged into the marriage service. We were told that this was the opinion of the Liberal party. I said to my wife, "No wonder the Liberal party are three to a thousand. No wonder the Liberal candidates forfeit their deposits if this is the Liberal view." I also listened to the right hon. Member the Leader of the Opposition. There we were rather intrigued as to whether he had not got mixed up with the housing problem. He is always so popular and everybody appreciates him so much. I know that his intentions are always the same and that he wished to do the best he could for the masses of India. I would not criticise him on that score.

I will refer a little more in detail to what I do not like in this Bill. I will not say much about the Princes coming into the Federation, because whether we like it or not they have to make up their own minds. Really what we ought to be doing, instead of wasting so much time on discussion, is to find out whether the Princes will come in or not. Great exception has been taken to the suggestion that any pressure has been put on the Princes. but when you some to such words as "cajolery" and "coercion" it simply means what definition you give these words. There may be a form of moral pressure put on which is not pressure from one point of view but is great pressure on the Princes from the other. The Princes are some of the most firm and loyal adherents of the Crown the Empire possesses, and that despite the fact that many reprimands and disciplinary actions have been necessary against individual Princes. The King Emperor has no more loyal servants than the Princes, but the Princes think of the King Emperor through the King Emperor's Government. When that Government gives its opinion it has a very great moral pressure on those Princes. They would have the utmost difficulty in not carrying out the wishes of the King Emperor's Government because I put loyalty first with the Princes as I think everybody would. But surely the second consideration is self-preservation.

Let the House and those who have not studied the question realise in what position we stand with regard to the Princes. Years ago contracts were made—I use the ordinary commercial word which is easier than so many other words—individually with all the Princes and the principal point of the contracts were: First, that we should secure the safety of their frontiers; no more war for the Princes; and, second, that we should secure the legal succession of their heirs, in the East one of the most important things to every ruling Prince. In other words, the two troubles which used to worry the life of most Princes are entirely provided for. If things are not going well in his State we send a Minister to help and even to rule his country. At the present moment there is one Prince who has been sent away from his Dominion for a couple of years. He does not care; he is living on velvet. We send a Minister into the territory to administer it and send him the takings because all the revenues from the state belongs to the Prince and nobody else. He can go away and have a good time and come back in due course. Why should the Princes want to surrender themselves. They would only desire it or agree to surrender if they thought that that same security was not to be forthcoming in the future as it has been in the past.

The third reason on the list why they should come into the Federation is that it will be for the good of India as a whole. I do not think it is necessary to base too much on this claim. India is so vast a

country that really the thing is too impossible. Why do we always talk about India. The proper word is the Indian Empire. We talk about the Provinces as if they were Cornwall, Leicestershire or Wiltshire. These are enormous territories and places as big as Europe. We do not talk of Germany and Italy and so on as provinces. There are countries in India just the same as there are in Europe. To say that anyone is coming into the Federation apart from the preservation of his own rights for the sake of the good of the whole of India, well if hon. Members believe that they will believe anything.

I pass on to the great and most important section of all and that is the question of how the masses are to fare under this proposed new legislation. Nine out of every ten men in India are the peasants living as their ancestors have lived for 10,000 years in India and carrying on in practically the same way with their crude agricultural implements, their cooking pots, and a little cheap cloth with which to clothe themselves. Those are the only things they have to buy, and yet the whole income of India is saddled with taxation on these three things. Therefore, whatever we do in India, it will have to be paid for by these people. The Lord President of the Council made a statement—though I suppose in private conversation we would not differ in the slightest degree—about the native mind turning to persons of their own colour. I think that he might turn to his own colour when it was a question of his domestic life or religion. Naturally he would. In his domestic life and religion there comes a sort of veil which no European can penetrate. When it comes to greater matters, his security and prosperity, I think that the Lord President of the Council has not quite got hold of the right end of the stick. There is every evidence and everything shows that he goes to the nearest white man, white magistrate or white police officer.

I am emboldened in my feelings in this matter by a gentleman, who, I believe, is a relative of the Lord President of the Council, Mr. Rudyard Kipling. I suppose that up to the time of the War the people of this country had taken his evidence as to the ordinary life of the peasant and his relations between what he calls the British raj in preference to anyone else in the world. Nowadays he is to a certain extent forgotten. I have not heard his name quoted. It is very difficult to put one's thoughts into a few concise, effective words, but I believe that all those stories were right about the simple Indian peasant, when he was in trouble, seeking the district magistrate or the nearest white man, or the nearest police officer, believing that through him he was reaching the King-Emperor or, as it was in those days, the Queen Empress, the mother and ruler of the whole of his destiny. How is the peasant going to fare under the Bill? He has to pay, but is the electoral freedom that he is going to get worth the sacrifice that he will have to make? In my opinion, the greater the electoral freedom he gets, the less his personal freedom will be. Certainly, to the greater extent the native Minister gets power over him, the more will he relax back into a state of slavery and drudgery.

The next point is that of the franchise. One's natural instinct is to say give him the vote, but people must be educated up to the vote. How are they to be educated up to the vote? The first instinct of every native when he gets a vote will be to ask what he will get for it; what is it worth to him as a tangible asset. He must learn if he puts certain people into power what the repercussions are. He must learn that if he returns a good Minister he will get benefits. To get him to realise that several elections will be necessary. He must be able to elect one Minister if he sees good results or to choose another Minister if he realises that the results are not so good. By that means gradually the masses can be educated as to the value of their votes.

We seem to be increasing the number of people who are to get the vote without any suggestion at all as to their qualifications. That is a very dangerous thing. Then we come to the Ministers themselves. The Secretary of State keeps repeating the word "responsibility". I am with him there. There is no one more than myself who values responsibility and what responsibility brings with it. It brings forth traits in a man that one would never have suspected, because one has not given him the opportunity to show them. I realise that, and I agree with the right hon. Gentleman. Where I

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think a mistake is being made is that the Government do not fully realise that responsibility does not necessarily bring ability with it. You do not choose a man for a responsible post unless he has graduated in other posts and has shown that he can carry himself properly, with a full sense of his duties, and that he can carry out his duties efficiently. My suggestion would be to restrict, if necessary, the sphere of the Minister's duties, and when you have done that, to give him real responsibility, not cloaked responsibility, when every moment other people may step in and over-ride what he is doing. It is rather like a man learning to fly and having alongside him a pilot who has charge of the controls, and he goes all through his life knowing that at any stage the other person can take charge. That is not responsibility. Our policy is to work up slowly and to let the Ministers be educated until they can show that they are capable of carrying out very important tasks.

What would be the position—I think this is very important—if the Princes do not come in? From the Parliamentary point of view that would be very interesting, because the whole of the Bill would go by the board. The Secretary of State says that if the Princes do not come in there will be no Federation. If there is no Federation there cannot be provincial autonomy. If the Princes do not come in we shall have this extraordinary arrangement that it is the Government's policy that will be the standstill do-nothing policy, while the policy of myself and my friends will be, I suppose, the fatuous rushing on to things which would be so dangerous to posterity. The Simon Commission were not asked to consider Federation or any other system of Government from the point of view of bringing the Princes in. Remember what they did say. They said:

"Even if we were to ignore the Indian States and were to rest content with the Provinces as at present constituted, the necessary conditions for bringing a fully Federal Constitution into being are not yet present. The Provinces must first become political entities. Even when our proposals for Provincial Autonomy have been embodied in a Statute the process is not yet complete."

That puts our position in a nutshell. The hon. Member for Bristol North (Mr. Bernays) made some extraordinary statements. Amongst other things he kept asking what is our policy. I wish that in the many years careful study which the Secretary of State has given to this question, to the admiration and appreciation of the whole House, he had devoted a little time to try and understand our point of view. If he would only do that and realise that the questions that keep us apart are not really so considerable as he imagines, it would be well. It is the absolute blank wall and the absolute failure to realise what we want, that make it necessary for us to oppose the Bill.

We really all want the same thing. It is just a question of how much we should advance, how far we should go. To say that we propose standing still and that we do not propose any measure of advance, is a complete misunderstanding of our position. It is far better that this Bill should eventually go out as the unanimous opinion of these Houses of Parliament, but we have not arrived at that stage yet. We are coming to a very difficult time, the Committee stage, and the Secretary of State has not started off too well. When he made his broadcast he ended by throwing the greatest doubts on our bona-fides in this matter. He deplored the fact that we should take up so much time in the House that might be devoted to other things. In regard to this enormous Bill, which is bigger, I understand, than anything that has ever been put before us previously, he definitely suggested that we were going beyond the ordinary limits in demanding time to discuss every detail.

When the Committee stage comes we shall have a great many Amendments to move, but I can assure the House, so far as I am concerned, and I think I can speak for others in the same group as myself, there will be no Amendments that are obstructive or wrecking. There will not be one Amendment introduced otherwise than for the purpose of strengthening the Bill and helping it in every possible way. I hope that the Amendments will be met in a much kinder spirit than our general situation has been met. It is my most earnest desire, that when we reach the Third Reading, the Bill will have emerged in such a form that, whatever misgivings we may have had, it will go out to India and the world as the considered opinion of all parties and persons in the House.

2.54 p.m.

Mr. RHYS DAVIES: I have listened to most of the Debate and I, like others, hesitate very much to pass any comment on our relations with India. Some of the Members have had the advantage of living in India; some say that they have been born there. I have never been east of Suez and therefore I know nothing about India except what I have heard and read. I have, however, no hesitation in supporting the Amendment placed on the Order Paper by the Official Labour Opposition, and I shall endeavour to show that this Bill, in our view, does not meet the problem at all. The hon. and gallant Member who spoke last has delivered himself of the philosophy of the India Defence League. He said that we should educate people how to vote before giving them the franchise. How on earth can you teach a child to swim without letting it enter the water? How are the millions of India to learn how to vote unless you give them the franchise?

It is curious to note how the critics of the Bill show great concern for the welfare of the masses of the Indian people. The amazing argument is put forward, it has been put forward by the hon. and gallant Member, that the Bill, and especially the proposals of the Labour party, will throw the masses of the working classes and peasants into the hands of the rich men of India. As a matter of fact, they have always done their best to keep the political machine of this country in the hands of the rich and, therefore, cannot very well condemn a proposition of that kind. If hon. Members who are talking in this way were Indians themselves they would I am sure prefer to be exploited by their own nationals rather than by foreigners. If I am to be whipped I would prefer to be whipped by my own national rather than by an alien. It seems to me that those who support the policy of the India Defence League are missing one or two important points of this kind.

I am somewhat in agreement with the hon. and gallant Member on the point as to the Princes coming into Federation. We on this side have no illusion as to what may happen when they do. Whilst we agree that the Indian people should govern themselves, should learn the art of government by experience, should learn how to vote by being granted the power to vote, the essence of democracy is that nations learn to do right by sometimes doing wrong. It is quite possible that the Indian people, if they secure home rule as we propose, would make many mistakes, but in making mistakes they would learn how to avoid them in the future, as all nations with a democratic system of government have done. With regard to the Princes coming into Federation, we conceive that this might very well prevent the onward march of the masses of the people to a higher standard of life. The Princes, in a Federal Parliament, would naturally not desire to see a higher standard of life among the working people in the Provinces lest they might be compelled to do something to uplift their own people within their own States.

Let me turn now to the main argument I want to put forward. I repeat that I speak with a great deal of humility on this subject because of my ignorance of India itself. I notice that so far four hon. Members from the County of Lancashire have taken part in the Debate, and although one-tenth of the membership of this House comes from Lancashire it is very surprising to find that the people who have shown the greatest concern about the welfare of the county and its staple cotton industry are the representatives of Epping, Bournemouth, Eastbourne and Chertsey. That is a most amazing thing. It is representatives of the South Coast of England who have begun to take a very deep interest in the welfare of the textile operatives of Lancashire. They might as well know what their organisation is dubbed in Lancashire—it is called "The India Pretence League"—I will repeat—the India Pretence League. The Lancashire textile manufacturers and employés know that they are being used just as a pawn in the quarrel among the Tory party. But their organisation is not making any headway among the hard-headed people of Lancashire, to whom I belong.

After all, any hon. Member from the County of Lancashire must be interested in this Indian problem because the textile industry, its prosperity or otherwise, is irretrievably bound up with this Measure. I know of no other commodity of commerce which can be affected for

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good or ill by this Bill and its contents to such an extent as the textile industry of Lancashire.

Whatever may be thought of the Indianisation of the Army, the Civil Service in India, the powers of the Secretary of State, the Provincial Governors, or the franchise, all these big problems, as far as Lancashire is concerned, fall into insignificance by comparison with what is going to be the outcome of the trade relations between India and Lancashire. That is the point of view of the County of Lancashire, leaving Wavertree out of account for the moment. This comes about because of the very unhappy experience of Lancashire trade in connection with India in the past. It is well known that the export of textile goods from Lancashire to India declined by the year 1930 to about 25 per cent. from the peak period. The silent looms of Lancashire were witness to that, the textile operatives were walking the streets, and then the India Defence League comes along and says, "We must remedy this." They propose a remedy; we propose another. The hon. Member for Prestwich (Sir N. Sandeman) speaking yesterday let fall a remark which amazed me. He said that we could only get people to buy our commodities if we compelled their respect, meaning by that, I suppose, that the only way to increase the textile export trade of Lancashire to India is to compel them at the point of the sword to respect our power. I am happy to think that his views as a representative of one of the Lancashire constituencies are the views of an hon. Member crying in the wilderness. I have yet to learn that you can sell any commodity of any kind in any part of the world unless the purchaser of that commodity wants to buy it. You cannot force Indians to purchase Lancashire commodities, although they may be the best in the world.

The remarkable thing about the attitude of those who speak about the trading relationship of Lancashire and India is this. The Customs duties imposed on Lancashire commodities by the Indian Government are imposed by right. It is said that there was a discrimination against us, against our commodities. I should imaginee that the Lord President of the Council has been wide enough awake to understand that any discrimination imposed against Lancashire textile goods going into India was employed in a measure in order to wring from this country greater freedom and greater home rule for the Indians themselves. I confess that if I were born and bred in India I would do exactly the same thing, and I should be astonished if any members of the India Defence League would not also follow suit had they been born and bred in India.

Let me pass to another point that ought to be mentioned. We remember, of course, the agitation of Mr. Gandhi. It had a terrible effect on the county of Lancashire. Indeed the effects of the Gandhi agitation and the handloom home production and all its accompaniments are felt in the towns of Lancashire even now. It was a great campaign with tremendous results. But one strange thing transpired, and it ought to be remembered. Even Mr. Gandhi's campaign could not withstand the product of the textile factories in India. The strangest thing of all was that Lancashire textile machine manufacturers and mill-owners not only sent their money and their machinery to Bombay in order to defeat Mr. Gandhi and his agitation, but in some cases they stripped their own mills in Lancashire of machinery and sent it to Bombay and destroyed the trade of Lancashire by manufacturing on the spot the very commodities that Lancashire used to export to India. Consequently they must not blame the Indians for all these dire results.

There are some things that are above party and this is one of them: I am happy to believe that the trade between India and Lancashire is improving just gradually. Unless I am mistaken, the improvement in that trade has come about because the mass of the people in India have been expecting a large step forward by this country in granting them greater freedom in self-government. If I understand human nature at all I would say that if the policy of the India Defence League were adopted by this Parliament, or if the Secretary of State accepted the plea just made by an hon. and gallant Gentleman for modification of the Bill on the lines of the India Defence League policy, the next thing would be an automatic decline once again in the exports of textile goods from Lancashire to India.

We as a Labour party are not only interested in trading relationships. We have had Labour Governments here and there may be a Labour Government in India some day. [HON. MEMBERS: "No."] That is what the forefathers of hon. Members said about this country a century or so ago. They thought that it was impossible that there should ever be a Labour Government here. We are interested too in the human aspect of this problem—whether the provisions of this Bill will give to the Indian people the means and the methods which they ought to possess in order to raise their standard of life. Let me put the case in this way. It is common knowledge that 90 per cent. of the people of India are illiterate. I have travelled a little and I have met many people who are illiterate. I used to think that the man who could not read and write was necessarily ignorant, but I do not think so now. It is better, of course, that he should be able to read and write. It is better still if he can read and write and speak my native language because that shows him to be a very intelligent man indeed. But it does not follow that a man lacks the power of comprehension and of thinking, merely because he is unable to read or write, and I would not be surprised to find that these millions in India, if they got the vote could exercise it just as intelligently as the British electorate did in 1931!

After all what do we find in this country? We have seen how 25,000,000 enlightened Britishers, all able to read and write, including a very large percentage who have passed through the universities and the secondary schools, can be fooled by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. Why then complain about Indians' intelligence? Hon. Members who put forward the policy of the India Defence League bemoan the fact that the Indian masses are illiterate. Who is responsible for that? If Germany owned a colony in Africa and if such conditions prevailed in that German colony as are to be found in India I am sure that hon. Members would blame the German Government for the ignorance of the people of that colony. I have heard them taking that view more than once. I am not going to deny that British rule has given the Indians roads and railways, telegraphs and telephones and all the rest of it, but it does not matter what a Government gives to a people in that way, if a man at the end of it all is expected to work for 9d. a day and keep a family on that. Railways and telephones do not count for much in the lives of people living under those conditions, although they are expected to pay for all these advantages.

Let us see what our rule in India has done. I approach the problem from this angle. Whatever the character or political colour of the British Government may be, in the end the people of India must redeem themselves and in redeeming themselves it is probably that they will have to fight their way up to a higher standard, not only against British rule but against the rich men of their own country. That has had to be done in every country in the world, and there is no reason to suppose that it will not have to be done in India as well. Our complaint is that this Bill does not provide for the Indian masses the scope to enable them to fight, even people of their own nationality if necessary, in order to improve their standards of life. Let me give one illustration. In the Province of Bengal, we are told, only 6d. per head of the population is spent on education, as compared with 4s. 7d. per head on military and police. That is *under British rule. In voting for the* Amendment which we have placed upon the Paper, I shall be voting in order to give the Indians the opportunity of reversing that figure and, if necessary, of spending 4s. 7d. on education and 6d. on the military and police. Why should that expenditure be in the proportions that I have indicated?

Then let us see how Indians and Anglo-Indians fare within this British territory. Two friends of mine, who went to India to inquire into these problems, issued a report. They went on behalf of the Trades Union Congress, and although they thought, as I did, that they knew a lot about the position in India, they did not know that you can have an Indian, and a white man from this country working on the railway, doing exactly the same job, working exactly the same number of hours, and turning out exactly the same amount of work, and lo and behold, the Indian, because he is an Indian, gets about one-third the wages of the Englishman. If I were an Indian workman, treated in that way, I do not think I would stand that for long, and there is no

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man in this House, whatever his political colour, who would silently endure it for long. I am told, too, that on the railways in India, for Englishmen doing exactly the same work as Indians, for the same number of hours, grants-in-aid are made from the Indian Exchequer to educate the children of white people, but not the children of the Indians; and all that under British rule. I say, therefore, that some of us are not at all happy to have it thrown at us that we are responsible for this sort of thing. If those conditions are to be, if they must be, if the Arab is to be paid less than the Jew in Palestine, or the ryot in India is to be paid less than the Englishman, let the responsibility for these differences lie at the doors of the people themselves on the spot. We should not carry it.

I wish the hon. member for Chertsey (Sir A. Boyd-Carpenter) was in his place, because for sheer eloquence I thought that his was the best speech I have heard in the House of Commons for some time. He put forward two or three very remarkable propositions. He said that this Bill means handing over the political machine to a few Indians, who are likely to exploit their own kith and kin. How familiar all that sounds in our own land. As a matter of fact, if it were not that we have 65 years of compulsory elementary education behind us and a strong and powerful trade union movement, exactly the same thing about which the hon. member complains in India would still prevail here. When I was a boy in an agricultural community all that the hon. Gentleman said would happen in India was in operation there, and if the hon. Gentleman and his friends had the power and, if I might say so, greater wit and the intelligence, they would still continue to do the same thing to-day.

Then, he said, that the fellah in Egypt is worse off since we left Egypt to the Egyptians. It was news to me that we had ever left Egypt at all. I was in Egypt twelve months ago, and, just to show the House that the hon. Gentleman is not quite as well informed as he himself thinks, the complaint on all hands was that the Egyptian Government can do absolutely nothing, even for the fellahin, without consulting the British Residence. John Bull has got his hands so tightly on Egypt that we might as well have taken it over and made it into a colony.

Another argument has been employed against our policy. It is a strange one, and I want the House to note it. It is that we cannot grant these wide powers because of the political disagreements which prevail among the Indians. That is very remarkable after Wavertree. I would like to see an Indian reading the "Liverpool Post" or the "Manchester Guardian" far away in Delhi trying to find out what happened to the Tory party there. It would be a mental achievement for an Indian to understand exactly what happened at Wavertree and how the right hon. member for Epping can support the National Government here and attack it in the country. The other argument employed is that we cannot give home rule to India because of their religious differences. I have had the privilege of visiting the United States twice. I do not care how many religions there are in India or any other country, I venture to say that there are twice as many in the United States.

Viscountess ASTOR: But only one language.

Mr. DAVIES: They make new religions in the United States almost every week and come over here and expect us to accept them. Every race, creed, caste and religion known to the human race can be found in the United States, and a few additional ones too. That argument will not avail, therefore. Then somebody said that the great continent of India is the brightest jewel in the British Crown. That, of course, means in other language that it is the biggest coin in the Englishman's pocket.

Whatever may be the outcome of this Measure, one thing above all is certain, and I do not think it has been mentioned in this Debate yet. When our Government in 1914 called upon thousands of men in India to come over to Europe for the first time to fight our battles and defeat the Germans, at that stage, and from that stage onwards, there was nothing to prevent Great Britain being compelled sooner or later, to grant that freedom to the Indian people which ought to have been theirs long, long ago.

3.25 p.m.

The CHANCELLOR of the DUCHY of LANCASTER (Mr. J. C. Davidson): In an amusing passage in the admirable speech which the Noble Lord the Member for Horsham (Earl Winterton) delivered yesterday, he cast me for the part of a Trappist monk who was about to break his vow of silence this afternoon. It is perfectly true that I have not yet taken part in any Debate during the present Parliament, but I do not feel at all akin to a monk. I feel much more like a man who after a long spell in the tropics finds himself at the Lido which bears the name of my right hon. Friend opposite on a cold January or February morning, longing to swim but forced to break the ice, and I trust that if I am clumsy in my swimming hon. Members will forgive me. I want and have wanted to speak on India for two reasons. First, I have a tale to tell which, in all modesty, I believe that no one else can tell in the House. With my colleagues, none of whom are now in the House, I spent five months on the Indian States Inquiry Commission travelling 10,000 miles through the Indian States, sitting with the Princes and their Ministers in durbars, in consultation, in examination of their financial problems, and therefore I do feel that perhaps I can shed a little light on the circumstances of the States. My second reason is that after the experiences I had in India, after sitting at the Round Table Conference and after sitting with the other pygmies on the Joint Select Committee, I have formed opinions based on convictions just as sincere, held just as sincerely, as those of any other Member in the House, and later I want to make a little confession of faith on the Indian problem.

In Clauses 6 and 143 to 147 of the Bill there are set out the methods of accession of the Indian States and the financial provisions which, in effect, carry out the recommendations of the Commission of which I had the honour to be Chairman, which recommendations were fortunately accepted both by British India, by the States, by the Round Table Conference and by the Joint Select Committee and now find themselves in this Bill. The Bill expresses conclusions which have been reached in discussions over a term of years with which the Princes have been associated, and the Princes are not unnaturally interested in the drafting of the Bill, particularly those earlier Clauses—including Clause 6, to which I have referred—which would especially concern them on the question of accession. The Parliamentary programme will, no doubt, necessitate an early discussion in Committee, and I am assuming therefore, and I have no doubt that the States will also assume, that some opportunity will be given, even by delaying the Amendments, for considering the points of substance which the Princes may wish to raise in connection with the Committee Stage of the Bill.

I do not believe that anyone in the House, especially any Member sitting on the Conservative Benches, can really approach the question of the future Government of India, unless he takes some account of the historical picture which India presents. For over 100 years the British Government have been pursuing a dual policy; a policy of settlement and administration of British India has gone hand in hand with a policy of closer alliance with the Indian States, until the day came, in 1857, when Lord Canning was able to say:

> "The Crown of England stands forth the unquestioned Ruler and Paramount Power in all India. There is a reality in the suzerainty of England which has never existed before and which is not only felt but eagerly acknowledged by the Chiefs."

In other words, unity has been achieved, from our point of view.

Hon. Members will understand that in those days the economic development of India had scarcely begun. Only a few hundred miles of railway, to take one example, ran through India; to-day there are 40,000 miles of railway running through India. If a study be made of the map, it will be realised that not only is that true of the great Provinces of India, but that railways are interlaced with the yellow of the Indian States. Going from Bombay to Delhi, one passes through 28 jurisdictions. Every day and every year that has passed, the relations between British India and the States have been growing more close as economic development has continued. The States have given free grants of land to the railways and have ceded jurisdiction, civil and criminal, all over the land on which the railways have run. They have taken part in public utility undertakings, such as roads and telegraphs. Therefore, it is clear that in many

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aspects, especially in the economic life of India, a federal system is almost in being. That is one of the chief things which must strike one about India.

Secondly I would ask this: Is it surprising that the States, and the Indian Princes who have been gradually going through a process of greater association with British India, should feel that they ought to have some voice in the decisions of the policies upon which the great undertakings have been settled in the past? India changed from a Free Trade country to a tariff country without any real consultation with the Princes, who had no say, though the interests of the internal States like those of the internal Provinces have been gravely jeopardised. The Prince who looked to his population for a comparatively low level of taxation has discovered that the taxable capacity of his subject has been greatly decreased by the increased cost of living due to the increased price of important commodities, but he has had no say in the economic policy. Travelling through India and talking in council with Ministers and with the Princes themselves, one found a genuine feeling that the time had arrived—and this is no doubt one of the reasons which led the Princes to make that famous declaration at the Round Table Conference—when, if there was to be a Federation, they must have some responsibility in the shaping of an All-India economic policy

I wish I had the vocabulary of the right hon. Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill). I should then be able to give a picture of Indian India, through which I had the pleasure and honour of travelling, which would bring to the House, if I could only do it, a far better realisation of the situation in India than I shall be able to do. There seems to be, in certain sections of the House and outside, a desire to use terms almost of superciliousness or patronage in connection with the great Princes of India. Words like "blackmail" and "bribery" are used much too freely in connection with men who are governing their States, and whose ancestors before them were governing their States long before this country had emerged into civilisation. Those men may be different from us, their methods may be different from ours, and you cannot compare one Indian State with another. The loose way in which people talk of the States as though they were a class, and throw them on one side, is all wrong.

I travelled right through India, and visited States of every dynasty. My hon. Friend the Member for Barnstaple (Sir B. Peto) has referred to Travancore. A picture is drawn of Travancore which refers to that State as a backward tract. Why, it had votes for women long before we had them in this country. It has a far higher percentage of literacy than many other parts of the country. It has no communal troubles; there are nearly 3,000,000 Christians out of a population of 5,000,000, and they live a happy, contented, and well educated life. I visited co-educational schools and colleges; I saw the finest women's hospital I have ever seen, staffed entirely by Indian women except for a British matron. To refer to the States as though they were wild, backward tracts is really most offensive, and I should like to enter my protest, as having had the honour of visiting them, against the kind of insinuations which have been far too widely used.

Sir B. PETO: My right hon. Friend does not infer that I made any disparaging remarks with regard to Travancore?

Mr. DAVIDSON: Far from it; I was calling my hon. Friend to my aid.

Miss RATHBONE: Would the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to give us a corresponding picture of the conditions that he found in Patiala, Alwar, and Kashmir?

Mr. DAVIDSON: I am perfectly prepared to admit, as I said at the beginning of this part of my speech, that you cannot compare one State with another, but to class all States and throw them on one side as though they were backward places is most unfair.

Sir H. CROFT. I am sure that nobody who represents our movement would ever do that.

Mr. DAVIDSON: It was really to those who are associated with the hon. and gallant Member that I was referring. Certain advice has been tendered in the Press, by a Noble Peer and by a collection of people, to the Indian Princes, as

to where their duty and their interest lay. Having stayed with them and talked with them, I consider that that is an extremely offensive and impertinent thing to do. They are quite capable of deciding their own destinies without any advice from anyone else.

Sir H. CROFT: Including the Viceroy?

Mr. DAVIDSON: The Viceroy is the representative of the Crown, and is guide, philosopher and friend to the Princes, and he is quite entitled, if he holds a view in the position he occupies, to convey that view to them.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Including the Viceroy?

Mr. DAVIDSON: If you were Viceroy, would you refuse it?

Mr. CHURCHILL: The point is whether it was ever legitimate to tender them advice. That was the point to which the right hon. Gentlman was referring, and it is admitted that advice has been freely tendered to them from the most authoritative quarter.

Mr. DAVIDSON: From a quarter and an authority which was based on knowing all the conditions of India, and as a friend and adviser, duly appointed by the Crown. No wonder the Maharaja of Bikaner in his speech used these words the other day:

> "It behoves us to view the question as to whether we should federate or not with the utmost calmness and vision, and to beware lest we allow ourselves to be used as tools of any political or extreme party in England or India for their own selfish ends, and permit ourselves to be influenced by alarmists and mischief-makers."

He went on in another passage to defend the Viceroy against attacks which had been made against him in this House and outside, and used the phrase that the Princes of India were not soldiers of fortune. I admit quite frankly that I looked forward to this opportunity of stating quite emphatically my views, and to say some word in support of the Indian Princes. They have a great responsibility to their subjects. They have a very difficult decision to come to. It would be the worst possible thing for India and for us if by any loose talk we were to create an atmosphere in which they might feel that we had not their interests at heart.

If I may turn for one moment to the general principles of this Debate, and also give my impressions in regard to this Bill, I may say that I went to India and came back from India, and worked at the Round Table Conference and the Select Committee, feeling very much in the beginning like many of my hon. Friends in this House, that caution was essential; but I came definitely to the view that the policy which they are now urging upon the House is by far the most dangerous policy that could be suggested for the future government of India. I can quite understand hon. Members, especially the hon. Member for Wycombe (Sir A. Knox), feeling that Parliamentary institutions are a failure in the East, and let us go back to the days when we were the father and mother of the people and we governed them. I can quite imagine that. That is a logical policy, but to say that they are prepared to give greater responsibility in the Provinces and leave the Centre unreformed, is to set forces at work in India which would lead to its breaking up altogether. You would be creating the worst of all dyarchies—responsibility at the perimeter and irresponsibility at the centre.

I firmly believe that it is essential for the future of India that that Federation should be set up. It is essential for the future of India that the Princes should play their part. We hope there is nothing that they have said to lead us to suppose anything else. What was a long view of the picture at the time of the Simon Commission is now a close-up and, when the time comes, I am certain that the Princes will play an inestimable part in the future government of India. They are Indians. We talk of the Princes, quite rightly, as the greatest friends of the Crown. In peace and war their loyalty has never been questioned. Over and above that, they have not only a material interest but a cultural interest in the success of their own people, and when I hear the kind of criticism directed against some Indian States that one hears from Members on the Labour benches, I feel that happiness is not always measured by material prosperity. If they had seen the scenes that I did in the Indian States, they would have realised that, much as we on this side of the world may feel that low wages under our present economic

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system are a bad thing, there are people in India who would prefer to live under their father and mother as they call it than earn big money under a system which they have never understood. You see it by the migration into the States and the very little emigration out of them.

I believe that the future of British India is simply this. You cannot go back. Even the right hon. Gentleman and his friends say you must go forward. If you are to go forward, go forward with the safety of leaving the Princes to come in in the Centre and do not let the British Indian Provinces create for themselves, as they have already done to a large extent, a national feeling which will become so strong that a weak Centre will never be able to be able to prevent centrifugal force working and India flying to pieces. I say this with great earnestness. I repudiate the suggestion which has been too often made, that it is a bad bargain for British India if the States come into the Federation. It is not, even financially. This is something that the House ought to remember. Many States now are paying for their forces which are available for internal security and also, through the Customs, for the general defence of India. They are paying twice over. I hope that will be taken into consideration by some Members in the House.

Perhaps I may give some little description of the complications which undoubtedly surround the Princes' entry into Federation. Some States have immunities. Under treaties with the Crown they are enabled to do things which other States are not. They can manufacture salt or enjoy a free issue of some in return for anything suppressed in their own manufacture. They have postal immunities, coinage immunities, and various things of that kind. On the other hand, there are States which pay large or small tributes or have ceded territories for the return of military protection. I am sure that every hon. Member will agree that it is impossible to set off the immunities on the one side against the liabilities of another. Therefore, it was stated in our report that a balance should be struck for each State; that the liability side should be balanced against the credit side, and whichever was the greater the State should have the benefit. That was a simple, and, I believe, a just method of getting justice both for the States, and eventually, if they federated, for the Federal Budget. That is the basis of the Clauses of the Bill to which I have referred.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Before the right hon. Gentleman sits down, may I venture most respectfully to ask him to tell us when an answer will be given on the legal aspects of the Statute of Westminster and Dominion status?

Mr. DAVIDSON: I understand on Monday.

Mr. COCKS: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer one or two of the points put forward from the Opposition?

Mr. MORGAN JONES: That is not done in these Debates.

Mr. DAVIDSON: As far as the right hon. Gentleman is concerned, I believe that the Attorney-General is going to deal with it early on Monday. There were several points raised by the Opposition, but, if the hon. Member will excuse me, I ask his indulgence on this occasion. I shall be more effective next time. I have to conclude my observations. To return for a moment to the States, I should like the House to appreciate that the Indian States are really the Indian interests. Out of the States, British India was carved, and when critics outside and inside the House refer to the fact that the Indian States are backward and that their civilisation is not up to the level of British India, they must not forget that they have an indigenous form of Government in India.

May I make this appeal to my hon. Friends who differ from us on this side. I have put forward my case, perhaps very inadequately, but I feel most sincerely and deeply at heart. I have come to the view which I have expressed of the vital necessity of a strong central Government out of a conviction and from prolonged study of the question, both in India and here. I do not pretend to be an advocate or to practice the art of advocacy, but I feel most sincerely that if we are to keep India we must give freedom with safeguards. We must associate the Indian Princes with an All-India Federation, because

without them nobody can talk of a united India. That unity is probably the greatest gift we have given. A national consciousness has arisen not only in British India, but in the States. If we are to lead that consciousness down the right road within the Empire, with all India taking part in an All-India policy of the regeneration and uplifting of the people, there is no possible hope in the adoption of the policy of my hon. Friends, except the one certainty, and that is that India will be lost for a generation.

3.55 p.m.

Mr. EMMOTT: The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down apologised to the House for the inadequacy of his presentation of his case. I think the House will agree with me that such apology was quite unnecessary, and that he need have offered no apology to the House except for the silence which he, the Trappist, has so long observed. Nothing could be more false or mischievous than the idea that we are under some pledge to establish in India the system of government that is contained in this Bill. Men talk as though the proposed system were something deserved by India, or some gift that we have promised to her. For the prevalence of this idea I believe that in great part Ministers are themselves responsible. They have habitually used language of great inaccuracy that has produced a confusion of ideas, which has been fostered both in India and in this country by interested persons in order to obtain approval of their own proposals.

The Round Table Conference itself has much to answer for. There arguments were overborn by speeches and rhetoric. Perorations were elevated to the rank of declarations of State policy. Mr. Gandhi himself said, in the Conference:

"We have never really come to grips. I have felt, 'Why are we not coming nearer and nearer together and why are we wasting our time in eloquence, in oratory, in debating, and in scoring points?' "

When the Round Table Conference began Parliament had not expressed its mind in regard to the form that constitutional development in India would take in its next stage. And yet from the beginning of that Conference language was used which carried the widest implications, but which Parliament had had no opportunity to consider, and which in the constitutional point of view was of no force or effect whatever. We seem to have forgotten that we were dealing in great part with Hindus, men of infinite subtlety of mind, men who will extract the utmost meaning from every syllable that a man uses, and will hold him to the performance of the last particle of that meaning. There is no question here of pledges, or of promises, but only of policy. In the Preamble to the Act of 1919 the word "policy" occurs twice, but the word "pledge" does not appear at all. A pledge is a promise; a declaration of policy is not a promise but a statement of opinion. A promise is morally binding: an opinion is not so. One affects the will, the other the mind. You cannot break a promise without breach of faith. There is no breach of faith in a change of opinion. I insist upon this distinction, not because it is the desire of my hon. Friends and myself to advocate any change of policy. We desire not that Parliament should abandon the policy laid down in the Preamble to the Act——

It being Four of the Clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

The remaining Orders were read, and postponed.

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER *adjourned the House, without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 2.*

Adjourned at One Minute after Four o'Clock until Monday next, 11th February.

BROADCASTING.

INDIAN REPRESENTATIVES' VIEWS.

3. **Miss RATHBONE** asked the Secretary of State for India whether he will endeavour to arrange for a series of broadcast talks in India by representative leaders of Indian public opinion to be relayed to this country?

Sir S. HOARE: This is a matter for the British Broadcasting Corporation, and I am unable to act as the hon. Member suggests.

Miss RATHBONE: Has the right hon. Gentleman no means of making suggestions to the British Broadcasting Corporation; and, if it is not possible to arrange for Indians to broadcast in England, could he not arrange to broadcast in India, so that Indian public opinion might know that the Government here are not indifferent to it?

Mr. HOLFORD KNIGHT: Will the right hon. Gentleman also consider the utility of suggesting to the British Broadcasting Corporation that some such statement from India by representative Indians should be broadcast here?

Sir S. HOARE: I could not make suggestions on matters which are outside the scope of my official duties. I will, however, keep in mind the suggestions of my hon. Friends in case the opportunity ever arises of considering the matter further.

BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION.

21. **Mr. JOHN** asked the Postmaster-General whether it is the intention of the Government to appoint a special Departmental Committee to investigate broadcasting and to report upon any change that should be made in the constitution of the British Broadcasting Corporation after 1936?

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Sir Kingsley Wood): I would refer the hon. Member to the answer which I gave to a question on this subject by the hon. and gallant Member for South Cardiff (Captain A. Evans) on the 28th January.

Mr. JOHN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that there is a statement in the Radio Year Book of the British Broadcasting Corporation for 1935 as to the probability of the Prime Minister setting up a special Departmental Committee to inquire into the constitution of the British Broadcasting Corporation after 1936?

Sir K. WOOD: I have not seen that statement.

BRITISH UNION OF FASCISTS.

17. **Mr. DAVID GRENFELL** asked the Postmaster-General whether he has issued an experimental broadcasting licence to any individual residing at the headquarters of the British Fascist party in King's Road, Chelsea, where an apparatus for broadcasting has been installed capable of being used for sending out communications to be received by suitable receivers throughout the London area?

Sir K. WOOD: An experimental wireless licence was formerly held by a person residing at 33, King's Road, Chelsea. The licence authorised the use of a low-power transmitter solely for the purpose of experiment and research. Attention was, however, called to the fact that the licensee's address was the headquarters of the British Union of Fascists, and as it is not the practice to grant an experimental licence for a wireless transmitter installed at the headquarters of any political party, the licence was terminated in October last.

MINISTERS' STATEMENTS.

25. **Mr. MORGAN JONES** asked the Postmaster-General whether he can inform the House as to the names of Members of the Government who have broadcast explanations of Government policy, and the number of times each has been given such facilities during the year 1934 and the month of January, 1935, respectively?

Sir K. WOOD: As the reply is of a detailed character, I propose, with the hon. Member's permission, to circulate it in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Mr. CHARLES WILLIAMS: Would it be beyond the right hon. Gentleman to try to improve the very low standard of the Opposition broadcasters?

Following is the reply:

The occasions on which Ministers have broadcast statements on subjects within their province during the period from 1st January, 1934, to the 31st January, 1935, are shown in the following statement :

Speaker.	Date.	Subject.
Mr. Ramsay MacDonald	5th January, 1935 ...	Looking forward to 1935.
Mr. Neville Chamberlain	17th April, 1934 ...	The Budget (*a*).
Sir John Simon	19th December, 1934 ...	The Naval Conversations.
Sir Samuel Hoare ...	1st January, 1935 ...	India (*b*).
Mr. J. H. Thomas ...	21st April, 1934 ...	The Budget (*a*).
Lord Londonderry ...	20th December, 1934 ...	Empire Air Services.
Sir Godfrey Collins ..	10th December, 1934 ...	The Milk Marketing Board in Scotland.
Sir Hilton Young ...	12th July, 1934 ...	The Drought.
,, ...	17th January, 1935 ...	The New Housing Bill.
Mr. Walter Elliot ...	14th February, 1934 ...	The Marketing Schemes in Action.
,, ...	24th August, 1934 ...	Cattle Emergency Provisions Act.
,, ...	27th September, 1934 ...	Milk for School Children.
Mr. O. Stanley	27th March, 1934 ...	Road Safety Campaign.
Sir Kingsley Wood ...	6th June, 1934 ...	Changes in the Post Office service.
,, ...	25th September, 1934 ...	Telephone Week.
,, ...	31st January, 1935 ...	Report of the Television Committee.
Mr. L. Hore-Belisha ...	10th July, 1934 ...	Pedestrian Crossings.
,, ...	2nd August, 1934 ...	Road Accidents.
,, ...	23rd August, 1934 ...	Silent Zones.
,, ...	3rd October, 1934 ...	The New Pedestrian Crossing Places.
,, ...	3rd January, 1935 ...	Taking Stock.
Mr. A. Eden	21st May, 1934	The Disarmament Conference.
,, ...	10th September, 1934 ...	Opening of the 15th Ordinary Session of the League.
,, ...	18th January, 1935 ...	The Settlement of the Saar Dispute.

(*a*) Opposition speakers on the Budget were :
Mr. C. R. Attlee. 19th April, 1934.
Sir Herbert Samuel. 20th April, 1934.

(*b*) Other speakers on India during the period included :
Mr. C. R. Attlee. 4th January, 1935.
Lord Lloyd. 11th January, 1935.
Mr Isaac Foot. 25th January, 1935.
Mr. Winston Churchill. 29th January, 1935.

CHINA (BRITISH MINISTER, NANKING).

5. **Sir WILLIAM DAVISON** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what is the present position as to the provision of a residence for His Majesty's Minister at Nanking ?

The SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir John Simon): I would refer my hon. Friend to the reply which I returned to my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Camborne (Lieut.-Commander Agnew) on 6th December last.

Sir W. DAVISON: I am aware of that reply in which the right hon. Gentleman said that the Consul-General's house at Nanking was being adapted for the Minister. Can he say on how many occasions the Minister has visited either Nanking or Shanghai since his arrival in China a year ago ?

Sir J. SIMON: Obviously, that is a different question. My hon. Friend may take it that the changes which we propose at Nanking are for the purpose of making it conveniently possible for His Majesty's Minister to discharge his duties in Nanking as often as he is required to go there.

Sir W. DAVISON: Do I understand then that the alterations have not yet been completed ?

Sir J. SIMON: I believe not.

POLAND (MINORITIES).

7. **Mr. RHYS DAVIES** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been drawn to the attitude of the Polish delegate at the recent meeting of the League of Nations Council during the discussion of two minorities

[Mr. Davies.]
complaints involving Poland; and whether, in view of this confirmation of Poland's virtual repudiation of the minorities treaties of 1919, he will bring the matter before the League of Nations?

Sir J. SIMON: The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative, except that only one minority petition was involved. As the hon. Member is aware, the Polish delegate made a declaration to the Assembly of the League of Nations on the 14th September, refusing all co-operation with international organisations in respect of the supervision of the application by Poland of the existing system for the protection of minorities I intervened on that occasion to make the position of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom clear, and the relevant extract from my speech was circulated in reply to a question by the hon. Member on the 14th November. The question of the Polish Government's attitude is therefore already before the League of Nations.

Mr. DAVIES: While thanking the right hon. Gentleman for the steps already taken in this matter, may I ask him whether we are to expect anything further shortly at the League of Nations on this very important subject?

Sir J. SIMON: Of course the matter is one for the Council of the League as a whole. I think the position taken up by the British Government and, I think, other Governments is quite clear, namely, that the minority procedure is still in force and cannot be modified by unilateral action on the part of any one State.

UNITED STATES (ARMS INQUIRY).

8. **Mr. DOBBIE** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any official protests have been made to the United States Government concerning any of the evidence given at the United States senate arms inquiry; if so, when were such protests made and what was their nature?

Sir J. SIMON: I presume that the hon. Member, in referring to official protests, is enquiring whether any such protests have been made by His Majesty's Government. On this assumption the answer is No; the only exception was with reference to a ridiculuous story, to which I referred in an earlier Debate, which brought in the name of His Majesty the King.

MEMEL.

9. **Sir WILFRID SUGDEN** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government are favourably considering the claim of the German Government for the proper government of that territory for which the Memel Diet are presumed to act, which could not be formed on any of the recent occasions when it has assembled; and if he is able to make a statement on the matter?

Sir J. SIMON: The situation in Memel has not materially altered since the reply which I gave to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme (Colonel Wedgwood) on 30th January. His Majesty's Government are at present in communication with the French and Italian Governments on the subject.

NAVAL AND MILITARY PENSIONS AND GRANTS.

11. **Major PROCTER** asked the Minister of Pensions whether he is aware that disabled pensioners who cannot follow their employment through their having to receive medical treatment owing to war service are denied dependants' allowance while receiving such medical treatment; and what action he proposes to take to remedy this grievance?

The MINISTER of PENSIONS (Major Tryon): I think that my hon. and gallant Friend is under some misapprehension. Allowances under Article 6 of the Royal Warrant are provided and are paid in cases in which the patient suffers loss of earnings in consequence of an approved course of treatment by having to give up temporarily a remunerative occupation on which he was dependent for the support of himself and his family.

Major PROCTER: Is the right hon. and gallant Gentleman aware that when men are referred to panel doctors for treatment they are afraid to go to the panel doctors, because they lose their wages and the allowances for their children?

Major TRYON: If a man is in employment, and subsequently gets treatment from us, he would get treatment allowances. The point raised in the question would not be relevant.

AGRICULTURE.

MILK PRODUCTS.

12. **Sir PERCY HURD** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether, on the representations of the milk marketing boards of England and Wales and Scotland and the manufacturers of dairy products, the Market Supply Committee has reported that the increased home production of condensed whole milk and tinned cream enables the British industry now to undertake to fulfil all the needs of the British market; and whether, in the circumstances, the imports of these products from foreign countries will now be prohibited in the terms of the Marketing Act of 1933?

The MINISTER of AGRICULTURE (Mr. Elliot): The question of the further regulation of imports of condensed whole milk and tinned cream is under consideration.

Sir P. HURD: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether the statement made in the question as to the opinion of the committee is not correct?

Mr. ELLIOT: My hon. Friend very well knows that the reports of the Market Supply Committee are confidential, and I am not to be drawn into giving an opinion one way or the other.

Sir P. HURD: Is the matter referred to not within the knowledge of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. ELLIOT: Many facts may be within my knowledge which it would not be proper for me to communicate.

PIGS AND BACON.

13. **Mr. ASSHETON** asked the Minister of Agriculture the actual number of bacon pigs received by the Bacon Board each month in 1934?

Mr. ELLIOT: As the answer contains a number of figures, I propose, with my hon. Friend's permission, to circulate it in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

The answer is as follows:

The numbers of pigs delivered to curers in pursuance of contracts made under the Pigs Marketing Scheme, 1933 (excluding pigs delivered but subsequently rejected, and excluding also pigs produced by curers themselves) in each month in 1934 were as follows:

1934.	
January	116,903
February	98,146
March	63,272
April	75,085
May	96,972
June	103,940
July	111,395
August	135,872
September	152,342
October	180,820
November	161,990
December	150,275

14. **Mr. HALL-CAINE** asked the Minister of Agriculture to what extent existing bacon factories in England and Wales will be unable to reach their maximum output during the first six months of this year owing to inadequate supplies; and whether the situation in this respect is any better for this half-year than for the corresponding half-year in 1934?

Mr. ELLIOT: I am informed that the number of pigs contracted to be delivered in the first six months of 1935 represents about 60 per cent. of the curers' stated requirements. This is 31 per cent. more than was the case during the corresponding period last year.

MILK REORGANISATION COMMISSION.

15. **Brigadier-General CLIFTON BROWN** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether he can now give the names of the members and the terms of reference of the Great Britain Milk Commission?

Mr. ELLIOT: The Secretary of State for Scotland and I have to-day appointed an Agricultural Marketing Reorganisation Commission for Milk, with the following terms of reference:

1. To consider the working of organised milk marketing in Great Britain under Milk Marketing Schemes and its incidence on production, distribution and consumption, and to make recommendations for further improvement.

2. To consider and report on the extent to which and the manner in which organisation could be facilitated by closer co-opera-

[Mr. Elliot.]

tion between the Marketing Boards concerned, or by the amalgamation of some or all of the schemes, including any schemes at present under consideration, or by other adjustments, and to prepare schemes for giving effect to any such adjustments.

3. To consider and report on the extent to which, and the manner in which, the organisation of milk marketing in Great Britain could be facilitated by closer co-operation between Milk Marketing Boards in Great Britain and the appropriate authorities in Northern Ireland.

The Government of Northern Ireland have been consulted with regard to the terms of reference, and have intimated their willingness to afford every assistance to the commission in the solution of their problems.

The composition of the commission will be:

Chairman:
A. E. Cutforth, Esq., C.B.E.

Members:
Professor, A. W. Ashby, M.A.
Sir Iain Colquhoun, Bt., D.S.O.
Sir John Orr, D.S.O., M.C., M.A., M.D., D.Sc., F.R.S., and
Miss D. S. Tomkinson, M,A., J.P.

Brigadier-General BROWN: While thanking the Minister for his reply, may I ask whether it will be outside the terms of reference of the Commission to recommend the Government to put on tariffs on skim milk and other products which are coming in here and ruining the home producer?

Mr. ELLIOT: I am afraid the commission will need to interpret its own terms of reference. They are very widely drawn.

Mr. LAMBERT: Will the commission have power to inquire into the prices charged by retailers, which are excessive to-day?

Mr. ELLIOT: The terms of reference includes working of organised milk marketing in Great Britain and its effect on production, distribution and consumption.

Mr. DAVID MASON: Can the right hon. Gentleman give the House any idea of when the commission will report?

Mr. ELLIOT: No, I am afraid I could not.

Mr. LEVY: If the terms of reference are not such as to allow the commission to deal with the question of a tariff on dried and skim milk products, can they be altered so as to include that question?

Mr. ELLIOT: I am afraid I could not further discuss the terms of reference at this time. As my hon. Friend knows there are immediate problems confronting the Marketing Board, which immediate problems cannot include the levying of tariffs on certain articles which are excluded from them by trade agreements.

16. **Mr. RONALD ROSS** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether he is aware that representatives of the Milk Marketing Board are endeavouring to restrict the normal market for Northern Irish milk products in the Liverpool district; and whether he will take steps to prevent this practice?

Mr. ELLIOT: No, Sir. I am not aware that any such endeavour has taken place, nor would I be willing to believe it unless some definite instance were brought to my notice.

Mr. ROSS: Will my right hon. Friend consider the second part of my question, and, if I can bring such an instance to his notice, will he discourage people from doing this?

Mr. ELLIOT: That is a further hypothetical question.

Mr. ROSS: Will my right hon. Friend receive such information as I can give him on these points?

Mr. ELLIOT: Undoubtedly, with pleasure.

POST OFFICE.

AIR-MAIL CHARGES (BRAZIL).

18. **Mr. KIRKPATRICK** asked the Postmaster-General why the minimum charge on a letter sent by air-mail from Brazil to London is 1s. 2d., while that on a letter from London to Brazil is three times as much, namely, 3s. 6d.?

Sir K. WOOD: The charge of 1s. 2d. is for a very light letter weighing only about one-sixth oz., whereas the charge of 3s. 6d. is for a letter weighing three times as much (½ oz.).

Mr. KIRKPATRICK: While thanking my right hon. Friend, may I draw his attention, with all respect, to the letter

which has appeared in the "Times" newspaper to-day, on page 21, on this subject?

Mr. BERNAYS: Is it not a fact that the minimum charge for letters from this country to Brazil is 3s. 6d.?

Sir K. WOOD: I would refer my hon. Friend to my answer.

TELEPHONE CHARGES.

22. **Captain CUNNINGHAM-REID** asked the Postmaster-General what complaints he has received from telephone subscribers regarding the change from a form for telephone charges which showed the number of calls charged to a form which shows only total amounts and would appear to deprive subscribers of the opportunity hitherto afforded them of checking their telephone accounts?

Sir K. WOOD: I have received a number of complaints from subscribers on the extension beyond 2d. of the previous system of showing in telephone accounts the total value in pence of local calls. The range of automatic working is being extended so as to permit a subscriber to obtain for himself calls up to 4d. in value by direct dialling without the aid of an operator. Under this arrangement it will be impracticable to show separately the numbers of 1d., 2d., 3d. and 4d. calls as these will be registered mechanically. In view of the great advantages of this extension of dialling, I trust that subscribers generally will accept the system, as in fact the great majority of those who have complained have done after explanation.

SALE OF STAMPS (SUNDAYS).

23. **Mr. HALL-CAINE** asked the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the large number of letters written on Sundays, he will take steps to improve the conveniences which exist for obtaining stamps on that day, either by increasing the present number of automatic machines, by installing new types which will deliver books of stamps as well as single stamps, or by making arrangements which would enable and encourage confectionery and tobacco stores to sell stamps on that day?

Sir K. WOOD: The installation of stamp selling machines is being proceeded with wherever financial considerations warrant; and machines for the sale of books of stamps are on trial. In localities where stamps cannot otherwise be readily obtained licences for their sale are freely issued to shopkeepers. I will examine whether the number of licences could usefully be increased.

Mr. RHYS DAVIES: Will the right hon. Gentleman take care not to warrant the sale of stamps in shops on Sunday —[HON. MEMBERS: "Why?"]—because in selling stamps in shops on Sunday shop assistants will be working seven days a week—and will the right hon. Gentleman urge people who want stamps to buy them on Saturday?

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT (WAGE INCREASES).

24. **Mr. ATTLEE** asked the Postmaster-General whether he is now able to announce the result of the wage negotiations which have been proceeding with the representatives of the engineering classes employed in his Department?

Sir K. WOOD: I announced in this House in December last that I had been able to authorise increases in the pay of certain grades of postal servants, but added that the case of various other grades, particularly in the Post Office Engineering Department, was still under consideration. I am glad to say I am now in a position, after having discussed the matter with the Post Office Engineering Union, to announce alterations in the pay of Post Office engineering skilled workmen and labourers corresponding to those previously announced in the case of the postal telegraph and telephone grades.

In accordance with the principle which I set before myself of dealing primarily with cases of hardship, the greatest benefit will be conferred on the labourers, the lowest paid group in the Engineering Department. But improvements will also be effected in the pay of skilled workmen and in the allowances granted to certain of them for undertaking special duties.

These improvements, like those already announced, are in addition to the increases provided for under the Government's consolidation scheme. The full cost of the latter in the case of the classes now in question is estimated at over £150,000 per annum, and the present concession will cost another £70,000 per annum. Some 25,000 persons are con-

[Sir K. Wood.]
cerned. I have also approved of certain improvements in the scales of pay of inspectors in the Post Office Engineering Department.

The relevant particulars as regards the wages of the engineering labourers and skilled workmen, have been set out in a document, copies of which will be placed in the Library in the course of the next few days.

These increases will take effect as from the 1st January.

TELEVISION.

19 and 20. **Mr. CLARRY** asked the Postmaster-General (1) when the British Broadcasting Corporation will be in a position to announce to all radio manufacturers the essential information preparatory to the construction of televisors, such as the nature of the apparatus, wavelengths, and the number of lines;

(2) whether he can give any date when the two main groups referred to in the report of the Television Committee, namely, the Marconi E.M.I. Television Company, Limited, and the Baird Television, Limited, will be in a position to market the appropriate apparatus; and when the new London station will be in a position to broadcast?

Sir K. WOOD: The points referred to by my hon. Friend are now under the consideration of the Television Advisory Committee, which I appointed on the 31st January. This committee held its first meeting on the 5th February; but there is a great deal of preparatory work to be done before any announcement can be made concerning the arrangements for the new service.

Mr. CLARRY: Are we to understand that in the meantime these two groups named in the Television Committee's Report will have a complete monopoly of the production of this apparatus?

Sir K. WOOD: I would refer my hon. Friend to the statement which I made and also to the report of the committee.

REGENT'S PARK (ST. JOHN'S LODGE).

26. **Sir CYRIL COBB** asked the First Commissioner of Works whether he is aware that better decorative horticultural use could be made of the gravelled spaces between the walls of St. John's Lodge and the steps down to the turfed flower borders leading up to the entrance to the Hylas garden of St. John's Lodge, Regent's Park; and, in order to remedy the dilapidated appearance of St. John's Lodge, will he seek outside advice as to how to beautify the spaces and paths immediately next the structure of St. John's Lodge and how to utilise this building for the use or enjoyment of the public instead of pulling it down?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Ormsby-Gore): As I informed my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Ayr Burghs (Lieut.-Colonel Moore) on the 6th February, negotiations are proceeding for the use of St. John's Lodge as a museum by the University of London. No question, therefore, arises at present of the demolition of the building. I cannot regard the present arrangement of gravel and grass at the entrance to St. John's Lodge as otherwise than appropriate to the front of the house. At this season of the year its aspect may be a little uninviting, but it will be made tidy in the spring.

27. **Mr. BURNETT** asked the First Commissioner of Works whether he can recondition a small part of the premises of St. John's Lodge, Regent's Park, for use as a public convenience and for the storage of bicycles, and for adaptation as an addition to the existing bathing and dressing accommodation for those who use Regent's Park for games and theatrical performances?

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE: Negotiations are at present proceeding with the University of London for the use of the whole of St. John's Lodge as a museum and training centre, and I am afraid, therefore, that I cannot consider the proposal made by the hon. Member.

HYDE PARK (CONVENIENCES).

28. **Sir C. COBB** asked the First Commissioner of Works the number of public conveniences in Hyde Park other than those with entrances outside the park and on the public roadways at Hyde Park Corner and the Marble Arch; and will he confer with the London County Council with a view to installing other

concealed public conveniences near the Victoria Gate, Bayswater Road, and near the gates of Hyde Park entrances on the Kensington Road, near Kensington Gardens?

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE: There is at present one convenience in Hyde Park near the refreshment pavilion maintained by my Department, in addition to those managed by the Westminster City Council at Hyde Park Corner and the Marble Arch. Another will be ready for opening in the summer. The hon. Member will appreciate that the number and the position of conveniences in Hyde Park must be studied in conjunction with those that are available in Kensington Gardens. As at present advised, I do not consider that additions are necessary, and I do not think, therefore, that a conference with the local authorities concerned is needed.

HIS MAJESTY'S SILVER JUBILEE (CELEBRATIONS).

29. **Captain PETER MACDONALD** asked the First Commissioner of Works what arrangements are being made for the flood-lighting of the Palace of Westminster and Government buildings during the forthcoming Jubilee celebrations?

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE: In addition to the list of buildings which I enumerated in my reply to the hon. Member for Bristol, North (Mr. Bernays) on the 29th January last, I am happy to be able to state that arrangements have now been completed for flood-lighting the Whitehall front of the Horse Guards and the Colonnade of the War Office. The Incorporated Accountants Hall and His Majesty's Ship "President" are also to be illuminated, and it is hoped that arrangements may be made to flood-light the new public offices, Duchy of Lancaster building, St. Paul's Cathedral, the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, Canada House, and South Africa House. Consideration is also being given to the possibility of flood-lighting the Victoria Tower of the Palace of Westminster in addition to the Clock Tower. By the generosity of the electrical and gas interests, the Government will be relieved of almost the whole of the expenditure involved. My Department is conducting experiments in Westminster Hall with a view to ascertaining the practicability of effectively flood-lighting the oak roof.

60. **Captain P. MACDONALD** asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether any special arrangements are to be made to ensure that an adequate extension of licensing hours will be permitted during the Jubilee celebrations in May?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir John Gilmour): No, Sir. As I have explained on previous occasions, the grant of special extensions of hours is a matter which lies in the discretion of the appropriate authority in each district, upon whom it is incumbent to consider each application individually and on its merits. I have no reason to doubt that all such applications will receive due consideration.

Captain P. MACDONALD: Is it not a fact that the powers of the licensing justices are limited to granting half-an-hour's extension in special cases, and can the right hon. Gentleman consider the question of extending the half-hour?

PARLIAMENT SQUARE.

30. **Mr. HALL-CAINE** asked the First Commissioner of Works whether any steps are to be taken by his Department to ensure that the amenities of Parliament Square will be preserved in the event of the scheme maturing for building a tall block of offices on the corner of Great George Street; and whether he will arrange to take such action before plans have been made in detail and contracts entered into?

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE: The scheme for the new buildings which it is proposed to erect on land belonging to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners at the corner of Great George Street has been submitted by the promoters both to the Royal Fine Art Commission and to the London County Council as the town planning authority. I have had the opportunity of examining the plans and elevations, and I cannot think that the new building as proposed would be otherwise than an improvement on the one which it displaces.

AIR DEFENCE.

31. **Mr. PERKINS** asked the Under-Secretary of State for Air the total num-

[Mr. Perkins.]
ber of first-line aircraft stationed in this country on 1st January, 1934, and 1st January, 1935?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for AIR (Sir Philip Sassoon): The numbers were 425 and 453, respectively, exclusive of aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm in home waters, numbering 86 and 108, respectively, at the dates specified. In addition, on both dates there were available 127 aircraft on the first-line establishment of non-regular squadrons.

Mr. PERKINS: Do I understand from those figures that the Government have changed their minds as to the immediate desirability of putting this country on a parity basis with all countries within striking distance of our shores?

Sir P. SASSOON: No, Sir.

32. **Mr. PERKINS** asked the Under-Secretary of State for Air whether there has been any increase in the total number of first-line military aircraft of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics during the last 12 months?

Sir P. SASSOON: There has undoubtedly been a substantial increase on the strength of 1,300-1,500 first-line aircraft which I gave my hon. Friend a year ago, but I am not in a position to give any definite figures.

Mr. PERKINS: Can my right hon. Friend tell the House the reason for this sudden expansion of the Soviet air arm, and does he consider that Russia is within striking distance of this country?

Sir P. SASSOON: The hon. Member had better ask the Soviet.

46. **Mr. MANDER** asked the Prime Minister whether he will state the results of the experiments recently carried out in the East End of London in making and building houses proof against aerial gas attack as part of the precautionary measures intended to be taken?

The PRIME MINISTER (Mr. Ramsay MacDonald): I have no knowledge of the experiments which the hon. Member suggests are being carried out in the East End of London. Perhaps he would be good enough to give me some information upon what he based his question.

Mr. MANDER: I will do so.

AVIATION (LANDING FACILITIES, WEYMOUTH).

33. **Mr. PERKINS** asked the Under-Secretary of State for Air whether he is aware that the only possible aerodrome near Weymouth is to have buildings erected on it in connection with the Western Counties Show; and whether he proposes to take steps to keep this field free for aviation during the whole of the summer months?

Sir P. SASSOON: It will be appreciated that the use that is made of the land in question is a matter for the owners, and, whilst my Noble Friend would like to see it preserved for use as a landing ground, he has no power to require it to be kept free from buildings. I may add that it has not hitherto been regularly licensed as an aerodrome.

UNEMPLOYMENT.

Insurance Fund.

39. **Mr. JOHN** asked the Minister of Labour the present assets and liabilities of the Unemployment Insurance Fund?

Mr. HUDSON: After allowing for the accrued charge for debt services under Section 18 of the Unemployment Insurance Act, 1934, there is a sum of approximately £10,310,000 in hand on the insurance account of the Unemployment Fund; the amount of the funded debt outstanding is about £105,740,000.

Special Area Commissioner (Publicity Agent Officer).

40. **Mr. MORGAN JONES** asked the Minister of Labour whether he can inform the House as to the amount of the lump sum which is to be paid to the advertising officer established at the offices of the Greyhound Association out of the £2,000,000 to be provided for the depressed areas up to 31st March, 1935?

Mr. HUDSON: The commissioner for England and Wales has made arrangements whereby he has a claim upon part-time of the services of a publicity agent for the purpose of explaining from time to time, as may be necessary, the various schemes and activities in progress. The agent in question, who undertakes work not only for the Greyhound Association, where his offices are situated, but for other bodies, will be remunerated by fee. He is not a salaried member of the commissioner's staff.

ASSISTANCE (ADJUSTMENT OF ALLOWANCES).

41. **Mr. HERBERT WILLIAMS** asked the Minister of Labour whether he has any statement to make in regard to the special arrangement made with the Sheffield Corporation in respect of unemployment assistance payments?

Mr. HUDSON: I would refer my hon. Friend to the reply given on Friday to the right hon. Member for Bow and Bromley (Mr. Lansbury) by the Prime Minister.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Is my hon. Friend aware of the grave disturbance in the public mind caused by this surrender to mob violence in a particular case?

Mr. HUDSON: If the hon. Member had been here on Friday he would have heard one of the representatives of the city council state that this approach was decided upon before the riots in question.

Mr. PIKE: Does not the position show that the Government are susceptible to advice from outside quarters if it is valuable?

APPEAL TRIBUNALS.

34. **Mr. REMER** asked the Minister of Labour how many of the chairmen of the appeal tribunals under the Unemployment Insurance Act who have been appointed recently are in receipt of pensions from any source; and if they are surrendering these pensions during the period of their appointment?

38. **Mr. LUNN** asked the Minister of Labour how many of those appointed as chairmen or vice-chairmen under the Unemployment Act, 1934, are in receipt of a Government pension; what is the amount of such pension; and will he state their names?

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the MINISTRY of LABOUR (Mr. R. S. Hudson): Out of 357 persons appointed as chairmen or reserve chairmen of appeal tribunals 20 are in receipt of pensions payable out of monies provided by Parliament, and seven others are in receipt of pensions payable from other Government Funds such as Indian Revenues. I would point out that these chairmen and reserve chairmen are remunerated by fee; the rules as to the adjustment of pension when a person in receipt of a pension out of public funds is employed in Government service will be applied. I will circulate the detailed information desired in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following is the information:

CHAIRMEN AND RESERVE CHAIRMEN OF APPEAL TRIBUNALS IN RECEIPT OF PENSIONS.

I. *From moneys provided by Parliament:*

	£	s.	d.
Allan Arneil, Esquire, M.B.E	193	17	8
M. Beaton, Esquire	373	13	7
Lieut.-Colonel Dan Burges, V.C., D.S.O.	540	0	0
G. W. Cummings, Esquire...	214	10	0
A. Duddell, Esquire, J.P....	271	9	1
James Evans, Esquire, B.L.	573	4	6
Instructor Captain E. W. Fitch, R.N....	810	0	0
Engineer Captain F. W. Hamblin, R.N.	540	0	0
Reverend Charles W. C. Ingles, D.D., R.N. ...	810	0	0
Sir Arthur B. Lowry, C.B.	958	17	9
H. T. Manley, Esquire ...	105	11	8
Brigadier-General R. C. A. McCalmont, D.S.O., J.P.	580	10	0
Sir Edmund B. Phipps, C.B.	770	0	0
E. Raven, Esquire, C.B. ...	1,017	10	0
W. Sanger, Esquire, C.B., J.P.	646	9	0
James Shaw, Esquire ...	271	16	8
Stanley R. Slack, Esquire, B.A.	156	15	0
Captain H. Stansbury, C.B., R.N.	361	19	2
Captain W. C. Tancred, R.N.	540	0	0
Captain Harri Williams ...	210	0	0

II. *From other Government Funds such as Indian Revenue:*

	£	s.	d.
B. C. Allen, Esquire, C.S.I	1,120	0	0
N. Blakiston Cox, Esquire...	1,013	18	9
R. C. Gordon, Esquire, C.I.E.	1,000	0	0
H. St. G. Peacock, Esquire, J.P.	960	0	0
P. E. Percival, Esquire, C.I.E., B.A.	1,000	0	0
Sir L. W. Reynolds, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., M.C. ...	1,000	0	0
Sir Hugh Walmsley, J.P. ...	1,200	0	0

37. **Mr. LUNN** asked the Minister of Labour whether he has formed the appeal tribunals for the West Riding of Yorkshire under the Unemployment Act, 1934; and, if so, whether he will give the names, occupation and qualification of the members?

Mr. HUDSON: Yes, Sir. With the hon. Member's permission, I will circulate in the OFFICIAL REPORT a list of the names and occupations of the chairmen and vice-chairmen, and I will send the hon. Member particulars with regard to the representatives of the Unemployment Assistance Board and the panel of workpeople's representatives. In this

[Mr. Hudson.]

connection, I would refer the hon. Member to the answers given to the hon. Member for Chester-le-Street (Mr. Lawson) and the hon. Member for Neath (Sir W. Jenkins) on Thursday last.

Following is the list:

UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE ACT, 1934.

APPEAL TRIBUNALS.

List of persons appointed as Chairmen and Reserve Chairmen of Appeal Tribunals in the West Riding of Yorkshire.

Tribunal.	Name.	Occupation.
Barnsley ...	Norman Goodyear, Esq.	Solicitor.
	G. H. Wilson, Esq.	Director of Company.
Bradford ...	Capt. A. W. Brown, M.B.E., J.P.... ...	Local Official of the British Electrical Development Association.
	Fred Pickering, Esq., O.B.E., J.P. ...	Retired Umbrella Manufacturer; Chairman of Bradford City Court and other Public Service.
	J. C. Scott, Esq.	Solicitor.
	Alderman J. Berry, J.P.	Retired Insurance Official; Chairman of Municipal Committees.
Dewsbury...	Norman A. Blackburn, Esq.	Architect.
	George E. Fergusson, Esq., LL.B.... ...	Solicitor.
Doncaster...	W. H. Carlile, Esq.	Solicitor.
	A. B. Dunne, Esq.. M.B., B.A.	Medical Officer of Health.
Halifax ...	Lewis Rhodes, Esq., M.A., J.P.	Solicitor.
	Ernest P. Learoyd, Esq.	Accountant.
Huddersfield	H. A. Bennie Gray, Esq., M.I.Mech.E. ...	Mechanical Engineer.
	Harold H. Ramsden, Esq.	Solicitor.
Leeds ...	Prof. D. McCandlish, M.Sc.	Professor, Leeds University.
	Hugh Prince, Esq.	Solicitor.
	Mrs. Leonora Cohen, O.B.E., J.P.... ...	Married Woman.
Wakefield...	Arthur E. Hartley, Esq.	Solicitor.
	J. Hardy Richards, Esq.	Director of Company.
	O. D. Griffiths, Esq., M.A.	Director of Company.
York ...	Stanley R. Slack, Esq., B.A.	Retired Headmaster.
	G. G. Stephenson, Esq., J.P.	Retired Bank Manager.
Rotherham..	G. Marshall Hattersley, Esq., M.A., LL.B.	Solicitor.
Sheffield ...	W. A. Lambert, Esq.	Solicitor.
	A. H. Styring, Esq.	Solicitor.
	H. Keeble-Hawson, Esq.	Solicitor.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

MILK SUPPLIES.

43. **Mr. RHYS DAVIES** asked the Minister of Health whether it is proposed to initiate legislation or to issue regulations with a view to securing a cleaner milk supply?

Mr. SHAKESPEARE: Detailed regulations for securing the production and distribution of clean milk are already contained in the Milk and Dairies Order of 1926 and it is not proposed at present to introduce legislation or to issue further regulations for this purpose. The question of the steps to be taken to secure a safer milk supply is under consideration in connection with the recommendations made on this subject in the recent report of the Cattle Diseases Committee of the Economic Advisory Council.

Mr. LEVY: Will my hon. Friend take steps to see that an adequate water supply is provided for cleansing the cowsheds, etc.?

CHINESE EGGS.

44. **Sir P. HURD** asked the Minister of Health whether he has evidence of the sanitary conditions under which the greatly increased supplies of liquid eggs from China are produced and prepared for market; what effective methods of inspection are carried out in this country; and whether he will cause full inquiry to be made through our representatives in China?

Mr. SHAKESPEARE: My right hon. Friend has no evidence about the sanitary conditions under which eggs from China are produced and prepared for market, but such eggs are subject to examination

at the ports of entry to this country and are liable to seizure and condemnation if found to be unsound or otherwise unfit for human consumption. It is, further, a requirement that imported eggs shall be free from preservatives. My right hon. Friend is not aware of any instance in which disease-producing organisms have been found in imported eggs, but he proposes to arrange for a special bacteriological examination of some samples of these eggs.

Sir P. HURD: Will my hon. Friend ask the Minister to inform the House why we should receive these vast quantities of Chinese eggs without hygienic precautions similar to those imposed on our own producers?

MATERNITY CASES (INSURANCE BENEFITS).

42. **Mr. GROVES** asked the Minister of Health whether his attention has been called by the West Ham Insurance Committee to the present circumstances of unemployed pregnant insured women in relation to the benefits of National Health and Unemployment Insurance; whether he is aware that the experience of local insurance committees is to the effect that insurance medical practitioners and others have reported cases in which unemployed pregnant women, fully insured under the National Health and the Unemployment Insurance Schemes, through the interpretation of the regulations and rules have failed to obtain the cash benefit of either during part of the term of pregnancy although, in fact, entitled to the benefit of one or the other; and whether therefore he will, in collaboration with the other Government Departments, devise a scheme for the removal of the hardship from which these insured women suffer?

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the MINISTRY of HEALTH (Mr. Shakespeare): My right hon. Friend's attention has been called to the statement of the West Ham Insurance Committee. He is having inquiries made into the matter and will communicate with the hon. Member as soon as they are completed.

HOUSE OF LORDS (REFORM).

45. **Sir W. DAVISON** asked the Prime Minister what steps are being taken by the Government to secure that the long-promised reform of the Second Chamber shall be dealt with during the life of the present Parliament, so as to prevent the enacting of any unconstitutional legislation until the electorate have been given an opportunity of expressing an opinion on the matter?

The PRIME MINISTER: It is impossible at this stage to make any statement as regards legislation during the remainder of the present Parliament.

Sir W. DAVISON: Does not the Prime Minister recognise that the seriousness of the position in which this country stands in not having a Second Chamber has latterly been greatly increased, and does he not think it desirable and essential to amend the Parliament Act to provide that no constitutional change shall be made without an appeal to the people?

AUSTRALIA (SIR MAURICE HANKEY'S VISIT).

47. **Mr. MANDER** asked the Prime Minister the circumstances in which Sir Maurice Hankey, after a visit to Australia which was to be private and without political significance, has recommended in a report the re-introduction of compulsory military training and the re-organisation of Australian defences; whether this report will be made public; and to whom it is to be rendered?

The PRIME MINISTER: I think the best reply to the hon. Member's question is to quote the official statement issued in Australia on the 11th January, which is as follows:

"The Minister of Defence (Mr. Parkhill), yesterday referred to the statement that the Secretary of the Imperial Defence Committee (Sir Maurice Hankey) had urged the re-institution of compulsory military training. It could be definitely stated, he said, that a request for compulsory training was not among Sir Maurice Hankey's observations.

The facts were that Sir Maurice Hankey had been for long connected with advisory positions in England, and opportunity was taken to obtain from Sir Maurice first-hand information regarding matters that were within his official knowledge."

Immediately on his return to this country, Sir Maurice Hankey categorically denied the report that he had given such advice, and I cannot refrain from regretting that the hon. Member has seen fit to renew the false report.

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

Eggs.

48. **Sir P. HURD** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the apparent failure of the voluntary restriction of egg imports and the increased British home production, he will institute a system of licences similar to that applied to potatoes, so as to ensure to the British producer an increasing share of his home market as contemplated in the terms of the Marketing Act, 1933?

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (Dr. Burgin): The position with regard to the voluntary control of the importation of eggs was stated in the reply given by my right hon. Friend the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries on the 7th February to a question asked by my hon. Friend. As regards future action, it is not possible at present to make any statement. I would remind my hon. Friend that the report of the Eggs and Poultry Reorganisation Commission was only issued last week, and that the commission for Great Britain has only recently been appointed.

Matches.

49. **Sir WILFRID SUGDEN** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that Russian matches are being imported into this country at 5s. 10d. per gross of boxes containing 50 matches each; that Japanese matches are also entering the country at 5s. 10d. per gross boxes, in both cases inclusive, at these prices, of an import duty of 4s. 9d. per gross boxes; and, in view of the extent of unemployment amongst British match-makers, will he adopt further measures, by restriction of imports or otherwise, to remedy the position?

Dr. BURGIN: There is no power to impose a quantitative restriction on the importation of matches, and any question of an increase in the Customs duty on them is a matter for my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Sir W. SUGDEN: Will my hon. Friend be so good as to consider the possibility of preventing these foreign matches from coming into the country at all?

Mr. WEST: Can we have published the names of the firms who import these matches, and is it not a fact that most of them are supporters of the Government?

Russian Timber.

50 and 51. **Mr. BOSSOM** asked the President of the Board of Trade (1) whether Timber Distributors, Limited, asked for and obtained the approval of the Board of Trade of their new contract with the Russian timber trading department, which allows for an increase of 50,000 standards of Russian timber in 1935 over that imported in 1934;

(2) whether the contract between Timber Distributors, Limited, and the Russian timber trading department included a fall clause; and, if it does, how was this permitted, in view of the terms of the Ottawa agreements?

Dr. BURGIN: I understand that Timber Distributors, Limited, have concluded a contract which provides for a maximum import from the Soviet Union of 400,000 standards of sawn soft wood and contains a rise and fall clause. The questions raised by the contract are receiving careful consideration, but I am not yet in a position to make a statement.

Carpets and Rugs.

52. **Mr. H. WILLIAMS** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he can furnish particulars of the transactions sanctioned under the Import Duties Act whereby Messrs. Gooch, of Brompton Road, London, were enabled to import 270,000 square yards of Persian carpets and rugs in exchange for a similar quantity of British carpets; whether duty was paid on the Persian goods; and whether the firm was authorised by him to publish an advertisement stating that the importation had been permitted?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Duff Cooper): I have been asked to reply. I have no knowledge of the transactions in question. No special sanction for the importation of Persian carpets and rugs is necessary under the Import Duties Act, 1932, but payment of any duty due under that Act is required before such goods are released out of Customs charge. The answer to the last part of the question is in the negative.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Does the hon. Gentleman think it desirable that advertisers should publish advertisements of this character which indicate that certain transactions receive the specific sanction of the Government?

DANUBE (SHIPPING DUES).

53. **Captain CUNNINGHAM-REID** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the handicap to trade between Great Britain and the Danube ports imposed by the heavy dues levied by the European Commission of the Danube on the total register tonnage of shipping using these ports, irrespective of the amount of cargo carried; and whether instructions will be given to the representative of Great Britain on the European Commission of the Danube to endeavour to secure some lightening of these dues?

Dr. BURGIN: I have been unable to trace any recent representations on this subject. The position is a somewhat complicated one, and my right hon. Friend does not think that the present would be an opportune time to address instructions to the British representative on the lines suggested by my hon. and gallant Friend.

Captain CUNNINGHAM-REID: As the amount of British shipping cleared from the Danube ports in 1933 amounted to more than 136,000 tons, is this not a matter of some importance?

Dr. BURGIN: I think it is a matter of importance, but it is also rather complicated. If the hon. and gallant Member has anything further, perhaps we might deal with it by correspondence.

KENYA AND UGANDA (JAPANESE IMPORTS).

55. **Mr. CHARLES BROWN** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies the amount of Japanese imports into Kenya for the year 1929 and the year 1933 or the last available date?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Sir P. Cunliffe-Lister): The imports into Kenya and Uganda (which are grouped together) from Japan were valued at £488,000 in 1929 and £633,000 in 1933. It is not possible to give the figures for Kenya alone, and figures for 1934 are not yet available.

MAURITIUS (SUGAR INDUSTRY).

54. **Sir IAN MACPHERSON** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies what special assistance has been given to the sugar industry in the island of Mauritius; and if he will state why the assistance was required?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: In consequence of unfavourable climatic conditions there was a serious fall in the sugar crop of Mauritius last year. This, combined with the low prices prevailing, reduced the receipts of the producers to such an extent that the reserves available in the island were likely to be insufficient to finance the forthcoming season s crop, especially as reserves had been depleted by several years of depression. I have accordingly approved a guarantee being offered by the Colonial Government to local banks up to a sum of £450,000 to enable them to secure the funds necessary to make the usual crop advances to planters. I have also indicated that I am prepared to approve the establishment of an agricultural mortgage bank in the Colony with the financial assistance of the local Government as a step towards the permament reform of the financial structure of the industry.

Mr. JOHN WILMOT: Is the right hon. Gentleman satisfied that the continued subsidy to the British beet-sugar industry is in no way conected with the necessity for this assistance?

IRISH FREE STATE.

57. **Mr. ROSS** asked the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs whether he has any further agreements with the Irish Free State under consideration; and, if so, what is their nature?

The SECRETARY of STATE for DOMINION AFFAIRS (Mr. J. H. Thomas): As I stated in the House on 28th January, if the recent arrangement could be extended, the Government would certainly welcome it. But no definite proposal to this end is under consideration at the present time?

Mr. ROSS: Would it not be prudent to get the Government of the Free State to honour their obligations in the past before making any fresh ones?

Mr. THOMAS: My hon. Friend knows perfectly well that the policy of the British Government is to see that the obligations are honoured, so far as they can do so. The recent agreement, coal versus cattle, certainly helps in that direction, and not hinders.

58. **Mr. ROSS** asked the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs why the recent coal-cattle agreement with the Irish Free State did not follow the usual practice in trade agreements; what precedents exist for such a course; and under what authority it was made?

Mr. THOMAS: As I explained in reply to questions in the House on the 28th January, the recent arrangement with the Irish Free State was not a formal trade agreement but an informal understanding. The only action called for on the part of the United Kingdom Government was in connection with the cattle quota which, as my right hon. Friend, the Minister of Agriculture, explained in reply to questions on the 4th February, is an administrative matter.

Mr. ROSS: In view of the fact that the Members of this Government have collectively desecrated the treaty and individually taken the Parliamentary oath with mental reservations, does my right hon. Friend think that this type of agreement is a very appropriate one?

EDUCATION (MILK SUPPLY SCHEME).

59. **Mr. ANSTRUTHER-GRAY** asked the President of the Board of Education, how many children are at present receiving free milk under the new milk-in-schools scheme; and what is the estimated figure to which this should rise during the present year?

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of EDUCATION (Mr. Ramsbotham): The latest date for which complete returns are available is December, 1934. During this month the number of children provided with free milk by local education authorities was 198,462. It is not possible to say precisely how many of these children received milk under the new Milk in Schools Scheme, but arrangements for supplying the milk at the reduced rates are in force in practically all the areas. Since the inception of the scheme in October, 1934, there has been a steady increase in the number of children receiving free milk, but it is not possible to say what figure may ultimately be reached.

Mr. ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: Are there any counties in which this scheme is not yet operating?

Mr. RAMSBOTHAM: It is operating in practically all areas, though there may be one or two where it is not.

Mr. WEST: Can the hon. Gentleman tell us whether children who are absent from school through illness are entitled to receive this free, or cheap, milk?

Mr. RAMSBOTHAM: I should like to have notice of that question.

METROPOLITAN POLICE (BORROWING POWERS) BILL.

61. **Mr. THORNE** asked the Home Secretary whether, in the event of the Metropolitan Police (Borrowing Powers) Bill, 1935, being passed, it will place an extra rate upon the various local authorities in the Metropolitan police area?

Sir J. GILMOUR: As I explained when moving the Second Reading of this Bill on Monday last, it is estimated that the additional cost to the ratepayers of the Metropolitan Police District during the currency of the loans will amount, on the basis of present figures, to the produce of a ¼d. rate a year.

TRENCH ACCIDENT, HURDSFIELD, CHESHIRE.

62. **Mr. THORNE** asked the Home Secretary whether he has received a report from one of his inspectors in connection with the accident to three men who were buried up to their necks by 14 tons of earth at Hurdsfield, Cheshire; if he can state the depth of the trench; and whether it was closely timbered?

Sir J. GILMOUR: I understand that a trench for a sewer was being cut behind some dwelling houses, and at the point of collapse was 4 feet 6 inches to 5 feet deep and partly timbered, and the ground practically all clay, so that danger was not anticipated. Such work is outside the scope of the Factory Acts, and I have no power to regulate the methods of timbering.

BURGLARIES, EAST FINCHLEY.

63. **Mr. CADOGAN** asked the Home Secretary whether he is aware that in Bishops Avenue, East Finchley, every house but two has been burgled in the last two years, one house five times in

as many months, and that on 5th February burglars raided a house in Bishops Avenue, extracted a 5-cwt. safe, and lowered it 30 feet into the garden and escaped; that there have been complaints from other districts in the Metropolitan area of repeated burglaries in the same streets; and whether he will issue instructions to the police that special precautions shall be taken in those streets where numerous burglaries have taken place at frequent intervals?

Sir J. GILMOUR: As my hon. Friend is aware, I have spoken to the Commissioner of Police about this matter. All cases of this kind have the personal consideration of the Commissioner, and my hon. Friend may be sure that the situation in this district is receiving the fullest attention. I may add that the facts are not quite as stated in the question. There are 60 houses in Bishops Avenue, which is almost a mile long. I am informed that since the beginning of 1933, 13 crimes involving 10 houses have been reported, including the case on the 5th instant, and in six of them the offenders have been arrested and sentenced. No house has been entered more than twice.

Mr. CADOGAN: Have any arrests been effected in connection with these burglaries?

Sir J. GILMOUR: I understand that six offenders have been arrested and sentenced.

Mr. RHYS DAVIES: Will the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to say whether there is anything in the suggestion that all this has occurred because the superintendent of police for the division is an ex-soldier without any police experience?

DISTURBANCE, SHEFFIELD (ARRESTS).

64. **Mr. MAXTON** asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can call for a report from the chief constable as to what were the circumstances which led to the breaking up by the police of a demonstration in Sheffield of unemployed men and women protesting against the new scales of relief?

Sir J. GILMOUR: I have received reports from the chief constable in regard to the disorder which occurred on this occasion. I understand that there was a crowd of about 10,000 persons; 26 persons were arrested, three of whom were subsequently released. Of the remainder, 21 have been charged with assaults upon the police, one with obstructing the police in the execution of their duty, and one with committing a breach of the peace. They have been remanded on bail until the 15th instant, and the hon. Member will appreciate that in the circumstances it would not be proper for me to make any further comment on the case at the present time.

Mr. MAXTON: Would it not be proper for the Home Secretary to institute an independent inquiry in the City of Sheffield as to the circumstances that led the police of that city to attack a peaceful demonstration, demonstrating on a perfectly legitimate grievance through the streets of Sheffield; and will the Minister make inquiries from some other person than the person responsible for making the attack on the demonstration?

Sir J. GILMOUR: I am sure that the House will realise that the kind of question which the hon. Member has put to me prejudges whether these were peaceful operations or not. Until the cases are tried I am not in a position to express an opinion.

Mr. THORNE: Pending a settlement, or in consequence of a settlement being arrived at between the authorities and the Government, would it not be much better to advise that the prosecutions be withdrawn?

ENTERTAINMENTS DUTY.

65. **Major-General Sir ALFRED KNOX** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will consider the possibility of granting relief from the Entertainments Duty to theatrical entertainments in which the human element predominates?

Mr. COOPER: My hon. and gallant Friend's suggestion has been noted, but he will not expect me to anticipate the Budget statement.

Sir A. KNOX: Would the Minister in the meanwhile agree that the legitimate theatre, in which a great amount of employment is given, has a prior claim to relief over the mechanical theatre?

Mr. COOPER: That permit will be taken into consideration.

BRITISH NORTH ATLANTIC SHIPPING INTERESTS.

66. **Captain P. MACDONALD** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the fact that the Red Star Liners "Pennland" and "Westernland" are at present owned by the British firm of Messrs. Frederick Leyland and Company, Limited, he is aware that the suggested purchase of these vessels by British interests would not involve the transfer of funds abroad; and whether he will consider the advisability of taking such steps as will ensure that these ships remain under the British flag?

Mr. COOPER: I understand that the firm of Messrs. Frederick Leyland and Company, Limited, is controlled by the International Mercantile Marine Company of America, and is disposing of its assets. A sale by it would, therefore, involve a transfer of funds abroad.

Sir PERCY HARRIS: Is not the hon. Gentleman aware that these ships have already been transferred to Germany, owing to the dilatory action of the Government?

Mr. COOPER: I have seen a statement to that effect.

Mr. H. WILLIAMS: Is it not a fact that the Leyland Company will transfer the money to the United States whoever buys the ships?

OVERSEAS INVESTMENTS.

67. **Mr. HENDERSON STEWART** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer what amount of British capital has been invested in Empire countries during the last 10 years; and whether there are figures to show the comparative returns from investments in Empire and in other countries during the same period?

Mr. COOPER: No official statistics on this subject are available, but I may mention that according to the estimates compiled by the Midland Bank, new issues on the London market for Empire countries (which are likely to differ materially from the amount of capital invested) amounted during the last 10 years to £543,000,000. As regards the comparative yield of investments in Empire and other countries, even unofficial estimates are very incomplete. Some light is thrown on the matter for one or two isolated years by the data compiled by Sir Robert Kindersley and the "Economist," which may be found conveniently summarised in the Bank of England Statistical Summary for August, 1932, July, 1933, and September, 1934.

CIVIL SERVICE (WOMEN).

68. **Sir A. KNOX** asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury whether His Majesty's Government have adopted as governmental policy the report of the National Whitley Committee on Women's Questions in the Civil Service, dated 23rd March, 1934; if so, whether it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to continue the policy of preference for ex-service men for posts in the Civil Service; and whether, in so far as this report abrogates the policy of preference for ex-service men, the latter will hold good?

Mr. COOPER: The answer to the first and second parts of the question is in the affirmative. The report of the committee referred to did not in any way affect the existing preference to ex-service men in the matter of employment in the Civil Service; the third part of the question does not therefore arise.

TRANSPORT (PEDESTRIANS' CROSSING-PLACES).

69. **Mr. THORNE** asked the Minister of Transport whether he has yet received a report in connection with the laying of yellow and black asphalt squares at a pedestrian crossing in Hammersmith Road, London; and, if these coloured crossings serve a better purpose than the metal studs, whether it is his intention to have further crossings laid?

Major GEORGE DAVIES (Lord of the Treasury): I have been asked to reply. This crossing in Hammersmith Road has been laid down experimentally with a view to ascertaining whether, by the use of special paving material, pedestrian crossings can be made sufficiently distinctive from the remainder of the carriageway. Similar experiments are being

carried out with other materials, and some time must necessarily elapse before any conclusions are reached as to the best types of material to be used for this purpose.

COLOMBIA AND PERU.

6. **Mr. MANDER** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Colombian Congress has yet ratified the agreement signed at Rio de Janeiro in execution of the Geneva arrangement of 25th March, 1933, for the settlement of the Leticia war between Colombia and Peru; and whether the dispute still continues?

Sir J. SIMON: The Colombian Government have strongly recommended to Congress that this agreement should be approved. While the Colombian House of Representatives authorised its ratification on the 23rd December last, the Senate has not yet agreed to this step, although its sessions were extended with a view to enabling this question to be decided. In view of the attitude adopted by the Opposition in the Senate, the Colombian President decided to bring the present session of Congress to an end on the 6th February. It is understood that a general election will take place in May, after which the Colombian Government may be placed in a position to effect ratification without delay.

Mr. MANDER: Does that mean that for the time being the dispute is still going on?

Sir J. SIMON: Of course, the dispute cannot be regarded as settled until both the parties have ratified the proposed agreement. In the meantime, no action will be taken which interferes with the negotiations. The Peruvian Government are confining their action to calling the attention of the League of Nations to the circumstances.

COAL INDUSTRY (EXPLOSION, YORKSHIRE).

Mr. GEORGE GRIFFITHS (*by Private Notice*) asked the Secretary for Mines if he has any information regarding the explosion which occurred yesterday at Woolley Parkgate Colliery; how many persons were injured and whether any of them have since died?

The SECRETARY for MINES (Mr. Ernest Brown): I greatly regret having to inform the House that an explosion of firedamp occurred at Woolley Parkgate Colliery early yesterday afternoon during an exploration of an area which was sealed off in November last following a fire. A rescue team had examined part of the area in the morning and the conditions appeared to be suitable for further exploration, which was undertaken by a second rescue team in the afternoon. The explosion took place soon after this second team had entered the area, and involved also four officials and an inspector of mines who were present. Ten persons, including the agent, the manager (who is critically ill) and the inspector, were injured by burning, and the House will, I am sure, wish to join me in expressing sympathy for their injuries and hope for their early recovery. The area has since been re-sealed.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Joseph Jackson Cleary, Esquire, for the Borough of Liverpool (Wavertree Division).

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

STANDING COMMITTEE A.

Mr. William Nicholson reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee A: Mr Savery; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Lees-Jones.

Mr. William Nicholson further reported from the Committee; That they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee A (added in respect of the Housing Bill): Mrs. Tate; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Bossom.

STANDING COMMITTEE B.

Mr. William Nicholson further reported from the Committee; That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee B: Miss Lloyd George and Mr. Ross Taylor; and had appointed in substitution: Major Lloyd George and Mr. Orr-Ewing.

Mr. William Nicholson further reported from the Committee; That they had discharged the following Member from

Standing Committee B (added in respect of the Herring Industry Bill): Sir Arthur Michael Samuel; and had appointed in substitution: Sir Arnold Wilson.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

HIS MAJESTY'S SILVER JUBILEE.

Mr. FLEMING asked the Minister of Pensions what would be the estimated cost of granting an extra day's pay to ex-service men in receipt of disability pensions on 6th May in celebration of His Majesty's jubilee?

Major TRYON: The estimated cost is £56,000.

EXPERIMENTS ON ANIMALS.

Mr. GROVES asked the Home Secretary how many licences to experiment on animals under the Cruelty to Animals Act, 1876, were granted in 1934 to persons not holding any medical or scientific degrees?

Sir J. GILMOUR: 19 licences were granted during 1934 to persons not holding any medical or scientific degrees, but in each case satisfactory evidence was produced that the applicant was qualified to perform the experiments for which the licence was granted.

TRANSPORT.

Road Accidents, City of London.

Mr. DONNER asked the Minister of Transport the number of people, if any, killed or injured in the City of London during the 12 months prior to the erection of beacons; the number of beacons which have been erected in the City of London and their cost; and the number of people, if any, killed or injured in the City of London since the installation of beacons?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: Beacons began to be erected at pedestrian crossing-places in the City of London on 22nd December, 1934, and 87 beacons have been installed. The cost of the beacons was £95. During the 12 months prior to 22nd December last, 14 persons were killed in road accidents in the City and 603 were injured, and during the subsequent six weeks one person was killed and 43 were injured.

Electric Tramways.

Sir W. BRASS asked the Minister of Transport whether he can give an estimate of the approximate mileage of the electric tramway services in the United Kingdom; what proportion of them draw their current from the overhead system of supply and what proportion of them from the central underground rail system; and how many miles, approximately, have been transformed into trolley-bus services and how many miles scrapped and changed into the ordinary motor omnibus services during the last three years or so?

Mr. HORE-BELISHA: My hon. and gallant Friend will find the latest information available as to tramways and trolley vehicle undertakings in Great Britain in the annual return for the year 1933-34 which has been presented to the House. The approximate route mileage of electric tramways at the end of the period covered by this return was 1,752. Ninety-three per cent. of the mileage is operated on the overhead system and 7 per cent. (all in London) on the underground conduit system. The mileage abandoned during the year 1933-34 and the two previous years was approximately 400 miles. I have not in all cases definite information as to the nature of the services, if any, which have replaced the tramways thus abandoned, but trolley vehicles have been substituted on about 110 miles and motor omnibus services have probably been substituted over the remaining routes.

EAST AFRICA (FOOD SHORTAGE).

Dr. O'DONOVAN asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies if official or private reports have reached his Department relative to a condition of famine in British East Africa among the natives; and have any relief measures been instituted?

Sir P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER: I have received no recent reports indicating a state of famine in any part of East Africa. Early in 1934 a serious food shortage developed in the Coast Province of Kenya owing to heavy locust infestation and the cumulative effects of four seasons of drought. The sum of £3,000

was voted by Legislative Council on 15th February in relief. In April a further £2,000 was provided by Government for the coastal areas to supplement contributions of £1,750 from other sources. At the same time, £1,500 was voted for the Turkana district where prolonged drought, extending over several years, had destroyed the pasturage; and in August a further £750 was provided from Government funds, mainly for the Turkana district.

SPIRITS, BEER AND WINE (REVENUE).

Mr. LECKIE asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer the estimated net revenue derived from duties on spirits, home and imported, beer, home and imported, imported wine, British wine and hops during the calendar year 1934?

Mr. COOPER: The following table gives the particulars for which the hon. Member asks:

Article.	Approximate Net Revenue. Calendar year ended 31st December, 1934.
	£
Spirits:	
Home-made	29,243,000
Imported	4,277,000
Total	33,520,000
Beer:	
Home-made	52,825,000
Imported	5,084,000
Total	57,909,000
Wine, Imported	4,423,000
Sweets, including British Wines.	312,000
Hops and Hop Extracts ...	189,000

UNEMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE, CAERPHILLY.

Mr. MORGAN JONES asked the Minister of Labour whether he can give any information in regard to the matter of making suitable arrangements for the purpose of ensuring that persons attending the Employment Exchanges in the Caerphilly area can do so under shelter from bad weather; and whether he will have this matter inquired into?

Mr. STANLEY: Steps have been taken already with a view to the provision of new accommodation for the Caerphilly Exchange.

CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE (SUPERVISORY APPOINTMENT).

Mr. McENTEE asked the Postmaster-General the reasons for the exceptional promotion of an assistant supervisor in the Central Telegraph Office to the post of supervisor, higher grade, passing over 92 officers; whether he is aware that the selected officer has passed over several officers of her own age or younger; that her experience is limited to the phonogram room; that she has never been employed as an assistant supervisor on circulation or instrument-room floor duties; that she does not hold the necessary technical qualifications that would have given her a double increment; that she has never acted as a supervisor; and that the appointment has caused great dissatisfaction and discouragement to other officers?

Sir K. WOOD: I am aware of the circumstances. Full consideration was given by the Central Telegraph Office Promotion Board to the claims and qualifications of all the supervising officers concerned. The officer who was recommended for promotion is regarded as possessing special qualifications for the vacant appointment, and I am satisfied that her promotion is in the best interests of the service.

HOUSING (RURAL DISTRICTS, SCOTLAND).

Sir A. SINCLAIR asked the Secretary of State for Scotland the amount of money expended upon the erection and improvement of dwelling-houses under the scheme of the Department of Agriculture for loans for crofter housing; and the number of houses built and reconstructed in 1934?

Sir G. COLLINS: The amount of money expended by the Department of Agriculture for Scotland for the improvement or rebuilding of dwelling-houses or other buildings of landholders, cottars and others from 1st April, 1920, to 31st December, 1934, was approximately £395,000. During the year 1934

loans were made for rebuilding 87 houses and for the improvement of 220 existing buildings (mostly houses).

Sir A. SINCLAIR asked the Secretary of State for Scotland whether he is aware that the Department of Agriculture is refusing applications from landholders for buildings loans solely on the ground that funds are not available; and when he proposes to put the Department's scheme for the improvement of housing in the rural districts of Scotland, where it is urgently required, into full operation again?

Sir G. COLLINS: Advances made by the Department of Agriculture for Scotland under Sections 4 and 5 of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Act, 1897, and Section 9 of the Small Landholders (Scotland) Act, 1911, continue in operation as formerly. The annual appropriation of £25,000 for this service from the Agriculture (Scotland) Fund has not been reduced. With a view to the earliest utilisation of the annual provision for the purpose at the most suitable time of the year, the offer of loans to applicants is made as soon as possible after the commencement of the financial year. It follows, therefore, that there is little or no prospect of advances being authorised in the latter half of the year, viz., from October to March. The Department expect to be able to authorise advances from the provision for the financial year commencing on 1st April next, very soon after that date. Applications made during the preceding months receive priority of consideration.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA BILL.

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [*6th February*], "That the Bill be now read a Second time."

Which Amendment was, to leave out from "That," to the end of the Question, and to add instead thereof:

"in the opinion of this House, no legislation for the better government of India will be satisfactory which does not secure the good will and co-operation of the Indian people by recognising explicitly India's right to Dominion status and by providing within it the means of its attainment, and which does not by its provisions as to franchise and representation secure to the workers and peasants of India the possibility of achieving by constitutional means their social and economic emancipation."—[*Mr. Attlee.*]

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Emmott.

3.41 p.m.

Sir HUGH O'NEILL: On a point of Order. May I ask your guidance, Mr. Speaker, before the hon. Member starts to speak, with regard to the Division that is to take place this evening? Is is not a fact that the only vote which will take place will be on the Amendment which has been proposed by the official Opposition, and that under the Standing Orders you, Sir, will be bound, if that Amendment is defeated, to declare that the Bill is read a Second time; and that, consequently, there will be no opportunity for any Division on the Question, "That the Bill be now read a Second time"?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes; the right hon. Baronet has exactly interpreted what the Standing Order says. Standing Order No. 33 lays down that on the occasion of a Second or Third Reading, when there is any question of leaving out words and inserting others, and it has been decided that the words proposed to be left out shall stand part of the Question, the Bill, after that, is read the Second or Third time automatically. There will be only one Division.

Mr. LANSBURY: You can all vote with us.

3.43 p.m.

Mr. EMMOTT: When the Debate was adjourned on Friday, I had pointed out the difference between pledge and policy, and I was about to conclude that part of my observations by saying that we insist upon this distinction not to urge any change of policy, but, on the contrary, to urge the careful, determined execution of the policy set out in the Preamble to the Act of 1919. I should have liked to-day to develop to the House an argument upon more than one of the issues that have been raised in this Debate, but I deliberately refrain from doing so, for the reason that I understand that His Majesty's Attorney-General wishes to address the House at an early stage of the Debate, and I assure hon. Members that it is not my intention to stand between him and them. I shall address myself solely to one matter, but a matter which is of vital importance. I mean, the statement made by the Secretary of State on Wednesday last in regard to Dominion status. I think the House is entitled to know what meaning His Majesty's Government read into this highly ambiguous phrase. Let me remind hon. Members of the exact words of the Secretary of State. He said:

"The position of the Government, therefore, is this: They stand firmly by the pledge contained in the 1919 Preamble, which it is not part of their plan to repeal, and by the interpretation put by the Viceroy in 1929, on the authority of the Government of the day, on that Preamble, that 'The natural issue of India's progress, as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion status.'"—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 6th February, 1935, col. 1173, Vol. 298.]

Now the Secretary of State spoke as though the Viceroy's declaration referred to the Preamble to the Act of 1919, but in fact that is an error. It is true that the Viceroy referred to doubts that had arisen regarding the interpretation to be placed on the intention of the British Government in enacting the Statute of 1919, but the actual words of the Viceroy were these:

"I am authorised on behalf of His Majesty's Government to state clearly that in their judgment it is implicit in the Declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress, as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion status."

So the House will observe that the Viceroy was interpreting the Declaration of 1917, and not the Preamble to the

[Mr. Emmott.]

Act of 1919. The Secretary of State rests upon the Preamble to the Act, the language of which he finds sufficient and comprehensive; and, indeed, the Preamble is the only safe and sure ground to rest upon. Why, then, did he resuscitate the Viceroy's declaration? The Viceroy's declaration was not necessary to the interpretation of the Preamble. Does the statement of the Secretary of State add anything to the Preamble? If so, what does it add? If not, why was it made? The expression "Dominion status" was deliberately avoided by the Statutory Commission and by the Joint Select Committee. To most men it is an expression of ambiguous meaning. But there can be no ambiguity in the mind of the Government, who have now repeated it in the most formal and solemn manner. Therefore, I invite His Majesty's Government to state exactly what it means.

Does status mean position, or does it mean Constitution? If it means position, then I say that a nation has that status which is secured to it by its history, by its art, and by its contribution to the happiness and welfare of the human race. But that status is independent of a Constitution. A nation, however, in which constitutional changes are occurring, is not, I think, content with that interpretation of status; it desires the embodiment of power in political forms. Does, then, status mean Constitution? If so, then I say that Dominion status means a Constitution which is comparable in its essential characteristics with the Constitution of any of His Majesty's Dominions. Do, then, His Majesty's Government, in any period of time for which we are legislating and to which this language applies, contemplate the limitation of the powers of the Governor-General of India within the limits that circumscribe the action, to take one instance, of the Governor-General of Australia? Do they contemplate the subjection of the Imperial Army in India to the orders of an Indian Minister responsible to the Indian Legislature? For these things are involved in the constitutional status of a Dominion and there can be no doubt that in the understanding of India these are the characteristics of the Constitution which the language of the Secretary of State holds out to her in prospect. It is really time to know where we stand, and to resolve these doubts and ambiguities. It is time to tell the truth to the House and to India in language plain and precise. Will the Attorney-General find it convenient to elucidate the points that I now put to him? Is the constitutional status of India, the attainment of which is contemplated by the statement of the Secretary of State, determined by the provisions of the Statute of Westminster? Under the constitutional development which His Majesty's Government contemplate, has India the right to secede from the British Empire? In this connection I should like to bring to the recollection of the House a statement that has been made by Mr. Srinivasa Sastri, a most distinguished Indian Liberal and, though it is hardly necessary to remind hon. Members of the fact, a Member of His Majesty's Privy Council. On 22nd July, 1930, Mr. Sastri, addressing in this country the East India Association, used these words:

> "However much the meaning of Dominion status may be changing, one aspect of it has for some years been accepted, not only as essential but as forming the very bond and cement of the Commonwealth, that is the right of secession."

And in the course of the discussion that followed his address he used these words:

> "It is no use saying to us in India: 'Well, that'"—

He was referring to the phrase "Dominion Status"—

> "'would have one meaning to Canada and Australia and Ireland, but may have another meaning with regard to you.' Now I wish to ask those who speak of the right of secession as being doubtfully included in the expression 'Dominion status' whether they will care to have this doubt spoken in the hearing of people of the Irish Free State, or in the hearing of General Hertzog, of South Africa. What is the use of speaking in one voice to them and in another to us?"

The last question that I put to the Attorney-General is this. Has the Legislature of India now the right, or will it in the future have, the right, to pass legislation repugnant to Acts, including this Constitution Act, of the Imperial Parliament? Unless these things are here and now made clear, we shall have laid ourselves open to the charge that we use language that has one meaning in India and another in England; and we shall have laid ourselves open once more to the charge of breach of faith.

3.54 p.m.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir Thomas Inskip): Every listener to the Debate must have been impressed by the sustained dignity of the discussion. Notwithstanding the very sharp differences that divide us, hon. and right hon. Gentlemen have used forbearance in the expression of opinions sincerely felt, and I hope I shall be able to follow these good examples. The hon. Gentleman who has just spoken has been no exception. I shall have something to say later in reply to the questions that he has put to the Government and to me, and I shall have a word to say also about the rather fine spun distinction which he seemed to me to draw on Friday between the binding character of what he called a pledge or a promise and a declaration of policy. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for South-East Leeds (Major Milner) on Thursday was inclined to make it a matter of complaint that so little attention appears to have been given by the Government to the criticisms of the official Opposition and to their Amendment. I am sure hon. Members will accept the statement that it is out of no discourtesy to them if we have appeared to underrate the force of their argument. Perhaps, as the hon. and gallant Gentleman invited us to give a little more attention to the Opposition and their Amendment, I may say how gratifying it is to us that the policy that was declared by the Leader of the Opposition last June to be the official Labour policy finds no countenance in the present Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman's policy, which he deliberately said was Labour's policy, was that the Indians should be invited to summon a constituent assembly and then that they should be left to make the best of it that they could. No one who has studied the facts, as the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stepney (Mr. Attlee) and the Member for Broxstowe (Mr. Cocks) has done, could subscribe to the right hon. Gentleman's policy, and no one is surprised that it is no longer Labour's policy.

So far as the official Amendment is concerned, it introduces this question of Dominion status, and I propose to say something about that before I finish, but it introduces another theme. It suggests that the workers and peasants have nothing to gain from the Bill. Let me try to examine that suggestion. The question is often put in this way. Does this Bill as a whole make for the better Government of India? I will try to answer that question. I am entitled to ask my hon. Friends in this connection, and particularly the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill), whether he really believes that their plan, what I may call a strictly rationed piece of self-government in the Provinces, would be for the better Government of India. The hon. Member for Chertsey (Sir A. Boyd-Carpenter) gave what I am sure would be his answer to the question. He was very eloquent as to the demand in India for the British Raj. I am sure what he intended to convey was that the great population of India want no change at all in their relations to the governing power. Indeed, I understand it was suggested that he would like to go back to the pre-1919 position. But no one seriously suggests that.

It is not surprising, therefore, that my right hon. and hon. Friends who are opposing the Bill have propounded a more attractive line of argument. They have suggested that the Bill neglects the interests of the masses. My first answer to that will be that you cannot pick out the masses and deal with them as if their interests were not the interests of the nations of India as a whole. A nation is not so simple an affair as all that. You cannot support the masses and put them, as it were, in a compound where they will be insulated from the discord and discontent which may be seen in other directions. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft), I think it was—he will forgive me if I am wrong—suggested that the electors of the humbler classes take no interest in the development of political thought, and would vote just as they were told, going to the polling booth like sheep. I very much doubt whether that is so. I remember an incident related to me by a ruling Prince of one of the native States who was also a member of one of the Round Table Conferences. He told me that he had been hunting a long way from any centre of population, and his motor car was waiting for him. As he came to it at the end of his expedition he saw standing beside it a tall, gaunt, thinly-clad old man leading a little boy as emaciated as himself. He thought that the old man had come with the lad to look at his great

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shining Rolls Royce car. He was not a little surprised when he discovered that the old man had waited to ask what had been the result of some vote of the Congress party, and then departed satisfied. I suggest that the masses of India are becoming very much more alive to political thought and more familiar with the ideas of political power than some of my hon. Friends would have us believe.

My hon. Friend the Member for Chertsey referred to the confidence which is reposed by the Indian people in men of our own race. He will forgive me for saying that I think he passed rather a harsh judgment upon the Lord President of the Council, who suggested that the days in which the white man was looked upon as the only guide, philosopher and friend of the Indian people had passed. I have no right to tell my hon. Friend that he was behind the times, but there is good reason, I am told, to believe that the district officer is no longer the embodiment of all political wisdom and authority for the working masses of India. [*Interruption.*] My hon. Friend seems to think that that is a cause for dissatisfaction. I take the opposite view. I regard it as a compliment that has been paid to us if we have taught the people of India to honour the men of their own race, as we honour our own race. However that may be, of one thing I am sure. You may postpone a decision of this great question on the plea of untimeliness, that the Indian people are not ready for it. You may observe the wind and not sow; you may regard the clouds and not plough. You will only flout the aspirations you yourselves have aroused; you will dissipate the very confidence you have inspired. My hon. Friend the Member for Chertsey, who was so eloquent about the respect of the Indian for the Englishman, will have to rearrange his arguments. There is no doubt, at any rate, that we do hold the confidence of the Indian masses. Is it quite certain that if we disappoint the expectations which we ourselves have aroused on this occasion, we shall be able next time to use this tremendous asset for a partnership with the Indian peoples in the government of their country which, for so long, we have governed for them? Draw back, and who can tell whether we shall ever be in the same position with regard to their confidence that we are in to-day?

My hon. Friend the Member for South Kensington (Sir W. Davison) and hon. Gentlemen opposite have particularly referred to the Depressed Classes. They have spoken of the poverty and destitution under which so many of those people suffer. The hon. Member for Gower (Mr. D. Grenfell) expressed a desire, which I am sure he sincerely felt, and with which we should all sympathise, that we should bring the standard of living of the Indian people as soon as possible to the level of our own people. A magician's wand might do it, but nothing else will do it except the efforts of the Indian people themselves when they have got the best minds and the biggest hearts they can find to solve the almost insoluble questions of caste and creed that have, to a great extent baffled us. Our great administrators and engineers have paved the way. Those who have brought education to the Indian people have prepared the minds of the people. What is now wanted is the contribution that can be made by India alone, and I can see nothing that is more likely to quicken the pace of those reforms we should all like to see in these matters than the sense of power and responsibility.

May I add one more comment upon this part of the criticisms which have been made? I have been a little sorry to hear the somewhat disparaging observations which have been made about the Indian politicians. It is inevitable, I suppose, that those who talk most in India, just as in this country, should get most of the limelight.

Mr. CHURCHILL: No one talks more than the Attorney-General.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The right hon. Gentleman seems to resent that anybody except himself should speak. We have not quite come to that in this country. I do not suppose that Indian politicians are immune from the faults which we see in ourselves, or, shall I say, in each other. There are public-spirited people in India as there are in this country. If these reforms are to work, our task is largely to attract into the legislatures and ministries the men who will be satisfied by the ambitions these new reforms will offer to them. Why should we deny to those men the am-

bitions which we ourselves value? Edmund Burke said he wanted to be a Member of Parliament to have his share in doing good and resisting evil. Are there no men in India who feel the same ambitions? And are we the people to deny those ambitions if they feel them? I believe those are right who look forward with new hope to the future of the depressed classes in India. Because of the power at the poll which they will receive, they will be a political force to be reckoned with, and the reform of the age-long abuse of Untouchability may become one of the dominant questions of Indian politics. If my hon. Friends asked me what the depressed classes and the masses of India have to gain by this Bill, my answer would be—everything.

There is at least one matter which admittedly concerns the masses very closely indeed, and I want to say a few words about that. The inclusion of law and order within the sphere of the action of Ministers has naturally and properly bulked largely in these Debates. My right hon. Friend and hon. Friends who assail the Bill are not alone in the importance which they attach to this question. In every line of the relevant paragraphs of the report of the Statutory Commission there are indications of the anxiety which the members of the commission felt upon this question, but that makes the substantial unanimity of the conclusions which have been arrived at the more impressive. Not only the Statutory Commission, not only the Joint Committee, but the Round Table Conference, the Government of India and the Government of this country have all come to the same conclusion after considering the matter with the best powers that they could command. I am aware of the opinion which my right hon. Friend holds of the stature of the Members of the Government. I am aware of the opinion which some of his friends expressed.

Mr. CHURCHILL: There was no personal application.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: My right hon. Friend is never personal, if he will allow me to say so. He is never offensive in the wrong sense, but I am aware, at any rate, of the opinion which some of his hon. Friends hold as to the influences to which the great public servants in India have been exposed. But do not let me take the Government, or the Government of India or the administrators in India, but let me ask the House to consider the report of the Statutory Commission, if only because the hon. and gallant Member for Wycombe (Sir A. Knox)—or was it the hon. and gallant Member for South Paddington (Vice-Admiral Taylor)?—agreed that the Statutory Commission was a wholly unbiased body, the one unbiased body which, he said, had considered these proposals.

Major-General Sir ALFRED KNOX: Is it not perfectly true that the Statutory Commission, though it did recommend the transfer of law and order, made a most important reservation that one or more Ministers should not be elected?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: If the hon. and gallant Member will forgive me, I will deal with that later. Let me first get the fact, which no one can dispute, that the Simon Commission reported with grave anxiety in favour of the transfer of this particular subject. Indeed, they not only reported in favour of it after consideration, but they set out the facts and arguments to which many of my hon. Friends have resorted to make their own case against the inclusion of law and order. You will never find a more complete, accurate and impressive statement of the disadvantages of the transfer than you will find in the report, the baneful effect of Communal differences, the vital importance of impartiality in police administration, the danger of deterioration in the discipline and prestige of the police which might upon a sudden crisis produce a sudden collapse of authority. All of them were set out in the Simon Commission's report. What was the result? The scales were set, the balance was taken and it was found to be in favour, on the whole, of the transfer. Now, says my hon. and gallant Friend, there were two reservations, or there was at least one reservation. I think the first reservation he suggested was that there was to be a special Minister or a nominated Minister. He is in error in that. If my hon. and gallant Friend will look at the report again, and refresh his mind, he will find that there was no direction, no condition that there should be a Minister. There was a proposal that there might be a Minister. That was a very different proposition.

Sir A. KNOX: I said "might."

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: If the Simon Commission attached the same importance as my hon. and gallant Friend does to that proposal, they would have inserted, not a permissive power but a mandatory direction which must be obeyed. Will he forgive me also for saying that there is no proposal that this Minister, nominated as he was, should hold any particular portfolio—none at all. It was a proposal, if I read the report aright, that had nothing at all to do with the conditions upon which alone the Statutory Commission were prepared to recommend the transfer of law and order.

Sir A. KNOX: Did not the Simon Commission very properly leave it to the Governor's discretion whether he should appoint a Minister or not? In certain Provinces you could obviously hand it over, but in others it would be dangerous to do so. Was not that the reason?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I cannot answer as to the reasons of the Statutory Commission except so far as they are expressed in the report which has been published.

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: Might I ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman——

HON. MEMBERS: Order!

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I am prepared to answer every point which my hon. and gallant Friends desire to raise.

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: I should like to ask whether this condition that there might be a Minister who was nominated was not with particular reference to the transfer of law and order and, therefore, must have some particular significance when considering the transfer of law and order.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The answer to that, in the way in which the hon. and gallant Gentleman has put it, is certainly, "No." I have already said that if the Simon Statutory Commission had attached the same importance to this proposal as my hon. and gallant Friends do, it would have been put in as a direction instead of as a suggestion. My hon. Friends cannot get away from that. The second suggestion or the second reservation which it is suggested was made by the Simon Commission affecting this proposal to transfer law and order was that there should be a strong Central Government, but you will find nothing in the Statutory Commission's report to suggest that the commission thought that the Central Government was going to intervene as such in consequence of any breakdown of law and order. The proposal was that the Governor should have certain powers and duties, but under the Governor-General, and under the Secretary of State, presumably, in the last resort. What the Simon Commission adumbrated in this respect has been drawn in clearer outline by the Joint Committee and by the Bill, and, if my hon. Friends will be good enough to look at the Bill, they will find the very same proposal there embodied, that the Governor, acting as the agent or under the directions of the Governor-General, and ultimately of the Secretary of State and of Parliament, was to intervene in the case of any breakdown.

Vice-Admiral TAYLOR: May I again ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman a question?

Mr. SPEAKER: The constant asking of questions is not the way to conduct a Debate.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: My hon. and gallant Friend knows that I should, if it were convenient, like to meet every point which comes from his fertile and anxious mind, but that that mind, which has the sincerity which we all recognise in each other, should come to a different conclusion upon this important question shows how men may honestly differ. But the Government are at least entitled to claim that the grave and prolonged consideration of this question by the Statutory Commission is impressive. As I understand their report their main reason was this: they told us that the police had too often become the focus of political faction, that, while Indian politicians and the people enjoyed and indeed demanded the protection of the police, too often they made the police the target for their political criticisms. What is more likely to make those who will have to administer these reforms anxious to see that the police are used for their proper duties than the sense of responsibility they will now possess? I am indebted to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for a phrase which puts the matter as I see it. To give these people the power of policy without the

responsibility of maintaining order which may be connected with that policy is, as it were, "to light a fire without providing a chimney for it." It is the sense of responsibility which will help Ministers to realise the first, and almost the main elementary duty of a government, and that is to maintain order.

I cannot help thinking that if my hon. Friends are saying that they would agree to Provincial Autonomy if law and order were not transferred they are really clutching at a straw. They are not using words with their true meaning when they speak of Provincial Autonomy in the absence of the control of these departments that are comprehended in the phrase. The judges, the police, the gaols, and all the departments that come into touch with these departments are to be kept back from the control of those to whom it is said by my hon. Friends that they are prepared to transfer Provincial Autonomy. My hon. Friends are living in a world of make-believe in which they may deceive themselves if they call that Provincial Autonomy, but they will certainly not deceive the people who are most concerned. If I were free, or if I thought it right to express my own opinion, an opinion which has so little authority or weight behind it, as to this proposal, I should say, from such experience as I have, that a divorce between political power on the one hand, and authority in the sphere of public order on the other hand, would be certain to end in a collapse of either the one or the other. But once compel the critics to take responsibility upon their shoulders, I should expect, in the familiar phrase we sometimes use, that the poachers would be the best gamekeepers in the new circumstances. If I dwell on this matter, I hope I shall not be thought to insist too much. It has been made the critical issue between my hon. Friends and ourselves, apart from the question to which I am coming in a moment of Dominion status. The more this question is examined by minds that are prepared to be open to argument and to reason, the more likely is the conclusion of the House to be that to which the Statutory Commission arrived as well as the Joint Committee, that the department of law and order should be a subject transferred to Ministers with other subjects.

I come to the question that no doubt chiefly interests the House, in so far as I have any observations to make. I think I am justified in saying that the declaration of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State of the intentions of the Government has been generally accepted, that is to say, as making plain the intentions of the Government. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Gower said that the Opposition know that the Government stand firmly by the pledge in the Preamble and in the Declaration of the Viceroy. The words which my right hon. Friend used had behind them not merely the assent of the Government, but their considered judgment. As far as I know, apart from my hon. Friend who spoke before me, no one in this House or even outside the House has ever suggested that we could go back upon that which was contained in the Preamble. If I did not misunderstand my hon. Friend on Friday, he suggested that what people called the pledge or the promise in the Preamble in the Act was nothing but a declaration of policy, and that a declaration of policy is not binding but a promise is. I do not know anyone else in this House or outside the House who takes that view.

Mr. EMMOTT: I did not at all suggest the abandonment of the policy laid down in the Preamble. On the contrary, both on Friday and at the beginning of my observations to-day, I made it plain that while we insist on the distinction, what we urge is the faithful, careful execution of the policy that is laid down in the Preamble.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The hon. Gentleman's explanation makes my task all the more easy on this part of the case. We may, therefore, accept the unanimous opinion of the House that the Government are right in maintaining both in the spirit and the letter their adherence to the Declaration contained in the Preamble. It was the second passage in the speech of my right hon. Friend which chiefly attracted comment. Perhaps it is useful to remember in passing that the Viceroy in 1929 had the expressed authority of the Government of the day behind him just as has my right hon. Friend, but it will also be remembered that the much quoted sentence as to Dominion status, in which the Viceroy described Dominion status as the natural

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issue of India's constitutional progress, was itself the result of doubts expressed both in this country and in India regarding the 1919 Declaration and the Montagu Declaration of 1917. My hon. Friend below the Gangway seems to suggest that there was some difference or some distinction to be drawn in intention and meaning between the Montagu Declaration of 1917 and the Preamble of 1919. I do not take that view, and I have never heard it suggested before. This House put in the Preamble in 1919 with a view to giving effect to the Montagu Declaration of 1917. Parliament at any rate did not take the view which my hon. Friend has presented to the House to-day. What is to happen? The Viceroy was himself, with the authority of the Government, putting an interpretation upon the 1919 Preamble. It is now suggested that we should pile Pelion on Ossa by putting yet another interpretation, suggested by hon. Gentlemen opposite, on that which was itself an interpretation.

Mr. LANSBURY: The point is that, first of all, the interpretation of what was in the Act was called into question. The Viceroy cleared that up, and now it is argued that a Declaration by the Viceroy has not any binding effect unless it is passed by this House.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: That is precisely the point upon which it is desirable we should concentrate our attention, and I think that I can ease the mind of the right hon. Gentleman. I am at present making this point that it is, generally speaking, more likely to darken counsel by merely multiplying words than to elucidate the meaning of words already used. To interpret an interpretation seems to be a course likely to cause more trouble than more clarity.

Mr. LANSBURY *rose—*

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: If the right hon. Gentleman will forgive me, I will meet his point precisely. Now it is said that, although the Declaration which my right hon. Friend made last Wednesday is satisfactory as far as it goes, it ought to have the legal sanction behind it of being embodied in a Preamble of the Bill. On this point, it is desirable to bear in mind that the hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth drew a distinction between the legality of the binding force of a Preamble and the validity of a mere Ministers expression of opinion on policy. I cannot help thinking that there is a good deal of confusion of thought in that distinction. A Preamble is, no doubt, an enactment, as far as it goes, upon which Parliament has expressed its opinion, but it is only binding, and it only has validity at any given moment not because Parliament originally gave it sanction, but because Parliament continues to give it its sanction. When Parliament changes its mind, and Parliament does sometimes change its mind, a Preamble loses its validity, and so does a Minister's statement. If a Minister makes a statement and the Government next day changes its mind, no doubt the statement of the Minister loses its validity. The point is that some declarations, whether in a Preamble or in a Minister's statement, are made under such conditions and to such people that it would not be honourable to depart from them. I want to persuade my hon. and gallant Friend, if I can, that he is wrong in saying that the Preamble is binding and the Viceroy's declaration is not. They are both of them equally binding, and for this reason, that they were both of them made to the people of India as a pledge, a promise, a declaration of policy, or whatever you like to call it, and they were accepted as such.

What I am arguing is, that a declaration of a Minister, with the assent of the Government behind it, is just as valid, just as strong, just as effective as anything you can put into a Preamble. Put your Preamble as high as you like, it is only efficacious or valid until Parliament choses to reverse it. So it is of the declaration of policy that my right hon. Friend has made. That will be binding upon this Government and upon every Government that may succeed it until a Government comes along—I hope it will never come along, having regard to our tradition of continuity of policy—and says: "We are not going to be bound by what the Secretary of State for India said in 1935."

Mr. LANSBURY: That is the whole point.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: That is the whole point, and I am very glad that my right hon. Friend has grasped it. The whole point is this, that my right hon.

Friend's statement not only has, but was intended to have, precisely the same importance and to be treated with precisely the same respect as if the Government had been able to put it into the Preamble.

Mr. LANSBURY: I am much obliged to the right hon. and learned Gentleman for his courtesy. The point that has been raised, not by us, not by Indians, but by British-Indian statesmen, and also in this House and outside, that nothing is binding except it is embodied in an Act of Parliament. I should have thought that a Clause in the Act of Parliament or in the Preamble would be considered binding on the British Parliament, where the word of the Minister, or of the Viceroy, or of the King-Emperor has been called in question.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The right hon. Gentleman will no doubt deal with that point in his speech later to-night. What I have been trying to say, but I am not sure that I have succeeded, is that the declaration of my right hon. Friend must be accepted, and was intended to be accepted, as fully as binding as the Preamble, and that whether you put it into the Preamble or only in the statement of the Government both of them are binding so long, and only so long, as the Government that succeeds, or the same Government, does not change its mind. I can quite understand views being taken that this declaration could be put into the Preamble. I do not take that view, and for reasons that I am going to mention. I think it would be extraordinarily difficult to frame suitable language as to the nature of the Dominion status which was intended to be conferred upon the Indian people, and put it in the formal framework of the Preamble.

Brigadier-General Sir HENRY CROFT: In view of what the right hon. and learned Gentleman has said, is it to be taken that if a statement is made by a Secretary of State and the Government is defeated by an enormous majority at the polls very shortly afterwards, that that statement inevitably stands? If that be the only test, is here going to be any chance of this House testing this vital issue?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Those are questions which any Member of the House can answer just as well as I. Everybody knows that any change of confidence by the electors results in a new Government, and a new Government may and often does reverse the policy of its predecessor. But there is this to remember, and any student of our constitutional history must recognise, that Governments even of directly opposing tendencies and opinions have been very tender indeed about matters of policy which concern other nations or other parts of the British Empire. It is one of the fundamental facts of our Constitution and the Constitution of our Empire, which no student of politics can afford to overlook. That continuity of our policy has been the keystone of the success with which we have been able to develop and maintain our British Empire. If there had been chopping and changing after every General Election we should not have been in the happy position that we are in to-day in regard to important matters of this sort.

Duchess of ATHOLL: The right hon. and learned Gentleman has touched upon a question of fact which has very great bearing upon the point before the House. Is he not aware that the Declaration made by the Viceroy in 1929 was followed within a day or two by an extremely impressive speech in this House by my right hon. Friend the Lord President of the Council, in his capacity as Leader of the Opposition, a speech in which he made it clear that, in his view, the road to Dominion status would be a long and very difficult one? He followed that up with a letter to the then Prime Minister, asking him if the Declaration represented any change in Indian policy by the Government, and the reply was in the negative.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I do not understand the Noble Lady's intervention. My right hon. Friend the Lord President of the Council seems to me, if her analysis is right, to have said precisely that which I should have expected him to say of that Declaration. Perhaps the Noble Lady can elaborate the point when she makes her speech later in the day. The fact remains, upon which I have been insisting, that this Government, the next Government, and as far as I know all Governments, are bound to have regard to that continuity of

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policy to which my right hon. Friend referred in his statement.

The next question, and it is the most important question that has been put to me is this: Do the Government intend that Dominion status shall be given to India of the nature of Dominion status after the Statute of Westminster? I am sure that those who have asked this question appreciate the fact that the Statute of Westminster did not mention, still less define, Dominion status. The phrase is often loosely used. It is just as well that we should remember that the word "status" in connection with the Dominions was first used in the well-known paragraphs of the Declaration known as the Balfour Declaration—

"They are autonomous communities"—

that is, Great Britain as well as the Dominions, remember that—

"within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations."

I make no attempt to improve upon that historic statement. My hon. Friend the Member for Middleton (Sir N. Stewart Sandeman) said that there was a good deal of difficulty in defining what people meant by Dominion status. The reason for the difficulty is not always recognised. It lies in the fact that Dominion status is a thing of life, of spirit, and growing, and not a dead thing of legal form. Put the phrase "Dominion status" into your Preamble as the status which you are conferring upon India and you will have ready made for you in a few years to come a series of lawyers' wrangles as to whether it was the Dominion status of 1935 or the Dominion status of whatever year it might be in which the question was arising.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Which is it?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: It is Dominion status both before and after the Statute of Westminster. It is idle to contend that the Statute of Westminster altered Dominion status at all, and I will tell my right hon. Friend why. I know perfectly well that he differs from the Government policy about this question of the Statute. I remember his criticisms, but I do not agree with them. Far be it from me to say anything more on this occasion that what the Statute of Westminster did, indeed, contain. Let me remind the House what it did contain. It gave the Dominions therein named increased powers of legislation, and indeed unrestricted powers, with one exception, and it is an important exception, as to the Constitution Acts of the three Dominions. They have no power to alter those Acts except under certain conditions. It legalised what had long been the constitutional usage that prevented the Imperial Parliament from legislating for the Dominions without their consent. Lastly, it must be remembered that the five most important sections of the Act were not to apply to Australia, New Zealand or Newfoundland without their adoption. Far be it from me to minimise the importance of the Statute of Westminster. It was accepted in the spirit in which it was offered to the Dominions as establishing beyond the possibility of doubt or of quibble the full equality and status of Great Britain and the Dominions, each of whom, it is true to say, has its own point of view, and its own position, but, let me add, always within the British Empire.

That India should at some time enter upon the same rights as the Dominions I most certainly affirm, but it is obvious to all that India from her size, position, and stragetic position will have more difficult problems presented to her than even those which have been presented to the Governments of the other Dominions. That we are bound to help her, pledged to help her in overcoming those difficulties and in her development, is accepted by every one. The Bill I contend is an instrument by the wise use of which India can take a great stride forward towards the attainment of the aims set out in the Preamble. She has difficulties to surmount in her journey. They are difficulties which she herself can solve. She can solve them only by the use which her statesmen will make of the powers conferred upon her for that purpose. Pursuing that course, it is worth while for her and for all in this country and in India to bear in mind that the special arrangements, not in the statutory safeguards but freely negotiated and agreed, are not inconsistent with the ultimate attainment of the position of a Dominion within the

Empire. Some of my hon. Friends seem to view with misgiving the prospect of India ever taking her place in full, free association with the other members of the British Commonwealth of Nations. I would rather say with Macaulay, 100 years ago, that when that happens it will be one of the proudest days in the annals of the British Empire.

It only remains for me to reply to the question raised by some of my hon. and right hon. Friends as to the so-called right to secede. I am bound to say that I regret that they have thought fit so much to insist upon that question. Let me remind the House of what Lord Balfour said in another place in 1926:

"You might as well consider all the causes of divorce before you decide upon the problems of matrimony."

We are engaged in building up the British Empire. We are engaged not only on this day but every day in building up the British Empire. My regret is due to the feeling, which I have no doubt many hon. Members share, that this is an academic question and is likely for ever to be an academic question with regard to India and every other Dominion within the Empire. Some people are always taking the temperature of the British Empire to see whether there is any danger of it contracting a malady. It will be quite time to engage on that when the Empire is much less vigorous and healthy than it is at the present time. I deprecate this insistence by hon. Members in all parts of the House——

Sir H. CROFT: By Indians.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I am quite aware that Indians raise it, and I will add this to what I have said, that I deprecate that both Indians and Englishment should raise it. There is no possibility of the question ever arising as a matter of practical politics in the lifetime of this Parliament, or of any Parliament which we can foresee. Speaking for myself, and I think for the Government, I do not believe, although some Indians and some Englishmen are discussing it as an academic question, that there is any real possibility of it ever being entertained as a practical proposal in India——

Sir WILLIAM DAVISON: It is the proposal of Congress.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: If my hon. Friends who have raised the question insist on it and desire to have an answer they are entitled to it. All our pledges to India are pledges relating to the future development of India within the Empire, and the Preamble itself says:

"As an integral part of the Empire."

It is so stated in the Irwin Declaration, which was merely put forward as an interpretation of the Preamble. Obviously, none of these pledges included a promise of status outside the British Empire or of a Constitution intended to be used to take India outside the Empire. The words "Dominion Status" are meaningless apart from the Empire, and, indeed, the words in the 1926 Declaration, of which I have reminded the House, described the Dominions as "autonomous communities within the British Empire." We believe that all these adjustments can be made in the future as they have been made in the past. There are undoubtedly peculiar features and special obligations affecting the relations which exist between this country and India. My hon. Friends tell us that we are taking great risks. Was there ever a time when the British nation was not taking risks? The story of our Empire is one long history of risks wisely taken. Sometimes, it is true, mistakes have been made, but wise men will not be deterred by the fact that there are risks in taking steps forward, provided they use ordinary judgment and powers of discernment with which most of us claim to be gifted.

I make no charge upon the sincerity and honesty of hon. Members who have expressed their views with so much force and consideration, but at any rate the Government are entitled to this satisfaction, that this question has been so long pondered, so wisely discussed by men of good will and experience, that we may go forward in the hope that our intentions will be accepted for what they are worth not only in this country but in India, and that India may, after this great Debate, realise that the people of Great Britain, who have so long helped her in her tutelage, are prepared now to lend all their efforts to enable the people of India to attain, what we think they desire, the full stature of manhood within the British Commonwealth.

4.50 p.m.

Mr. MORGAN JONES: The Attorney-General, who has delivered a speech of

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first rate importance, will forgive me for saying that some passages in the speech leave us still in a condition of discontent. I want, in the first place, to make some observations upon the Amendments which are on the Order Paper, and therefore I will leave what I have to say on the question of Dominion Status to a later part of my speech. The Bill and the Amendments indicate three schools of thought in relation to the India problem. There is, first, the school of thought represented by the right hon. Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill); then there is the school of thought as represented by the Government in this Bill; and, thirdly, there is a school of thought which, like the Labour party, demands a much more radical approach to the problem. Let me deal first of all with the position taken up by those associated with the right hon. Member for Epping, and in discussing their point of view I do so, not as a defender of the Government, but as one who is examining their proposals, and the position they take up, on their intrinsic merits.

Let me go back to the beginning where I think we are on common ground. As I understand, the right hon. Member for Epping and his friends accept as their starting point in the controversy the Government of India Act, 1919. They always argue, and I think rightly, that the Government of India Act, 1919, in providing for the re-examination of the problem by a Commission at a later date, specifically allowed such a Commission to determine whether there was to be any further advance in constitutional progress, and indeed that they were free to recommend a restriction of the powers enjoyed by India. The Simon Commission was duly appointed and visited India. The first point I want to make is that the Simon Commission's Report, which the right hon. Gentleman in the main accepts, never suggested any withdrawal of powers. Its recommendations in the main were for a further advance, and the degree to which the right hon. Gentleman accepts that report is also the degree to which he accepts proposals in favour of advance. Since then we have had a series of conferences and discussions, round table conferences and committees, until finally we came to the Joint Select Committee. The right hon. Gentleman, I gather, having reviewed the results of our deliberations in the Joint Select Committee for some 21 months says caustically, "this is the work of pigmies." The right hon. Gentleman must not be unduly hard upon us. What does he expect from pigmies when all the giants go on strike? They must do the best they can with the material available. But Gulliver himself came among the Lilliputians for three days, and we thoroughly enjoyed our discussions with him for that short period. He came like some great professor to a kindergarten. He said, "now children let us start with an elementary lesson in physics."

Mr. CHURCHILL: I never said anything of the kind.

Mr. JONES: No, but no doubt the right hon. Gentleman recognises the professor. "First the bricks and then the wall; first the sticks and then the faggots." Those are the professor's own words. Having invited us to build in that spirit, he made a constructive suggestion of his own, the only one—the one to which he referred in his broadcast. He said to the assembled children of the kindergarten, "now boys do you remember the grants-in-aid which are going from the centre, and some scholar from Chelsea said, "please teacher, there are no grants-in-aid." Then the professor said "if there are no grants-in-aid there ought to be." If the world is not flat it ought to be. What pleasure is there in being a professor giving a lesson on India unless you can get the students to believe from the outset that twice two make five. That is exactly the right hon. Gentleman's position.

But let me put a serious proposition to the right hon. Member. He suggested that there should be grants-in-aid. I ask him: who is to administer these grants-in-aid? Is it the Governor-General in his personal capacity, or is he to have an advisory body associated with him? The right hon. Gentleman also said that there must be a certain number of inspectors. I suggest that there would have to be a whole army of inspectors, for, if the right hon. Gentleman's case is that there is such widespread corruption in India, then you must have inspectors like locusts all over India to see that the money is properly spent. But suppose the right hon. Gentleman argues that

these grants-in-aid are to be administered by the Governor-General or some advisory body associated with him, then I ask him what is to happen? Are they going to operate side by side with the present Legislative Assembly? What are you going to do with that body? Are they to have no powers at all? The Legislative Assembly, as I understand, is to remain. What are they to do? Are they to administer these grants-in-aid or not? The right hon. Gentleman has never taken us into his confidence on this matter, and I suggest that it is vital.

Let me ask him another question. Grants-in-aid must be on a wide scale. What is going to be the effect on the central body of these grants-in-aid? The right hon. Gentleman will remember that 62.5 per cent. of central finances are now spent on the army. If, in addition, he is going to provide a vast army of inspectors, and further a properly constituted body, to administer the substantial grants-in-aid, how much money is going to be left to provide for the poor people to whom his Resolution refers and about whom he is shedding so many tears? I submit to the right hon. Gentleman with all respect that he is adopting an entirely and purely destructive attitude in this matter. Perhaps evil associations have corrupted good ideals. He reminds me of the man who journeyed from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among —highwaymen. There was another word, originally, I know. The right hon. Gentleman has fallen amongst those people, and since he has been among them they have torn away that mantle of social reformer which he used to bear. He is now clothed in the glad rags of reaction. He is not going to recover his political faith in Bournemouth. No new ideas come from there. There is no political creche to be found at Bournemouth; only a crematorium; and they will burn the right hon. Gentleman to a cinder before they have done with him.

The right hon. Gentleman and his friends are very concerned about what is called commercial discrimination. It is, I agree, a subject which must dominate their minds as well as ours. They are concerned with the future of Lancashire. The hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) the other day put an argument like this: Referring to the declining trade of Lancashire in India and the increasing trade in Japanese goods going into India, he spoke as though that particular fact were due to some inherent quality in the attitude of Indians themselves. An hon. Friend this afternoon, at my request, asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies to state what increase has taken place in the importation of Japanese goods into Kenya—a Crown Colony. The answer showed that even there Japanese goods in the last four or five years have increased in value almost by one-half. It is an inevitable consequence, a feature of international trade practically all over the world at the moment. It is unfair to attribute the increased Japanese imports into India, therefore, as a fault lying at the door of those much despised people called Indian politicians.

If Lancashire's trade is declining in India, how do the right hon. Member for Epping and his friends propose to revive it? There are only two ways—either by force or by friendship. Can you add by one piece to the sales of Lancashire goods in India through the application of force? Can you compel the Indians to buy one extra pound of British merchandise at the mouth of the gun? In the long run the only way to increase Lancashire's trade with India is by the development of good will and friendship. The right hon. Gentleman and his friends refer frequently to unemployment in Lancashire, and I do not complain of that, for it is quite natural that they should do so, though, perhaps, they play upon the fears of Lancashire people in this matter. But I would recall with pride one episode in the life of the Lancashire workers. It was at the time of the American Civil War, when the interests of the South were the interests of the slave-owners and the interests of the North were the interests that fought against the slave trade. The economic interest of Lancashire, of employers and employed, was on the side of the South. Even the Government of this country was in favour of the South because of economic considerations. But the workers of Lancashire said: "No, though we suffer greater unemployment we will stand by the great principle of freedom for the slaves in the Southern States." So in this Indian matter, though it may very well be that the workers of Lancashire may lose economically through greater unemploy-

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ment, through the development of new methods in India, I am sure they will take the stand that their forefathers took 80 or 100 years ago and will say: "We will not impose on these people burdens that we would not care to bear ourselves."

Mr. CHURCHILL: Why is it a burden to reduce a duty which hinders the consumer?

Mr. JONES: The right hon. Gentleman has his own point of view. But my argument is that if he is to allow Indians to have any measure of self-government, even if he allows the present Assembly to remain as it is, he must give them power to look after their trade from the point of view of the well-being of India and not from the point of view of Lancashire. If the right hon. Gentleman wants to avoid trouble of fiscal discrimination the only way of doing it is by having a trade agreement expressing good will and friendship between the one side and the other. I want to make one observation about the very eloquent speech of the hon. Member for Chertsey (Sir A. Boyd-Carpenter) last week. It seemed to me that he disclosed the real attitude of mind of some hon. Members in this matter. Controverting the argument of the Secretary of State, he said that the Secretary of State was not entitled to regard the trouble between ourselves and Canada, and the final settlement, as affording any parallel to this Indian question at all. I know he developed a further argument, but this is the important sentence: He said, "There is no analogy. After all, the people of Canada and America were of our own stock." Yes, but what does that mean? Does it imply that there is some special quality belonging to white people that does not belong to other people.

Mr. WISE: Yes.

Mr. JONES: Does the hon. Member who says "Yes" imply that it requires some special kind of clay to make an hon. Member for Smethwick and another kind to make an hon. Member for Calcutta?

Mr. WISE: Yes.

Mr. JONES: I am glad to have had it so pertinently said that Providence requires to put forth a special effort to make the hon. Gentleman opposite different from an hon. Member who sits in an Indian Parliament. I decline to believe it. There is great offensiveness in a declaration of that sort, which ought not to be offered to these people in far-off India. In the old baronial halls of this country those of inferior quality sat below the salt. Are we to understand that in the Imperial hall, where members of the British family of nations are to sit, the Indian people are always to sit below the salt while we gorge in splendid magnificence at the high table? Is that the hon. Gentleman's point of view? If so, if I were an Imperialist I would speedily repudiate such philosophy, for that point of view is divisive and destructive in an Empire like ours. I protest with all the force at my command against this racial snobbery. Let us begin to measure men according to the quality of their heads and their hearts, and not according to the colour of their skins. Speaking from experience, after having seen white men and other men from India sitting side by side for many months in the Joint Select Committee, I say that the Indian people need not be ashamed of any comparison or contrast which may be set up.

I turn from that question to consideration of the Government's case. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney-General made some reference to a complaint which my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for South-East Leeds (Major Milner) made last Thursday concerning the amount of attention that the Government have given to our case. I join my hon. and gallant Friend in that complaint. This is the seventh day of this discussion. Throughout the three days discussion we had before Christmas right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite loftily disdained to discuss our position at all. They devoted the whole of their attention to the right hon. Member for Epping. Let me recall one fact. I with my colleagues sat for 21 months on the Joint Select Committee. I did not go there to form a background for the Conservatives. I went there to do my share of this job. We presented our own alternative draft proposals. But for six days we have not had one reference by way of argument to the case that we put up. I do not think it is just; I do not think it is fair; and I refuse to allow the Government to let the case of the 8,000,000 who voted for us in

the country go by default. This is Parliament, not a Tory Conference. We have as much right to be heard, as much right to have attention given to our case, as has the right hon. Member for Epping. We may be on the Government bench before very long. The learned Attorney-General said this afternoon, though I do not accept his theory of continuity of policy, that the next Government, whatever it may be, would be held responsible for this legislation. It will not be the right hon. Member for Epping who will be responsible. That being so, we are entitled to have our point of view considered, discussed and answered in this House.

Let me now turn to the main question at issue. Speaking as a Socialist and member of the Labour party, I admit that I have some difficulties about this business of Federation. I do not deny it. I say frankly that if the territory of the States were all contiguous geographically in India I could conceive—I do not admit the case is wholly on that side—a case in favour of federating British India alone and leaving the States to come in later if they choose. But the situation is not like that. States are dotted here and there all over India. There are territorial problems, problems relating to railways, postal and telegraph services, and all sorts of problems involved, and the consequence is that we are bound to consider whether the States should be brought into some Federation or other.

But, having conceded that point, I must complain bitterly of the difference in approach made by the Government first to the Princes and then to British India. What do the Government say to British India? The Legislative Assembly has turned down the proposals of the Bill. There is scarcely a friend in the whole of India or in British India for these proposals. But the Government say to British India, "Here are our proposals. Take them or leave them." But when it comes to the Princes the Government say, "Gentlemen—your Highnesses—what would you have us do? What shall we do to please you? What conditions would you like to advance and what price shall we pay?" I ask the right hon. Gentleman, is the price to be found in the Second Schedule? Under the operation of the Second Schedule no sort of change whatever can take place in the future federated India, no change can take place in British India in the future without entitling each Prince to say, "That is an adequate reason for me to withdraw." Any such change absolves a Prince from his accession. He is free to retire—according to the Second Schedule. What this Schedule means is that in the Indian ship of state in the future, British India is to be in the stokehold, clamped down carefully, while the Princes walk gaily in the sunshine on the upper deck, splendidly protected from the glare by the great umbrella of safeguards, and if the temperature becomes a little too torrid the Governor-General and the Governor will be there to do the necessary fanning. That is the simple situation as it is now left by this Schedule.

What does this mean? Once this Bill is through, once this Constitution is passed, you cannot change it by one jot or tittle. It will be like the laws of the Medes and Persians. It cannot be altered—except of course later on with the assent of this House, and, may I add, with the assent of every Prince. In other words, His Majesty's Governor-General in India is reduced to the level of a petty policeman acting on behalf of the Princes of India to guarantee that the people of British India will behave themselves properly. I do not know that I am very much enamoured of the manner of approach of His Highness the Maharaja of Patiala to this question. He said, as quoted last week:

> "If British India is hoping to compel us to wear, on our healthy body politic, the Nessus shirt of a discredited political theory it is living in a world of political unreality."

Democracy, self-government—a discredited political theory! I do not know anything about Patiala but I know something about Europe and I know that those countries alone which accept a democratic method of government have been able to withstand the buffetings of the political storm in Europe during the last few years.

Mr. ANNESLEY SOMERVILLE: Are we to understand then that the hon. Gentleman, speaking for the Socialist party, would withdraw from the Princes the powers and privileges given them in the Bill?

Mr. JONES: When we present our Bill the hon. Member will see it. I will return to that subject in a moment. Let me now take the situation as we find it to-day.

[Mr. Jones.]

Here in Europe we have seen crowns tumble, thrones totter and constitutions crash, but the democratic countries alone have stood inviolate and inviolable amid the surging seas of disturbance on every hand. I want it to be understood that, as far as we are concerned, we are not going to be parties to tramping down the freedom of the people of British India. I ask again, therefore, whether because these Princes regard democracy as a discredited theory our Governor-General is to be there, always available to rake out the fires from the furnaces of freedom and progress in India? It looks like it.

I want to say also this about secession, and I am glad to see the Secretary of State in his place, because I am not sure that there has not been some misunderstanding about this question. When we had discussions about Burma it was understood that there was a section of Burmese delegates in favour of Burma being allowed to remain associated with India, they being presumed to believe that in their own time Burma could break away or secede from India. We settled firmly at the beginning this proposition—that once in the Federation no secession from it should be possible. For that reason, I for my part took the line that Burma ought to be separated staight away. If Burma was not to be allowed to secede, why are the Princes to be free to do so? I think that is an important question. I am prepared to vote for a Federation but I am not prepared to barter away the liberties of the people of British India in return for the acquiescence of the Princes.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Sir Samuel Hoare): But surely the hon. Member knows that the Princes cannot secede so long as the conditions continue to obtain under which they enter the Federation? That seems to be perfectly reasonable.

Miss RATHBONE: The hon. Member for Caerphilly (Mr. M. Jones) has just told us that his party are not prepared to barter away the liberties of the people of British India. Are they prepared to barter away the liberties of the people of Indian India—the people of the States?

Mr. JONES: I should be very glad to see some instrument established in the Indian States which would enable the people of those States to speak for themselves, but there is no such instrument as yet—at least not in all the States. There are Legislative Assemblies in some of them. But I think the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State and I understand our differences on this matter clearly. The point simply is this: If this Schedule remains as it stands, no change can take place in British India constitutionally without giving the Princes the right to withdraw if they or any of them think fit to do so.

I turn to another point. The Lord President of the Council told us that he had been assured that someone was going to work this scheme. Who? We ought to know. Who is prepared to work this scheme now? Congress will not do so. Surely the right hon. Gentleman does not mean that he is going to invite representatives of the princely States to form a Ministry for an All-India Administration—or may it be some representatives of the princely States *plus* some of the Moslems. I met representatives of the Moslems and I know they are very able men but with a Ministry of that sort you would certainly not get an All-India Federation. You would destroy even the vestiges of Indian unity. If it comes to other people, by whom are they going to be elected? They cannot get constituencies to elect them. I confess I cannot understand on what authority the Lord President of the Council assured the House a month or so ago that this scheme would be worked.

I come to the last point discussed by the right hon. and learned Gentleman, namely, the question of Dominion status. Our point of view on this matter has been clear from the beginning. We have consistently argued that the Government should recognise the claim of the Indian people to Dominion status. Let me be clear as to what is meant by ordinary intelligent people in regard to this question. I think the Attorney-General will agree that the late Mr. Bonar Law was a person of great perspicacity. In 1920 he used these words about the status of the people of the Dominions:

"What is the essence of Dominion Home Rule? The essence of it is that they have control of their whole destinies of their fighting forces, of the amounts which they will contribute to the general security of the Empire. All these things are vital to Dominion Home Rule. . . . There is not

a man in the House who would not admit that the connection of the Dominions with the Empire depends upon themselves. If the self-governing Dominions, Australia, Canada, chose to-morrow to say, 'We will no longer make a part of the British Empire,' we would not try to force them."

Later on he said:

"Dominion Home Rule means the right to decide their own destinies."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 30th March, 1920; cols. 1124-1125, Vol. 127.]

There could be nothing clearer than those words. That statement was made six years before the Imperial Conference at which an attempt was made to give an exact definition of Dominion status and to show its implications and consequences. The Inter-Imperial Relations Committee of the Imperial Conference in 1926 said, of the group of self-governing communities composed of Great Britain and the Dominions, that each of them had, as regards all vital matters, reached its full development. I heard Mr. Jayaker at the Joint Select Committee giving his view of the implications of Dominion status. He said in effect—I am giving my own words—"We demand for India exactly what you have given or may give to Canada, South Africa or Australia. The full status given to those places and all it implies, we demand for India."

Mr. O'CONNOR: Is he asking that that should be given now?

Mr. JONES: Certainly. Not in the dim and distant future.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Your Minority Report does not say that.

Mr. JONES: The hon. and learned Member will forgive me if I dispute that proposition very seriously. We have steadily stood for a declaration in favour of Dominion status for India. The trouble arises in this way. The right hon. and learned Attorney-General says to us, "Oh, but you ought to be satisfied. We are going to put the Preamble of the 1919 Act of Parliament into this Measure." Well, what will be the effect of that? You repeal the rest of the Act, and you embody this Preamble in a new Act. At least, so I understood the Secretary of State to say last week.

Sir S. HOARE *indicated dissent.*

Mr. JONES: Let us see. We have changed our position since last week then.

Sir S. HOARE: No, we have not.

Mr. JONES: Then it is the same as last week. In the OFFICIAL REPORT of the Debate in this House on the 6th inst. my right hon. Friend the Member for Darwen (Sir H. Samuel) asked:

"In what sense is he using the word 'unrepealed'? Of course he is not meaning that it will be legislatively unrepealed, because the whole of the Act of 1919 is to be repealed by this Bill, and that will include the Preamble."

To this the Secretary of State replied:

"Constitutional experts have never been quite clear as to whether the repeal of an Act means the repeal of the Preamble. There seems to be some doubt. In order to put all doubts at rest, I shall move at the proper time, when we come to the Schedule under which the Government of India Act, 1919, is repealed, an Amendment to say 'except the Preamble.'"—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 6th February, 1935; col. 1189, Vol. 297.]

Very well then. The Act has gone, and we are left with the Preamble. A Preamble to what will it be? What is the meaning of a Preamble that is hanging in mid air? What is the meaning of a Preamble that is not "pre" to anything? The right hon. Gentleman really should clear up this point. I understand that if you have a Preamble of this sort suspended, as it were, in mid-air and attached to nothing at all, it means nothing.

Sir S. HOARE *indicated dissent.*

Mr. JONES: The right hon. Gentleman shakes his head, and so does the right hon. and learned Attorney-General, and they are both enlightened lawyers.

Sir S. HOARE: No indeed, I am not.

Mr. JONES: Well, I want to know what it means. It is like taking away a man's shirt and leaving him with a button. A button is useful very often, but here it helps nobody, and it has no meaning whatever.

Sir S. HOARE: I do not agree with the hon. Member, but I will not keep interrupting.

Mr. JONES: Even if the right hon. Gentleman puts the Preamble in, the Preamble will still be open to the same interpretation. That Preamble has been in since 1919, and Sir Malcolm Hailey, a high official and a very capable person, as we all know, when called upon to

[Mr. Jones.]

interpret the phrase "Dominion Status" said that when people used the phrase "Dominion Status," it did not mean what the Indians said it meant; so that it is no use your telling us that it is satisfactory to introduce the old Preamble. The whole trouble has been that in spite of declarations by His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, on behalf of His Majesty the King, by the right hon. Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill), when he was Colonial Secretary, by the Viceroy of India—Lord Irwin, as he then was, now Lord Halifax—and by all sorts of people, this phrase has been used, and Government spokesmen say, "Ah yes, we use those words, it is true, but they do not mean what you say they mean." The only way out of that difficulty is to state categorically that you propose to give Dominion Status, and, if necessary, to define exactly what you mean by it. The trouble is very serious, because out of all this kind of business has grown a profound distrust of us. They no longer believe our word. They have lost confidence in our pronouncements. It will not do to say that the statement of a Minister has the same effect as an Act of Parliament, because it has not. One is an opinion; the other is a binding agreement in words. Therefore, let it be clearly understood that if the Government insist upon standing pat on the 1919 position, they must not expect us, in pursuit of a continuity of policy, as they choose to call it, to accept those pledges as adequate. I hope that is as clear as the noonday sun.

The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy on Friday invited the House to allow him to state a declaration of his faith. May I venture to state mine too, very humbly? I believe that it is written on the tablets of destiny, by the very finger of God, that mankind shall be free. I know that some are more ready for freedom than others, but it should become their common lot. Freedom, to me, is a great citadel set upon a hill. We have all got to climb towards it. Some will have to approach it along winding roads, others perhaps will have to blast their way through rocks, but they must all climb. There will be occasions, I have no doubt, when the very difficulty of the journey will bruise and break the feet of many, but inevitably they must climb. They will rise and fall, at times they may even slip back, but in spite of the rising and falling, in spite of the striving and the struggling, in the long run the people of the world must climb to the summit, and when they have reached that summit, they must possess the citadel of freedom.

5.38 p.m.

Mr. ISAAC FOOT: I had the opportunity of serving for a long time with my hon. Friend the Member for Caerphilly (Mr. Morgan Jones), and sitting side by side with him, on the Joint Select Committee, and I know how passionately he feels on the subject with which we have been dealing. I do not think that there is between him and me any fundamental difference. I think that, as far as the Labour opposition is concerned, it is mainly a difference of emphasis, and when the hon. Member complained just now that the Government were giving their attention mainly to the opposition within their own ranks, I think it was because it was from that direction that the attack was really coming. I do not understand that the Members of the Labour party would desire to defeat this Bill.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: We do.

Mr. FOOT: At any rate, I am sure the right hon. and gallant Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme (Colonel Wedgwood) would not be able to speak for the rest of his party upon that. I suggest that it is a simple matter to vote for an Amendment with the happy assurance that it is not likely to be carried. If one takes the statement of the case submitted in our papers and headed "Mr. Attlee's Report," there is not much difference there from our general scheme. Indeed, they accept the principle of Federation and safeguards. The essential is federation, responsibility at the Centre, safeguards. That is the threefold principle of this scheme, and that threefold principle was accepted by the Members of the Labour party, and by all the Members of the Labour party. When I hear the complaint that is now being made by the hon. Member for Limehouse (Mr. Attlee) as to safeguards and the rest, I only want to refer to words which were fully assented to by him with other Members

of the Statutory Commission, because he was a signatory of the report of that commission, which was unanimously presented to this House. These words are as much his words as the words of any Member, and, as far as I know, he has never in the slightest degree withdrawn from them. In the early part of that report—and I am taking Vol. II—there is insistence upon the necessity for safeguards, and these are the words:

"The Governor-General or the Governor, as the case may be, must be armed with full and ample powers. We desire to give the fullest scope for self-government, but, if there is a breakdown, then an alternative authority must operate unhampered."

Again, at the end of the next paragraph, on page 23, it says:

"But we consider that the only practical means of protecting the weaker or less numerous elements in the population is by the retention of an impartial power, residing in the Governor-General and the Governors of provinces, to be exercised for this purpose."

I suggest that if the Members of the Select Committee said they were in favour of Federation, of responsibility at the Centre, and of Safeguards, and if those three elements are the essential elements in the Minority Report, if that term can be used, though it is not strictly accurate, or in Mr. Attlee's Report, as it is technically named, I do not see how Members of the Labour party can desire the defeat of this Measure.

Mr. MORGAN JONES: I am sure my hon. Friend would not like to mislead the House, and I am sure he will agree that when my hon. Friend the Member for Limehouse (Mr. Attlee) spoke in those terms, he had not then seen the Safeguards embodied in this Bill.

Mr. FOOT: I find great difficulty in reconciling what the hon. Member for Limehouse said as compared with the declaration of the Leader of his party, I find great difficulty in reconciling the views of the hon. Member for Limehouse with those of the hon. Member who has just resumed his seat, and I find great difficulty in reconciling the views of the hon. Member for Limehouse with those of the hon. Member for Limehouse at different dates. That is my trouble, and I think it must be admitted that the Government have had to turn to the real opposition, because to-night we are to vote on an Amendment which I really think not many people in this House desire to see carried, whereas there will be no opportunity for voting upon the Amendment which many desire to see carried in this House.

I want to turn, therefore, to what I consider is the real opposition to this Bill. Really the Secretary of State has had to consider opposition from three directions. There is the criticism of the Bill that has come from His Majesty's Opposition, there is the criticism of the Bill that has come from Members of his own party, and there is the criticism of the Bill that has come from India. With regard to the opposition from Members of his own party, the case could not have been put with more passion and eloquence than in the powerful speech delivered by the hon. Members for Chertsey (Sir A. Boyd-Carpenter). I think that speech suffered from the same defects as those from which every one of the speeches from that opposition has suffered. Every speech that has been made by Members of the Conservative Opposition against this Bill has had one fatal weakness. It has shrunk from the conclusion to which all its arguments have led. When I heard the hon. Member for Chertsey and the rest of them emphasising, as they did, that this Parliament in 1919, reserved under Section 41 of the Act, the power not only to go forward, but to go back, and then not one of them proposes to go back, it seems to me that every speech they make is an effort to weave a rope of sand. I think that the people of this country could understand a position of whole-hearted resistance to any surrender, as it is called, but they do not understand a policy of semi-surrender. They understand what is called scuttling out of our Imperial responsibilities, but they do not understand this scuttling by quota.

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill), speaking over the broadcast last week, concluded his remarks by saying that we were "blackening the face of Britain with an indelible stain." I do not think the people of England understand such a condemnation, but the right hon. Gentleman is doing some of the blackening himself in the great Provinces of India. Speaking some time ago, he described the other nations of the world as "looking on in astonishment while we were engaged in this hideous act of self-mutilation." I

[Mr. Foot.]

submit that the astonishment of the world is not likely to be less when they see that he is himself taking part in this dreadful operation. The hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) spoke last week, and dealt with the fiscal part of this question. He spoke scornfully of Swaraj which in one of its aspects is only economic nationalism. If, however, the ideal of economic nationalism has spread in India, who is responsible? The Indian, looking through the world, sees other countries adopting this policy of economic restriction and nationalism, and I think he is entitled to say to the hon. and gallant Member, who plays so great a part in this controversy and who is a protagonist in this matter, "If your policy is good for you, it is good for me; if it is bad,

'the villainy you teach me I will execute; and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.' "

As a matter of fact, when the hon. and gallant Gentleman spoke to us the other night of the surprising blessings of Free Trade——

Brigadier-General Sir HENRY CROFT: Within the Empire.

Mr. FOOT: —and also the burdensome effect of import duties on the people of India, I thought he was a Daniel come to judgment. His appeal for help to the Liberals was rather in contrast to his scornful reference in his Manchester speech a short time ago. The hon. and gallant Gentleman will perhaps remember the speech in which he spoke of "the disease of democracy" and asked the people of Lancashire:

"Are you going to allow a hotch-potch of Socialists, Liberals and Nationals at Westminster to administer the *coup de grace* to your remaining export market and shatter your final hopes of recovery?"

Last week he did not call us a hotch-potch.

We heard last week, as we have heard all through this Debate, about the burning passion for the masses of India, about our high Imperial mission and our dread responsibility that we have to discharge; and in the midst of it we have all this talk about protecting our trade. There has been nothing like it since Shylock went through the streets of Venice crying:

"My daughter!—O my ducats!—O my daughter!
Fled with a Christian?—O my Christian ducats!
Justice! The Law! My ducats, and my daughter!"

In the same speech he made a statement which, coming from an Imperialist, is the most remarkable declaration I have ever heard. I will remind the hon. and gallant Gentleman of his actual words. He turned upon the Ministers and suggested that they should do something better to earn their salaries. He said that in the Debates here and in the country nothing had been said about British interests, and he added:

"It is just as important for this House to look after British interests as it is to consider the few vocal agitators in India. It is the prime duty of Ministers, it is why they hold office and why they receive their, I admit, inadequate, salaries—to look after British interests."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 7th February, 1935; col. 1380, Vol. 297.]

I should have thought that every Member of this House was a Member for India. If we are not, what representatives has India got at all? If the Secretary of State for India was concerned primarily in answering that appeal, does not the hon. and gallant Gentleman see that it is the strongest of all arguments to put in the hands of Congress?

Sir H. CROFT: My whole case was that hitherto we had only been considering in this House Indian interests, and that surely British interests deserved more care. They were not even mentioned in the Prime Minister's speech.

Mr. FOOT: I am willing to accept any qualifications, but we must take the words as the hon. and gallant Gentleman said them. At that time he was speaking of British interests as distinct from Indian interests. If that is the construction which he places upon the responsibility of this House, I disagree with him.

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping, if I may turn in that direction, is having some trouble in his own division in relation to this Bill. I only refer to it in order to show what sort of Government will have to deal with this question of India, judging from his reply to his constituency, if the present Government goes out, as it would if his Amendment were carried. I want to read to the House his conception of a National Government. It is one in which Conservatism must be predominant:

"The Conservative party before the next appeal is made to the electorate must recover its pre-eminence and cohesion. . . . For such a truly national and Imperial policy we should welcome the aid of able and patriotic men whatever their party labels may have been, but we should not injure the cause or derogate from the theme to gain weak and encumbering allies, nor must the Conservative party be made the agent of policies against which its traditions protest and its instincts revolt."

It is to be a National Government in which everyone will be expected to make a sacrifice but the right hon. Gentleman. It is to be a National Government in which there is to be another coupon, a National Government to deal with this Bill in which no one will be able to get returned, if the right hon. Gentleman can help it, unless there is another coupon election. We have had two coupon elections in the history of this country, one in Cromwell's Protectorate Parliament of 1656, and the other in 1918. Now apparently, if the right hon. Gentleman is able to have his way, and have this Bill dealt with by a reconstructed National Government, we shall all have to go in at the strait gate with a certificate of ability and patriotism signed, no doubt, by Winston and counter-signed by Randolph.

The right hon. Gentleman knows that the root of this difficulty is responsibility. He is going to speak, and I want to put a direct question to him. Does he contemplate any permanent institution where responsibility is not given to the Minister? Can there be any permanence in a political institution where you have an irresponsible opposition face to face with an irremovable Executive? That is a question to which I would like him to address himself, because I was brought up in my early days on a book published by the right hon. Gentleman. When I was a young man in politics I gained great inspiration from a book of the right hon. Gentleman's speeches called. "Liberalism and the Social Problem," in which he gave us his view of responsibility. He was dealing with the South African question, and I would like to tell the House what the right hon. Gentleman said in this House upon this very question of responsibility:

"The system of representative Government without responsible Ministers, without responsible powers, has led to endless friction and inconvenience wherever and whenever it has been employed. It has failed in Canada, it has failed in Natal and Cape Colony. It has been condemned by almost every high Colonial authority who has studed this question. . . . Lord Durham, in his celebrated report, says of this particular system, 'It is difficult to understand how any English Statesman could have imagined that representative government and irresponsible government could be successfully combined?'"

How does the right hon. Gentleman hope now to combine these two elements? On that question he has never addressed us. I regard the right hon. Gentleman as being the tragedy of modern politics. The other day he went to a Conservative meeting and put this question: "Will this Bill make a better Government for the Indian people?" That is a question which he could never have put in his earlier days. It is not a question of better government, but of self-government. We shall find no better words than those of Mr. Bonar Law in the House in 1917, when he said:

"I think that very often a bad form of government, if it is with the consent of the people governed, will work infinitely better than a much better system without that consent and good will."

The right hon. Gentleman broadcast the other day, and he told the people of this country that he had been waiting for four years to tell them his advice upon India. I thought when I heard his speech that it was a pity he had broken his silence. He took that opportunity, when 20 minutes were very precious and there was a great deal to be said, to insult people who could not answer for themselves. He spoke of

"the political agitators and highbrows of India,"

and he said,

"and then they tell us that the relations of Great Britain and India are not a matter for the working-classes or for the ordinary elector."

Whoever said they were? He went on:

"Oh, no, they say, all these lofty matters have to be settled by a lot of swells backscratching each other and log rolling at Westminster and Whitehall."

Is that a fair statement of the case to put before the people of this country? The right hon. Gentleman spoke of abdication and repudiation of duty, and then said that we had erected

"a monstrous monument of shame built by the pygmies."

Mr. CHURCHILL: Not "shame," but "sham."

Mr. FOOT: I was quoting from the "Listener."

Mr. CHURCHILL: I am quoting from the speaker.

Mr. FOOT: If it is wrongly reported, I accept the right hon. Gentleman's correction. He speaks, then, of

"a monstrous monument of sham built by the pygmies,"

but the giant also has his responsibilities. The work had to be done by somebody, and if the giant stands aloof the pygmies must do their best. I suggest further that the right hon. Gentleman should go back to the famous simile of Sydney Smith about Mrs. Partington beating back the waters of the Atlantic with a broom. He is not likely to succeed any better with the Pacific.

I would like now to turn to the most important part of the opposition, namely, the Indian Opposition. The strongest part of the case for the opponents is the Indian Opposition, and certainly they are making the most of it. A sudden interest has developed in the proceedings of the Indian Assembly. I have never heard the opponents of this Bill attach so much importance to the Indian Assembly. Last week a telegram was received giving the results of the vote on a resolution in that Assembly, and it was passed round the benches here as though it had been the result of Wavertree. We have had references by almost every speaker to Mr. Sastri. I think he would be embarrassed by the amount of attention he has received. His credentials have been set out at great length. One speaker after another who probably never knew before that there was a National Liberal Federation in India has been quoting the resolutions of that federation with as much reverence as if they were the oracles of the sacred law.

I fully agree that it is highly proper that we should attach the fullest importance to Indian opinion. I was challenged the other evening by the hon. and gallant Member for South-East Leeds (Major Milner) as to something I said in a broadcast address about co-operation and consent and the hon. Member for South Kensington (Sir W. Davison) quoted what was said in the White Paper as to consent being the basis of these proposals, and said he presumed that such agreement was assumed by the Joint Select Committee in their Report. That is perfectly true. Unless there is ultimately consent this Constitution cannot succeed. No constitution can work itself. A very keen observer of our English life, Joseph Conrad, said that "No Act of Parliament has got any common sense of its own, but only such common sense as was put into it—and that is precious little sometimes." That was his comment on our law. We have to assume, in granting this Constitution to India, first that we are going to have governors who are not dictators, governors who are not on the look out for opportunities of intervention, and that the Ministers who come in to shoulder responsibility will honestly seek to discharge that responsibility and are not there to wreck the machine. If, on the one hand, there are incompetent governors, or governors anxious to interfere where they should not, and, on the other hand, Ministers who are not prepared to undertake their proper responsibilities, a constitution prepared by archangels could not succeed, and the right hon. Gentleman is quite right in starting with that assumption. We have to assume that there is a measure of consent.

I quite agree as to the importance of the protests being made, and I will not dwell upon them, except to say that to a large extent it has been a protest against the absence of the words "Dominion status. [*Interruption.*] I have had a similar opportunity to the hon. Member of consulting the Indian papers, and have been as much in touch with the Indian people as himself, and I know that the first emphasis is laid on the absence of the words "Dominion status." I wish now, in the light of what has happened, that those words could have been used in the report of the Joint Select Committee. I think it is a pity that our not using those words, as we might have done, should have occasioned this opposition. Secondly, there is the emphasis on the safeguards, on which unfortunately I cannot stop to speak. Thirdly, there is the criticism as to indirect election. I had the opportunity, in the Debate a few weeks ago, of dealing with the question of indirect election, and everything I have seen coming from India since has borne out and confirmed what I then submitted to the House.

There is very great concern over the question of indirect election. One may turn to the resolutions of the National Liberal Federation, to the letters sent by all those who can speak for Indian opinion, or, what is more important, to what was said recently by the Viceroy. In an address to the Indian Assembly at Delhi only a week or two ago he referred again to indirect election, and said that the Government of India, and he himself as Viceroy, although they recognised how cogent were the arguments in favour of indirect election, still stood for direct election; and there are some people in India, as far as one can read Indian opinion, who have made the strongest possible protest against that port of our proposals which would take away from the Indian people a right which they have enjoyed for the last 14 years.

I hope that the right hon. Gentleman the Lord President of the Council, who throughout these proceedings has treated us with the fullest possible candour, will let us know before this question comes up in the Committee stage of the Bill what is the fully considered opinion of the Government of India. He will remember that the Statutory Commission which went to India reported in favour of the indirect system, that the Government of India considered that report and then stated why they still held by the principle of the direct vote. That comment was of the greatest value in guiding the people of this country. We are not ourselves in the best position to judge.

I suggest that before this question comes up for the consideration of this House, a question which, some Indians say, affects the life of their country, there will be a very full statement, at least as full as is necessary, to show what is the mind of the Government of India, and the Governments of the several Provinces, upon a matter which is to them of such deep concern. I would make this further representation, that I hope so important a matter will not have to be dealt with in the course of an hour or two. I do not know how much time will be set aside for the discussion of the Bill, but when we consider that the question of our own franchise has occupied the attention of this House through the past century, and how it has affected the making and the unmaking of Governments, I suggest that a matter which affects the franchise of one-fifth of the people living upon this planet, and one upon which they feel very deeply, is one upon which we should have the fullest opportunities for deliberation before coming to a decision. I cannot imagine that three or four days would be too long.

As far as I have been able to ascertain the Indian view, I think the main objection to these proposals is that they are made by us and not made by India. I really believe that if the Bill had been the most perfect Measure, drawn up by the wisest people imaginable, it would yet be condemned because it was not drawn up by Indians themselves. It is a question of sentiment; in the end all our relations with India depend upon sentiment. My view is that the future of this country in relation to India does not depend upon any Act of Parliament or the wording of any Statute but on how far we can convince the people of India that we are their friends, how far we can convince them that we are not out for domination but for an honourable partnership.

Sir W. DAVISON: What is the evidence for that?

Mr. FOOT: As to the evidence, I am quite sure that the policy which is supported by the hon. Member would at once turn many who at present are our friends into our enemies. He holds his view as sincerely as I hold mine, but, according to my reading of the situation, we have in India a great many friends and a great many enemies. No one can say how many enemies there are or how many friends, there is no statistician who can give those particulars, but everything depends upon whether we, by what we say in this House and by what we do in our Bills, can keep the friends we have and turn some who are now our enemies into our friends. It all depends upon that. The damage that would be done if we tried to treat the Indians as being inferior to ourselves is incalculable. The damage that was done when Mr. Nehru, now one of the most prominent men in India, came to this country some years ago with his wife and daughter and had to try more than a dozen hotels before he could get accommodation——

Mr. DORAN: It happens to-day.

Mr. FOOT: That left the most unhappy impression in India. What happened in

[Mr. Foot.]

this country last week will be reprehended by every Member of this House. It is such things as that which count in India. We have to do what we can to keep our friends.

I would like before I close to refer to what has happened since the last Debate. I suggested then that in India they had great need of us but that also we had need of India. Members of the House will appreciate that that argument has been greatly enforced by what has happened since. General Smuts, when he spoke in this country on 13th November, referred to conditions in the Far East. He spoke of the possibility of notice being given for the denunciation of the Washington Treaties and said there was a cloud in the Far East that at present was no bigger than a man's hand. That cloud has begun to overspread the horizon, and every thinking Briton sees the necessity, I should imagine, of three things, especially when we consider the conditions in the Far East. First of all, if trouble is to arise in Asia, there is the greater necessity for Europe to put her house in order. Secondly, there is the necessity, the overwhelming necessity, for a frank, complete and absolute understanding with the United States of America. Thirdly, there is the necessity, and this is not less important than the others, that we should be friends with India—that we should retain our friendship with India. It would make all the difference if we could turn some who are opposed to us there into our friends. That may indeed be the deciding element in that great struggle. It is a big business upon which we are engaged.

The Debate we have had is one that has done honour to this House, because despite the sharp cleavage of opinion there has been great appreciation of the opinion of others. We are face to face with the greatest thing this country has ever tried to undertake. Here is something that is going to tax to the full the resources of what has been called man's unconquerable mind. Further, if this thing can be done in our generation it will not be the work of this generation alone. We are reminded of that as we come through Westminster Hall and through St. Stephen's Chapel. It will not be the work of this generation at all; and if following upon those many years, following upon the sacrifices made in India, following upon the work which gives distinction to our history as regards the relations of this country with India, we can do this thing in our generation, it will prove again the truth of what was said by a very wise man, "The State is a partnership not only between those who are living. It is a partnership between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born."

6.13 p.m.

Mr. CHURCHILL: I am very glad to feel, from what I have heard, that our differences on this Bill, which are serious, are not likely to be aggravated by any differences about the time to be allotted to its discussion. I understand that my right hon. Friend the Lord President of the Council will possibly give us some information upon this matter when he speaks to-night. I can assure him that those of us who are the Conservative opponents of this Measure do not wish to resist it by dilatory methods. We rest our hopes upon argument and upon reason. Personally, I have always felt that every Government, any Government, has a right to pass the main and major Bill of the Session in that Session, and if a fair, reasonable time is allotted for this Bill, which is one of great length, and in which many points of view are involved, I say on behalf of all my friends, that we will co-operate with the Government and with the other parties in order that the different stages of the Bill may be properly and adequately discussed over the whole area of the Bill, and that the Debates may be brought to a conclusion at a convenient point. We will do our very best to help and assist the Government in every way.

Surely it would be a very great credit to the House and to the Government, and especially to my right hon. Gentleman the Patronage Secretary, if a Bill of this extraordinary size and intricacy were to pass through Parliament, when feelings run so high about it, without there being the necessity of any formal Guillotine Resolution or without the necessity even of applying the Closure at any point. That, I believe, is not beyond our power to achieve, and if so, it will greatly enhance the procedure of this House and get us back to the period before our procedure was mutilated during the latter part of the nineteenth

century. There is one advantage which will come from this to which I may, perhaps, refer. We are now at the beginning of these long debates on India. How shall we come out? How shall those of us, on this side of the House at any rate, who are political friends and in many cases personal friends, emerge from this long, rigorous controversy? No one can tell. This I will say, that if the minority can feel that the issue has been fairly tried, that they have had every opportunity which reason can afford for stating their case and for putting the really searching and questionable points in the case to debate; if they feel that they have done their best, then at any rate, they can feel that they are guiltless of any evil consequences that may result, and if anything could remove a lasting bitterness it would be that this matter has been thrashed out thoroughly in the House of Commons.

Of course, the grave new fact which is now before us is the declaration of the Secretary of State the other day reaffirming Lord Irwin's statement of October, 1929, about Dominion Status. My right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney-General said in the course of his speech that the Viceroy had the express authority of the Government of that day behind him in 1929; there is much more in it than that. Our memories are very short, and I must ask a few minutes attention from the House to remind hon. Members of what really happened in 1929. The Statutory Commission were completing their report, and everyone was waiting with the very greatest respect and expectancy. Suddenly, Lord Irwin, as he then was, made this declaration. This phrase "Dominion Status" had been very loosely and unwisely used—by me, among others, certainly—in the years immediately after the War, that is, about 15 years ago, but time had passed by 1929, and in the interval it was felt among people in many quarters, and in Parliament, that so vague and indefinite a phrase ought not to play a part in the revision of the Indian Constitution. It was thought then especially wrong that such a phrase should be revived in the most solemn manner by the Viceroy, and on the eve when Parliament was expecting the report of its Statutory Commission.

We were told on Friday by the hon. Member for Broxstowe (Mr. Cocks), and I have no doubt that it is a perfectly valid explanation, that Lord Irwin's object was to create a favourable atmosphere for the publication of the report; but what this statement did was to overbid and to destroy the report of the Statutory Commission. It cut the ground from under their feet. The report was superseded before it was presented, and never since has it been thought worth while to bring this immense, invaluable and incomparable document to the formal consideration of the House of Commons. There was an immediate general protest at this statement. The indignation was intensified when it was found that the Statutory Commission—I hardly dare call it the Simon Commission any more—had themselves disapproved of this most improper departure.

Let me recall to the House the names of those who disapproved: Lord Reading, my right hon. Friend the Member for Carnarvon Boroughs (Mr. Lloyd George), my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Sir A. Chamberlain), and, of course, Lord Birkenhead. All these authorities upon the subject, leading men, disapproved in the strongest terms. My right hon. Friend the Lord President of the Council stood in a somewhat different position. He had been overtaken while on his holiday at Bourges by an emissary of the then Prime Minister—the present Prime Minister—and, in the belief that the Simon Commission—the Statutory Commission—favoured this declaration, he gave a conditional assent to it. The other day I saw in a newspaper: "Trial of the Tory rebels." What happened on this occasion was something very like the trial of the Tory commander-in-chief. I was not a member of the court. I was returning on the high seas, and when I arrived I acted, if I acted as anything, in the capacity of prisoner's friend. I hope my right hon. Friend will bear that in mind should the occasion arise. The right hon. Gentleman found it necessary to make a personal explanation to the House about it in which he said, about this declaration which the Attorney-General wishes us to suppose was almost taken for granted, and which had the full authority of the day, and so on:

"I pledged myself alone, and that only conditionally upon the assent to the proposed publication being obtained from the Simon Commission. In this matter my colleagues

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and I acted in full agreement."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 7th November, 1929; col. 1305, Vol. 231.]

This account is given by the then Secretary of State, Mr. Wedgwood Benn, speaking in this House on 7th November, 1929:

"Lord Reading made it perfectly plain from the beginning that he objected to this declaration. . . In the second place, we learned that the Statutory Commission did not wish to be associated with the issue of any declaration, and, finally, the right hon. Gentleman, the Leader of the Opposition, and his colleagues, ex-Secretaries of State for India and others, dissented most strongly from the course which the Government proposed to take. Therefore, we had first, Lord Reading from September onwards objecting; then the commission not wishing to join in, and then the right hon. Gentleman opposite, on behalf of the Opposition"—

that is, my right hon. Friend the Lord President of the Council—

"making the most strenuous objection. That was the situation which faced the [Socialist] Government in October. They wished to do this thing and they were faced with this powerful opposition. . . . The Liberals were against it, the Conservatives were against it, and the commission were unwilling to participate. What did the Government do? They governed."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 7th November, 1929; cols. 1325-6, Vol. 231.]

How we laughed; but he laughs best who laughs last. Confronted as we are with the situation in which we now stand, I will say that the then Secretary of State has made good his boast. The strange occult influences of Socialists, wherever they may sit, the power of those ideas to which no resistance is made, *have compelled us—have induced*, permeated and pervaded this Parliament, with its gigantic Conservative majority—to do what in those days was scouted by everyone except those in the minority Government of the Socialist party. I agree that the great opposition has disappeared. I do not see my right hon. Friend the Member for Carnarvon Boroughs; he seems to have lost interest in this all-important matter, in which he has played so great a part. Lord Reading——

HON. MEMBERS: Where is the Prime Minister?

Mr. CHURCHILL: The Prime Minister has carried his point, certainly. He is the only one who has. Lord Reading, released from the guidance of Carnarvon, rapidly slid over to the opposite pole and developed his own point of view. My right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham was, as he says, converted; the Foreign Secretary, of course, then quivering with indignation, has been what has been called, in American parlance, taken care of. So we find that this Declaration which was condemned then by the leading authorities, is now exhumed, resuscitated, and foisted upon the House of Commons, and that the House of Commons is expected to swallow it without further question.

What I ask, and what I think we should consider is, what has happened since 1929 to induce this change of view? The first thing that happened is this: The Statutory Commission have published their report and it was found that they unanimously concurred in omitting any mention of Dominion status from their report. I think that was a rebuke, in a way, to the persons who, like myself, in the atmosphere after the War, when these matters had not become closely debated and hammered out as counters of discussion, used such language. I accept the rebuke. I think it is right that people should be reproached for language that they have used 10 or 15 years ago in different circumstances if that should be found subsequently not to conduce to the interests of the country. What is the second fact? The Joint Select Committee, the body in which we are told such immense authority resides—the Government seem to ride through all difficulties on the back of the Joint Select Committee—deliberately omitted mention of Dominion status. Deliberately; it was not accidental. I cannot believe that it was accidental. They are no longer in existence; I wonder what that committee would have said if by a vote they had been asked to express their approval of the insertion of that statement in the speech of the Secretary of State last week. That the omission was not accidental cannot be disputed.

I was reading in the public print a few days ago a speech by the Archbishop of Canterbury in which he said:

"I think it is time that we got rid of such a misleading phrase as 'Dominion status.' It has proved capable of infinite misunderstanding both in this country and in India. No one knows whether it means constitution or position. If it is to mean

constitution, is it conceivable, considering the circumstances of India, and the necessary relations with the Imperial Parliament which these circumstances involve, that in any time which any of us can contemplate, India should have a constitution identical with those which have been achieved in countries so entirely different as South Africa, Australia, or Canada? Therefore, it is no use thinking that there can ever be a constitution in India identical with the Constitutions of those Dominions."

I was delighted to read those sagacious words of the Archbishop of Canterbury, because they are, as the hon. Member for Caerphilly will probably recollect, almost an exact replica of the explanation which I myself gave in this House, 3½ years ago, of my own previous unfortunate utterances on the subject. We have, therefore, the Statutory Commission deliberately abstaining; we have the Joint Select Committee, four years afterwards, deliberately abstaining; and yet now the Government ask us to re-incorporate with the utmost formality this deliberately avoided phrase in the policy for which we are asked to vote to-night.

There is a third event which has occurred since 1929, since the Irwin Declaration. It is the Statute of Westminster. Whatever reprehension may have been attached to the use of such a loose phrase as "Dominion status" before the Statute of Westminster, surely that is slight compared with the censure which should fall upon those who use it now that we have seen the Act of Westminster in all its repellent legalism. Before the Statute of Westminster, the relations of the various Dominions to one another and to the Mother Country were largely undefined; but now we have a written Constitution, or what is very largely a written Constitution.

My hon. Friend the Member for Springburn (Mr. Emmott) asked the Attorney-General a number of pointed questions at the beginning of our Debate this afternoon. The Attorney-General bore them with a stolid face and with his usual composure. But when he came to approach the point in his speech where he should give some answer to them, I thought his discomfiture and agitation and obscurity were painful to witness. My right hon. and learned Friend, who, of all men, can make things clear, was found to be also the man above all others who could enwrap and envelop them in the thickest of fogs. I think we must try to get a little clarification of the position from the right hon. Gentleman. There was one thing that he said in response to an interruption of mine. He said, as I gathered, that it was no use asking what were the differences between Dominion status in 1917 and in 1935, or something to that effect. I said, "Which is it that you are doing now? What is the meaning of your solemn promise? You have made a solemn promise; you tell us how solemn it is; you are forcing us to endorse it. Will you tell us whether it means that the Statute of Westminster applies to Dominion status when it is mentioned by the Secretary of State, or whether it does not?" That is a fair question, and it ought to be possible to give an answer to it.

My right hon. and learned Friend did give an answer—a very characteristic answer. I will not say it was characteristic of him; that would be discourteous; but it was characteristic of the method which is now in vogue in this matter. When I asked him, "Which is it—pre-Statute of Westminster or post-Statute of Westminster, 1917 or 1935?" he said, "Both before and after." That is very good. For his faithful followers it is all right, it is before the Statute of Westminster; for Indian consumption it is after the Statute of Westminster. That is a very dangerous method to apply, and one which, as I shall show, is frequently being resorted to, in the course of the Debates on this Indian matter, by His Majesty's Ministers. But there is no doubt whatever as to what the answer means. The Statute of Westminster does opply and does govern this Declaration, and is meant to govern it. It may be that the right of secession is not implicit in the Statute of Westminster; that is another matter; but the promise made was intended and meant to carry the force of the Statute of Westminster. The ultimate Dominion status which India is to achieve will be Dominion status as defined by the Statute of Westminster. You say it is not defined—I beg pardon—as expressed, as exemplified, as embodied in the Statute of Westminster. That is what it means. This shows the way in which we are treated. Three-and-a-half years ago, when I raised this matter first and when we had the first White Paper, with the Prime Minister's valedictory address to the delegates of the Round Table Conference—when that was before

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us, and the Government demanded approval for the White Paper, which was the forerunner of the policy which is now being carried out, I put it to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, did it or did it not carry with it the implication of the Statute of Westminster which we had just passed? He said:

"The Statute of Westminster has no more to do with the statement of Government policy than the man in the moon."

Let the House consider, and let the country consider—because they are going to take an interest in this matter—how we are being edged, and shoved, and wheedled, and drawn ever nearer and nearer to a position to which, if it had been frankly, boldly and fairly placed before the Conservative party, they at least would never have committed themselves.

No wonder, with this guilty record, they did not dare to put it in the Bill. There, again, is another instance of this equivocation which, I am sure, is the worst way of dealing with India. It is not in the Bill, so that it can be said, "Well, it has no statutory effect." That is a re-assurance to the followers of the right hon. Gentleman. On the other hand, the language used by the Attorney-General, the language used by himself, this solemn Declaration, this deliberate, considered statement on behalf of the Government and so forth, is meant to have its advantage over there in India. Nothing can be worse than this. Let your yea be yea and your nay be nay in dealing with Asia and with the Indians. They may dislike what you say, but they will respect it. But the kind of very nice balancings and dodgings which I see too often in this matter are calculated, not merely to win their dislike, but to excite their contempt.

It is, I think, most important in these Debates that we should try as far as possible to answer each other's arguments. I used a lot of arguments when we last discussed this subject, but no attempt, as far as I can see, has ever been made by the Government to answer any of them. They make their own speeches from their own point of view. We shall never get to grips with this matter unless we really try to face up to the awkward points and posers which are put to us from the other side of the argument. I will try to deal with a few. The first important point to deal with is one which has been put by the Secretary of State, and implied in his answer to an interruption of mine about our complaint of the omission of any care for the welfare of the masses of India in all this great Bill and in all these reports and commissions. If I rightly interpret my right hon. Friend—and I am trying to do so—this was the position: We complained that the welfare of the Indian masses is virtually ignored in all these reports—their agriculture, their education, their hospitals, their water, their forests, their labour standards, their social services. The Imperial Power divests itself of interest in and control over all these matters, grasps solely what is essential to its own self-interest, and, with a shrug of its shoulders, leaves this enormous peasant proletariat to take their chance in the inexperienced hands of whatever may be the dominant party in the different Provinces or in the Central Legislature.

That is our complaint. What is the answer of my right hon. Friend? If I may give what I conceive to be his answer—he will correct me if I am mis-stating it, but I am really his advocate for these few moments—he says: "The Act of 1919 transferred the bulk of the services; as for the rest, you and your friends are willing to support Provincial Autonomy, which covers the rest and governs the future. What right, then," he says, "have you to accuse us of being indifferent to the welfare of these masses, when you are equally committed to leaving them to shift for themselves?" I do not know whether that does justice to his point of view, but I certainly felt that it was an argument which we had to meet. What is our answer? We have an answer; it is this: The first 10 years of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms showed a marked deterioration in the transferred social services—such a marked deterioration that we cannot allow this process to continue unchecked. Now that we are extending a far fuller measure of Home Rule to the Provinces, we must make a new provision to secure reasonable and decent efficiency. We are handing over services of immense consequence, for instance, irrigation and the forests—irrigation, that highly artificial system upon which a quarter of the food of India depends; and the forests, the cutting down of which would affect the humidity, and also the springs and the whole drainage and canal system on which great

Provinces and communities exist in what would otherwise be blistering desert. These are handed over, in contradiction, I gather, of the whole advice of the Simon Commission—I have their report here. I cannot find an absolute positive veto, but the whole page which I have here deprecates this course in the strongest manner.

It seems to me that there is only one way for us to preserve this control, and that is by the system which was mocked at by the hon. Member for Caerphilly in a personal sense, but not in a Parliamentary sense. It can only be done by a portion of the money available for the Provincial Governments being meted out to them from the Central Government under some system and with an inspectorate similar to that to which we are accustomed here in regard to education and other matters, which will ensure that there is not a grave administrative breakdown or a serious decline in the Provinces. That is our answer, and it is the only safeguard against progressive deterioration. Moreover, it is the Government's only defence against the charge that they have abrogated their present responsibilities to the people of India, and that they are not caring any more what happens to these poor people. We shall place upon the Paper a series of Amendments to give effect to this method and system, which, I firmly believe, we are bound in duty to do if we are to proceed even with the Provincial sections of this Bill.

The hon. Member for North Bristol (Mr. Bernays) put a series of questions to us on Friday, one of which was: "Do you or do you not believe in democracy?" That is a fairly large question. We all remember the gentleman who, on being shown an elephant for the first time, said he did not believe it; and there was the lady who wrote a metaphysical treatise, whose name, unfortunately, escapes me. Perhaps my right hon. Friend the Lord President, whose various and numerous excursions into literature adorn the culture of our political life, will be able to supply the missing name. This lady began her treatise with the words: "I accept the Universe." And, as we all know, Mr. Carlyle made the celebrated comment: "Gad, she'd better." That is rather like my feeling about democracy. I accept it. But I am a good deal more doubtful whether democracy believes in Parliamentary institutions. There was a very fine article, which greatly impressed me, written by the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Hitchin (Sir A. Wilson) reminding us of the utter failure of all the Parliaments that have ever been set up in the East. We have only to look across the Channel in Europe to see how democracy tends in its present manifestation to be injurious to the Parliamentary system and to the personal liberties which are dear to the Liberal heart. I should like to ask the hon. Member, does he call this Bill democracy? Is the communal franchise democracy? Is caste reconcilable with democracy? Is the idea of 60,000,000 untouchables reconcilable with any sort of democratic system? The foundation of the democratic idea is that one man is as good as another, or better. Are the second chambers in this Bill democracy? Is it democracy to have indirect election—four or five men in a room, we were told, choosing the delegates of a great Province? The hon. Member takes us to task as to whether we believe in it. I ask him the kind of democracy he is voting for. Is it democracy to spatchcock into the midst of your central elected chamber one-third of the representation of the stewards and bailiffs of the hereditary Princes, who are autocrats? The hon. Member had really better go to the Liberal Summer School without delay and brush up his fundamentals, or else he will run a very grave risk of forfeiting his deposit.

It is fashionable, wherever the influence of the Government extends, for prominent Conservatives and high officials to take a needlessly poor view of our rights and our position in India. I was sorry to read of a high military officer in India speaking of us as aliens. The Joint Select Committee repeatedly stigmatised our rule in India as irresponsible. The Lord President made a reference to the Indians having an increasing preference for putting their confidence in men of their own race and language. To-day the high water mark is reached by the Attorney-General, who, on being challenged by me, exulted that the influence of the British district officer was now no longer so paramount as it used to be. I am very sorry to hear of this downcry of our national credit. None of it is true. All of it is utterly untrue. We are no more aliens in India than the

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Mohammedans or the Hindus themselves. We have as good a right to be in India as anyone there except, perhaps, the Depressed Classes, who are the original stock. Our Government is not an irresponsible Government. It is a Government responsible to the Crown and to Parliament. It is incomparably the best Government that India has ever seen or ever will see. It is not true to say that the Indians, whatever their creed, would not rather have their affairs dealt with in many cases by British courts and British officers than by their own people, especially their own people of the opposite religion. Any Hindu would prefer to have his case dealt with by a British officer than by a Mohammedan, and vice versa. I have been told that there are frequent instances, and modern instances, of peasants who have a quarrel in a village and both parties walking 40, 50 or 60 miles to find a British district officer who can adjust the trouble between them. Talking about going to people of your own race and language and so forth, when Mr. Gandhi had his appendix removed he was very careful to insist upon a British surgeon. Instances like this could be multiplied indefinitely and it is wrong, indeed it is heartbreaking to find the great name of Britain in India so wantonly and improvidently depreciated by the very functionaries whose prime duty it should be to defend them.

A similar mood of disparagement affects the defence of our commercial rights with India. I always pay great attention to what my Noble Friend the Member for Horsham (Earl Winterton) says of India. The line that he has taken upon it is remarkable. As the old song says, his propensities are all the other way. He asked me whether we who constitute the Conservative Opposition adhere to the so-called Fiscal Convention of 1919. I do. But I place a very different interpretation on it from that of the Government spokesmen. The Fiscal Convention of 1919 is not a convention in the sense of being a treaty. It is a unilateral declaration of policy. It does not confer fiscal autonomy upon India or upon the Government of India. It does not transfer British sovereignty to an independent external body. The Government of India is not an independent body. It is a projection, to a very large extent, of the Government of Great Britain. It is open to the Secretary of State to address and, if necessary, to instruct the Viceroy, and through him the Government of India. The closest consultation in practice—the weekly letter—prevails, or ought to prevail. Many representations in my own reollection have been made by Secretaries of State to Viceroys in regard to tariffs affecting different branches of British trade. The Crown appoints the Viceroy, the Crown appoints the Finance Member of the Viceroy's Council, the Crown appoints the important functionaries who compose the Government of India, and in the ultimate issue these functionaries can be recalled by the authority of the Crown and others appointed in their stead whose views are in harmony with those of Parliament. Of course, it might not be right or expedient to do that. That would entirely depend on the circumstances of the case and the time, but to say that we have transferred fiscal sovereignty, that India has complete fiscal autonomy, is not warranted either by the letter or by the spirit of the so-called Fiscal Convention. It has always been understood, until the last five disastrous years of these relations, that both the Viceroy and the Secretary of State owe a duty to both countries in the maintenance of healthy, fruitful, fair trading conditions. While we maintain an Army in India at a great burden of expense to this country, while we give the protection of our fleet, while we give the fruitful advantage of our trade, we are entitled on the highest grounds of justice, as well as empowered by hitherto unimpaired sovereignty, to proper and special consideration in regard to our trade.

Sir S. HOARE: Is my right hon. Friend in favour of continuing the system under which we do not interfere when the Viceroy and the Legislature agree on tariff questions, that is to say, would he impose a tariff upon India if India were unwilling to have it?

Mr. CHURCHILL: If my right hon. Friend had followed my argument he would see that it entirely covers the point. I have pointed out that, if the Viceroy and the Assembly are in accord, the Secretary of State does not interfere, but, as the Secretary of State is in special relation to the Viceroy, it is not an agreement of two external independent bodies. Do you think you could let

a point like that slip when the livelihood of millions in this country might depend on the interpretation of our rights? It may be well and wise to give way and to interpret your rights with prudence and discretion, but that our own Minister, the representative that we have in this House, should take such a very low and poor view of the valid rights and authority that we possess in this House is indeed much to be regretted. [*Interruption.*] During the last five years certainly it seems to me that duties have been raised out of all relation either to the trade between the two countries or even to the interests of the Indian revenue. The hon. Member for Caerphilly and the hon. Member for North Bristol speak of this matter as if in trade matters what becomes an advantage to one country can only be obtained to the detriment of another. That is an absolute contradiction of all Free Trade principles. One of the first maxims that I honoured, and still honour, in the Free Trade armoury is that all legitimate interests are in harmony, and that the good of one country may well be the good of another, whether within or without the Empire, and all the more stimulating and all the more beneficial if within the Empire. It is not a question of one country exploiting another, but of both deriving reciprocal benefits through the interchange of goods and services upon the largest possible scale.

Of course, we are confronted with the old choice of self-government versus good government. We are invited to believe that the worst self-government is better than the best good government. That is going too far, but I think no one would look at it in that way. It is a matter of degree. It is a matter that can only be judged in relation to the actual circumstances and conditions. Everyone is, in fact, approaching it on those lines. The modern view is not concentrated entirely on the sovereign virtues of self-government. On the contrary, there is the idea of the external aid to be given by one nation to another. How happy we should be if the United States were willing to place her fleets and armies at the disposal of the League of Nations to protect countries in Europe against an aggressor. How we should rejoice. Yet it is those very functions which we have discharged and are discharging in India that have given India its immunity from the perils, the anxieties, the disorders and the burdens which oppress the strongest and most civilised nations in Europe. That is not the principle of self-government. It is the principle of beneficial aid from an external source for a virtuous object.

This protection and security cannot be removed from India. They have grown with our growth and strengthened with our strength. They will diminish with our diminution and decay with our decay, if I may paraphrase a famous sentence. In so far as they are withdrawn and this external aid withheld, India will descend, not quite into the perils of Europe but into the squalor and anarchy of India in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It seems to me that the present infatuation of the Liberal mind, and I must say of the more intellectual part of the Socialist mind, is at this moment very serious. Their error is an undue exaltation of the principle of self-government. They set this principle above all other principles; they press it to the destruction of all other principles. Let satisfaction be given to the idea of self-government and in the end, they assure us, all will come right, and the consequences, however evil, will fade into the background. Let there be self-government and all will be well. But see the absurdity of this in application. Let me take an instance. The Bombay and Ahmedabad mill-owning millionaires, we will say, obtain a corrupt influence over the Congress Party and so exercise a dominating influence in the new Legislature; and the Legislature, under their influence, sets up a prohibitive tariff which causes widespread distress in Lancashire, which affects the Indian revenue and which horribly denies and stints the vast agricultural population of India in its legitimate needs.

In the result enormous profits are reaped by this handful of exploiters. And then what does my right hon. Friend say? That he must regard that with sombre acquiescence as an example of the less successful working of his system of self-government: But if, on the other hand, the Viceroy and the Secretary of State in close association influence the Government of India to limit the tariff to *bona fide* revenue purposes and to the degree within which the interests of the Indian consumer are adequately con-

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sidered and protected from monopoly, then that wise and prudent and righteous measure would be condemned as the shameful exploitation of one country by another. No other country in the world would consider such an argument for a moment. No other country in the world having Asiatic possessions would for a moment look at such arguments—and other countries are as intelligent in their own spheres as we are.

The French, I believe, export 50 per cent. of their whole exports to their own Colonies; and the Dutch also. None of these countries would submit to this extreme interpretation of a theoretical doctrine, pushed beyond all bounds of common sense and beyond all bounds of common humanity, either to the people of India or to the people of this country. I accept the so-called fiscal Convention with the interpretation which I put upon it. I have been at the centre of affairs for a very long time, and I know the interpretation that has been put on it for many years by people just as competent as many of those who now direct our affairs.

Mr. HAMMERSLEY *rose*——

Mr. CHURCHILL: I am afraid that I cannot give way. The hon. Member as a Lancashire Member ought to be helping. The moment you set up responsible Government at the Centre, you begin to make effective the transfer of sovereignty. Then you make the great change, and that is the moment at which, we hold, as a condition of making this transference you should obtain sure and lasting guarantees for mutually advantageous trade between the two countries. If the Federal Clauses of this Bill are persisted in by His Majesty's Government, we shall certainly endeavour to introduce such provisions into this Bill and to take the opinion of the Committee upon them. My Noble Friend the Member for Horsham set out to convict us of inconsistency and want of logic in our position. He said, if I rightly interpret him, that we did not really believe in the spread of Western democratic methods in India and yet we were willing to agree to a far-reaching scheme of Provincial Home Rule, imputing to us want of logic in that. Any concession made to the opinion of others may be turned against us in that way. But that is not a very hopeful way of approaching these long Debates, when obviously there must be a good deal of give and take on both sides. I answer that, not by logic, but by an appeal to history in this controversy.

I have always felt bound to a very large extent and in principle by the great compromise and settlement between representatives of all British parties embodied in the report of the Statutory Commission. I do not agree with it in every detail, but in the main I have felt greatly under the impression of its authority. I should have been glad if the commission had reported, in view of the lack of co-operation by Congress and other elements and in view of the deterioration of the transferred Services, that no further advance was justified at the present time. I have not the slightest doubt that that would have been the best and most sensible decision to be reached, and I have no doubt that many people in their heart of hearts, not only here but in India, would take that view. But we bowed, as often we have to bow to a practical working proposal. People ought not to underrate the work of the Statutory Commission. They condemn dyarchy in all its forms and sought to eradicate it from Indian polity. What they gave they gave fully; what they withheld they withheld firmly. They gave full Autonomy to the Provinces but maintained integral cohesion at the Centre. If the experiment in the Provinces came to grief, then it could be stopped and the powers resumed. Meanwhile, none of the grave complications attendant upon All-India Federation would have been raised. I still think that after all these five years of discussions and inquiry no advance or improvement of any sort has been made upon the report of the Statutory Commission. There has been no advance towards efficiency, no advance towards finality, and, above all, no advance towards agreement. All these protracted, tumultous confabulations which followed Lord Irwin's unfortunate Declaration in 1929—all this labyrinth through which we have been led has brought us nothing that has been good for this country or India.

We have gone further, and we have fared worse. We have gone into infinite worries, bitter quarrellings, toils unending, and ever-deepening confusion, with

sharper disagreements between friends at home and with fellow subjects in India. There has been no foothold for us to stand upon. The hon. Gentleman who spoke last argued that no one should pay attention to the opinions of anyone holding our views. It seems to me that their opinions should not be overlooked entirely. Then comes this extraordinary point. The present position of the Indian Legislature, judged by this Resolution which they carry by so large a majority of elected members, is almost identical with the recommendation of the Statutory Commission set up by us some five years ago. It is extraordinary that they recommend that Provincial Government should be proceeded with, although they do not like it in its present form, and that the Federal system should be dropped. They say:

"With respect to the scheme for central government called All-India Federation this House is clearly of opinion that it is fundamentally bad and totally unacceptable to the people of British India, and therefore recommends the Government of India to advise His Majesty's Government not to proceed with any legislation based on that scheme."

That is identical with the position disclosed in this magnificent and monumental Report of our own Statutory Commission which was prepared with so much pains and trouble by the Commission as a result of their journeys through the East. Therefore, it seems to me that if we are illogical in this matter we have good justification in the fact that the Statutory Commission and the Indian Legislature seem to be of the same opinion. Let me retort upon my Noble Friend that if we are inconsistent in going as far as the Statutory Commission, although farther than we wished to go, where is his consistency and where is the consistency of the Government of which he is the champion? They use fine language about meeting Indian aspirations, but they do not meet them. They speak all the time as if they had agreement with Indian political forces and reproach us for marring the harmony when there is the most violent disagreement.

The Government proclaim their trust in the Indian political classes—but they show their distrust by the multitude of Safeguards they have introduced. Take the question of the provisions with regard to the handing over of the police. We hear all this talk about the educative value of responsibility, and it is beautifully expressed, but what is the responsibility that will really be given to the Indian Minister of a Province in regard to this? It seems to me that it is very seriously inroaded upon. He must not interfere with the internal government of the police; he cannot appoint or dismiss the chief of the police; and he is not to know the information on which the police act, although he will have to bear the responsibility of action which may involve bloodshed. It is no good saying that one should not tell them these things for they must be well known to Indian lawyers and others who have studied the matter. Here, again, you have made the great mistake of using all kinds of language not fully justified by the act and facts for which you are responsible. The Government are floundering in the old bog of government by consent with consent not forthcoming.

But there is one matter upon which the Indian Legislature will have great power and great temptation to use its power, and that is in the matter of trade relations between the two countries. When this Trade Pact, this poor meagre Pact for the sake of which the Manchester Chamber of Commerce sacrificed its opportunity of stating its whole case before the Joint Select Committee—when this Pact was rejected the other day, some of our friends who support the Government Bill met us with a superior, but at the same time rather sickly smile and said: "This means nothing; they are not responsible; they have not yet got the healing, educative, steadying, stabilising force of responsibility operating upon them; when they have that it will be all very different." I do not know about that. If there is a man who wishes to kick you but has not the power, are you to say: "Give him the power and you may be sure you will be quite safe"? It may be true. No one cay say that it is not conceivable, but it is not at all a convincing or alluring argument.

Here our Irish experiences ought to be relevant. It ought to be relevant upon this question of the healing, educative virtues of responsibility. We gave them full responsibility and everything necessary to full autonomy. We had a solemn treaty and there you had able and resolute men who had pledged their faith

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to that treaty. But what happened? It was this. Both the Government in Ireland and the Opposition were forced to vie with one another in showing who could be the most disagreeable to England. The Government would have liked, as I know, to show us friendly feeling, but they did not dare for Opposition Members gained popularity throughout the country by showing how they could beat the Government hollow at the game of twisting the lion's tail. Because the Government were not so good at kicking England as they were the Opposition finally installed themselves in their places, broke the treaty and ruined the country. That is what happened in Ireland. Of this healing virtue of responsibility this certainly is not an encouraging example. It is not at all proof that the medicine in which you have such unbounded faith will in all cases produce immediate recovery.

You have not got, as you have in Ireland, a practical and complete autonomy. This new Parliament will be obstructive at every point. The Opposition said the other day that they would have very little to do. They could criticise the administration and attack the safeguards, and you have furnished them with a means to attack the safeguards. What is the means by which they can attack the safeguards? It is by maltreating the trade. They will have Lancashire as a hostage, they will be able to torture Lancashire, and they will be able to extract from the Government and extort from the Viceroy diminution of the safeguards. They will have that in addition to all the other mighty persuasive powers of Parliamentary procedure.

I have watched this story from its very unfolding, and what has struck me more than anything else about it has been the amazingly small number of people who have managed to carry matters to their present lamentable pitch. You could almost count them on the fingers of one hand. I have also been struck by the prodigious power which this group of individuals have been able to exert and relay, to use a mechanical term, through the vast machinery of party, of Parliament and of patronage both here and in the East. It is tragical that they should have been able to mislead the loyalties and use the assets of the Empire to its own undoing. I compliment them on their skill, and I compliment them also on their disciples. Their chorus is exceedingly well drilled. We listen to their parrot cries—"We have set our hands to the plough; we must plough the furrow to the end, even if the course is folly, and even if the end is disastrous."

We are told that something must be done. My father Lord Randolph Churchill was often credited with saying that when he heard people going about saying that something must be done, he had noticed that something very foolish was done. We are told that you cannot put the clock back. What nonsense. We put the clock back every year with highly beneficial results. Why do we put it back? That is what I want the House to notice. We put it back to place ourselves in more harmonious relation with the great facts of nature. We do not try with our little clocks and watches to run counter to nature. That would bring us into confusion or be entirely ineffectual. The error of the Government is that they are trying to put the clock forward without regard to the true march of solar events. They are trying to put it forward in the hope that the sun will alter its process because of their little dodges. So much for the argument that you cannot put back the clock.

There is one final argument that remains. I will endeavour to compress and put it as shortly as possible, but it is one that must be met. We are told that by opposing the India Bill and India policy here and in the country we are running the risk of putting the Socialist Opposition into power, and that they will pass a much worse Bill. If that doctrine is to be accepted, it means that right hon. Gentlemen opposite, whether in office or in Opposition, are always in power. It really destroys the Conservative and Liberal parties. But in actual practice the passage of this Bill as it stands will make very easy the path of a Socialist Government in carrying a solution of the India problem which not one of those who are going to vote on the Government side to-night would for a moment contemplate or tolerate. One Parliame cannot bind another, but there are nd tain practical securities. The first is the organised parties expressing nat I national and traditional view, ba each other and reacting upon a public opinion in the country—t it was a great security against foolish nk that if ous legislation. on the occa-

But there is another, and it resides in the Procedure of the House of Commons, which I am glad to know the Government themselves are respecting in this case. This Bill is a gigantic barrier against hasty or imprudent legislation. Imagine the party opposite installed on these benches having to pass through Parliament a Bill with hundreds of Clauses during their first or second Session. They would never be allowed by their followers. They would say: "Get on making the new order of society; get on with your cure for unemployment; get on with your nationalisation of the banks, and so forth; do not spend all your time on these intricate matters." A Bill of this kind is an immense deterrent with all its complications, but you are doing all this work and you are sweeping all this barrier out of the way. When this Bill is passed it will be quite an easy matter to amend it. There will not be the slightest difficulty. A dozen or 15 Clauses in a little, light paper Bill would be quite sufficient to tear away all these safeguards which are comforting so many hon. Gentlemen to-night, and which they are laying to their hearts as the grounds to justify them in what they are doing and to quiet their misgivings—the natural pricks and stings of conscience by which they are undoubtedly afflicted. Take the question of the Federal Clauses of the Bill. I have not been able to estimate how many there are. Perhaps the Secretary of State will tell us some other time. At any rate, there are hundreds of them.

Sir S. HOARE: Certainly not hundreds.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Let us say a large proportion. We will ascertain the figure later. As we stand at present, if this Bill is passed as it is, the Federal system can be brought into operation in three, four or five years, when the circumstances may be wholly different from what they are now and when, in our opinion, it would be most unwise and unnecessary to bring them into operation. But they can be brought into operation by a single vote; an Address in both Houses of Parliament. Can you expect the House of Lords, which the Lord President has so consistently refused to reform or abolish, to stand up in these circumstances against a Measure, the principle of which has been conceded, and against which the Administration in power, on which would be said to be vehemently demanded in all parts of India? No, the security against bringing into operation the Federal system at an unsatisfactory time is that the Federal system should stand over from this Parliament and be left to be brought in when the circumstances are apt and ripe for it.

I will make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman, if he will allow me to do so, an appeal which is earnest and governed by sincere respect. Will he not consider the division of this Bill into two parts and the omission of the Federal Clauses? That will enormously relieve the whole position and follow on the advice and wishes expressed by the Indian people through the only channels and organs which are open to them. Moreover, it does not in any way prevent the Government exposing their whole design. They have already exposed it in this Bill, which has passed the First Reading, and which is going to pass through Second Reading. You have unfolded your great plan of Indian Parliaments of the future, and you can put it up in the tea room for everyone to see. There is only one block which you can build now and for a good many years to come, for which you have the funds and for which you have the agreement, or measure of agreement. Put that up, and when, later on, the time comes, it will be possible to relate the other parts of the building to what has already been erected.

The Vote we are going to give to-night will be a vote against the Second Reading of this Bill. As it is put from the Chair it gives a perfectly clean, clear, simple vote against the Second Reading on the Question of whether the word "Now" and other words stand part. That Vote in no way involves the terms of the Amendment placed on the Paper by the Opposition. If we were successful in our vote against the Second Reading of this Bill, another Question would have to be put from the Chair, that their words be there inserted. There could be no question of their coming before the House if we were successful in the first Division. We should vote against the words of the Socialist Amendment in the second Division and, I trust, that we shall be assisted by any debris of His Majesty's Government who may still find it necessary to take an interest in public affairs.

This is the first time that this extended and elaborate Bill has been brought out

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to the open and exposed to the criticism of the House of Commons. I believe that it will be possible to convince the House and the country that the Federal proposals are untimely and unworkable. I believe that they could be riddled in fair and free Debate, and that if the scheme which is now being pressed forward—the whole of it, not only the Federal, but also the Provincial—were dropped by the Government it would be the cause of great relief not only throughout this country, but from one end of India to the other. We shall endeavour to conduct our opposition as far as in us lies to show the fatal faults and defects of this Bill. But we shall aim at doing more. We shall try to instil into the minds of the peoples of Britain and of India a different and a new conception of the relations between the two countries. We hope once and for all to kill the idea that the British in India are aliens moving, with many apologies, out of the country as soon as they have been able to set up any kind of governing organism to take their place. We shall try to inculcate this idea, coming now to be mentioned more and more in many quarters of the House, that we are there for ever as honoured partners with our Indian fellow subjects whom we invite in all faithfulness to join with us in the highest functions of government for their lasting benefit and for our own.

7.29 p.m.

Lord EUSTACE PERCY: In one thing, at any rate, I warmly agree with my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill), that it is our business in these Debates to answer each other's arguments, and I propose to answer his. I was very much struck on Friday by my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Battersea (Commander Marsden). He complained that he was unable to get from the Government any real appreciation of the point of view of himself and his friends, and I feel that there is a case to be answered by those who support the Second Reading of this Bill. But I am bound to say that I am not sure whether that case has been in any way very much strengthened by the speech of my right hon Friend which was supposed, I gather, to sum up the case against this Bill. Was it necessary for my right hon. Friend, in endeavouring to answer arguments, to answer so many arguments which have never been put at all, to spend so much time in talking about words and phrases like democracy, self-government and the aspirations of our Indian fellow subjects, none of which have been seriously advanced in the sense in which he referred to them by any supporter of the Bill? Was it necessary to imitate the Congress point of view and to devote so much time to the mere phrase "Dominion status"? Many of us were shocked a little immediately after the report of the Joint Select Committee when we found that, apparently, no vocal section of political opinion in India was prepared to consider the constitutional scheme, but that they ran off, trying to argue about Dominion status. My right hon. Friend has now thought it wise to do the same thing. He has found that perhaps constitutionally it is not so vulnerable as he at first thought, and he has found it convenient to raise this question about a phrase in order to create prejudice against a Bill which does not contain the phrase, against a report which does not contain the phrase, against proposals which have nothing to do with the phrase, and in relation to the Second Reading of a Bill which has nothing whatever to do with that question.

Moreover, was it necessary for my right hon. Friend to introduce that particular kind of prejudice which consisted in saying, in insinuating, in an aside almost too cursory to notice, that a small and sinister group in this country have carried out their policy by the free use of patronage? What is the use of saying things which nobody believes? I would recall to my right hon. Friend's memory a speech by my right hon. Friend the Senior Member for Oxford University (Lord H. Cecil), when he said that, really, statements in politics need not be true, but that they must have verisimilitude; that to make a charge which was obviously untrue was useless and that it was better to reserve one's breath for more profitable mendacity.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Am I to understa that my Noble Friend is applying term "mendacity" to anything t' have said?

Lord E. PERCY: I said that quotation, but I certainly th' that quotation was in order.

sion that it was made it is in order to use it in reference to the imputation which the right hon. Gentleman levelled against an anonymous group, that they had used the power of patronage to force through a policy against the good judgment of Parliament.

Mr. CHURCHILL: As I understand it, my Noble Friend is now definitely applying the word "mendacity" to me, not in the sense that I have been misled or have used an unwise or improper phrase which I cannot substantiate, or one difficult to substantiate, but an accusation of mendacity in the sense of wilfully and intentionally saying what is mendacious and untrue. That, I am sure, is not a statement that I can permit to pass without placing myself under the protection of the Chair.

Mr. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman asks me for my Ruling. If one hon. Member speaks of another in terms of that description, directly, then, of course, it is unparliamentary, and must be withdrawn.

Earl WINTERTON: On a point of Order. Is not a right hon. or hon. Member entitled to quote a phrase which was used in Debate and which went without rebuke from whoever occupied the Chair at that time? I should like an answer to that very important point.

Mr. CHURCHILL: That statement, if I recollect correctly, was used generally and without application to any particular person.

Earl WINTERTON: I desire to raise a definite point of Order. It is a very important question of principle. Is an hon. Member of this House not entitled to quote words which were used in Debate on a previous occasion by an hon. or right hon. Member about another, and went unrebuked at the time?

Mr. SPEAKER: It all depends how it was meant to apply.

Lord E. PERCY: Allow me to assure my right hon. Friend that, while I must continue to say that the actual statements he made were untrue——

Mr. CHURCHILL: You are perfectly entitled to say that.

Lord E. PERCY: Of course, I do not impute to him and I would never impute to him or to any of my hon. colleagues in this House any intention of making a charge which he did not believe himself.

Mr. CHURCHILL: I am very much obliged to my Noble Friend. The remarks that he has now made entirely satisfy me.

Lord E. PERCY: I am sorry if my right hon. Friend thought that I meant anything else. I was going on to ask whether it was necessary for my right hon. Friend to use a certain liberty in quotation. He led the House to believe, indeed, he almost stated it in terms, that the Resolution of the Assembly was a Resolution in favour of the Simon Report, in substance. Did he omit to notice the last Clause in that Resolution?

"and urges that immediate efforts should be made to consider how best to establish in British-India alone a real and complete responsible Government."

Responsible government for a British-India Federation. That is the policy of the Assembly, a policy of compromise between warring parties, but still the minimum demand of the Assembly. Is that a demand which my right hon. Friend proposes that we should meet? I am afraid that my right hon. Friend did not read his text any more closely than my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) read closely the speech of the Maharaja of Patiala, whom he quoted in such convenient terms, a speech in which the Maharaja mentioned the shirt of Nessus. "That," said my hon. and gallant Friend "does not show very much eagerness for Federation, does it?" I will not trouble the House with the full quotation, unless I am challenged, but the reference to the donning of the shirt of Nessus was a reference to those people in British India and in this country, including the supporters of what is commonly known as the Salisbury Report, who say, "We cannot have a Federation with the Indian States because the Indian State have not Parliamentary Government, and, therefore, their representatives in the Federal Assembly will not be elected representatives." They will only be, as my right hon. Friend says, in his sneering terms, "the stewards and bailiffs of the Princes." In answer to that the Maharaja said: "Do you think that we are going to put on ourselves in our Constitution the shirt of Nessus?" That is the kind of standard quotation which

[Lord E. Percy.]

is used against these proposals, and used especially by those who, in another communication to the Maharaja, were modest enough to say: "We are the best of the Conservative party." How comforting it must be to have such an opinion of oneself.

I come to two arguments which the right hon. Member for Epping put forward, points which have been reiterated by the opponents of the Bill several times. The first is the argument about the welfare of the masses. Here, my right hon. Friend obviously found it very difficult to reply to the question: "What are you proposing to do for the welfare of the masses if you propose to hand over the whole sphere of provincial government?" He says: "I propose to have the scheme which I laid before the Joint Select Committee—a complete inspectorate appointed by the Central Government and controlling the expenditure of the provincial Governments on all social services."

Mr. CHURCHILL: A portion of their expenditure.

Lord E. PERCY: I know. There is to be a grant from the Central Government, and in return for that grant there is to be control by an inspectorate over those central services, not only control over the grants made by the Central Government but over the whole services. The right hon. Gentleman said that he was going to move Amendments to that effect and that that was the policy of the group which he is leading. I wonder how many of the Members of that group knew that before the right hon. Gentleman stated it? There is only one other hon. Member of this House, so far as I know, who has said that that was his alternative solution, and that was the hon. and gallant Member for Wycombe (Sir A. Knox). He said that his alternative scheme was the right hon. Gentleman's scheme, complicated by Sir Michael O'Dwyer's scheme. No other hon. Member has ever mentioned it. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Battersea North (Commander Marsden) —I am sorry that he has left the House. —said that his alternative solution, or what he and his friends wanted to do, was this:

"My suggestion would be to restrict, if necessary, the sphere of the Minister's duties"—

He was referring to Provincial Autonomy—

"and when you have done that, to give him real responsibility, not cloaked responsibility, when every moment other people may step in and override what he is doing."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 8th February, 1935; col. 1535, Vol. 297.]

That, I gather, was the solution of my hon. Friend the Member for Chertsey (Sir A. Boyd-Carpenter). That is dyarchy. That is the whole policy of dyarchy. That is the policy which was tried in 1919, which was condemned by at least four out of eight Provincial Governments, condemned by the Statutory Commission, and condemned, I think, by everybody. It is an exact definition of dyarchy. You cannot have that complete responsibility in India unless you have a system of dyarchy.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Dyarchy means that there is a division of power, but in this system the power rests with the local bodies, the provinces, and if they wish to earn a grant they have to obtain a certain standard of efficiency.

Lord E. PERCY: The right hon. Member has misconceived my argument. I do not misunderstand what the right hon. Gentleman wants, and I am pointing out what some of his followers want. The hon. and gallant Member for North Battersea and the hon. Member for Chertsey believe in dyarchy and the hon. and gallant Member for Wycombe stated his alternative. His alternative, will it be believed, is the Salisbury Report. "Among the many faithless, faithful, only he." He is the only one who has mentioned the Salisbury Report since it was adopted by the India Defence League, and then hurriedly dropped. Now the right hon. Member for Epping has thrown further light on the matter and has said that this scheme holds the field. The most authoritative report on the scheme is that of the Statutory Commission which made an exhaustive inquiry and report on these matters. It considered the right hon. Gentleman's scheme, which was put before it with great force by its auxiliary Committee on Education.

Mr. CHURCHILL: The Joint Select Committee.

Lord E. PERCY: The Statutory Commission. I am afraid that the right hon. Gentleman has not been fully coached on this subject. What is known as the Hartshorn Committee put forward a scheme of central grants with some degree of inspection before the Statutory Commission, which considered it at great length, heard all the arguments in favour of it, and finally turned it down quite definitely. It has been turned down since by the Joint Select Committee and by the minority of the Joint Select Committee, who never mention it in their report. It has no friends at all. Why? Some hon. Members in this House speak as if the history of India began in the year 1919. There was a Government of India before that, and a social policy in India before that date. Since 1882 at least the Government of India have followed a policy of definite decentralisation of education of an extreme kind. A resolution carried in 1882 called for:

"The progressive devolution of primary, secondary and collegiate education by private enterprise and the continuous withdrawal of Government from competition therewith."

That has remained the policy. Lord Curzon attempted to establish some greater control over the Provincial Governments but failed, and everyone knows that the degree of inspectoria control which you can expect to exercise over the enormous area of India and the enormously complicated social services, especially delegated so entirely as they have been to local bodies, makes that scheme, as a method of establishing real central control, quite impracticable. No one who has known India or who has any knowledge of the history and actual conditions of India, her social services or economics, has ever looked at that scheme for a moment. They know that it is in practice impossible, and for the right hon. Gentleman to some along and try to get out of an awkward argumentative dilemma by saying that this is a brilliant scheme for ensuring the welfare of the masses of India is hardly worthy of him. But it is not only my Conservative friends who have adopted this argument about the welfare of the masses of India, but also many hon. Members who sit on the Labour benches.

I recognise the real genuine feeling that under the franchise we can give at the moment undue power will be put into the hands of the moneyed classes. I would ask my hon. Friends to consider whether in fact that has been the experience since 1919. You may say with some force that the efficiency of the service has deteriorated in the past, that the policy has not been wise and that too much money has been wasted, but you certainly cannot say that the policy of the provincial councils, elected on a far narrower franchise than that which we are proposing in the Bill, has been an illliberal policy. On the contrary. Here again I must protest against the very false impression on these matters which is conveyed too often by pamphlets about the evils of education in India. All the evils of education, from the days of Lord Macauley, are laid down in the provincial councils, which have existed only since 1919. I am addressing myself now to the question as to whether it can be said that the policy in intention has been reactionary; and I need only quote a few words from the present Educational Commissioner of the Government of India:

"The decade 1921 to 1931 was perhaps the most inspiring in the annals of Indian education."

After all an enormous amount has been done. The Hartshorn Committee, which criticised Indian education severely, said:

"We have not suggested, nor do we suggest, that the responsibilities of Ministers in the provinces should be reduced. On the contrary, we are of opinion that they have been reduced too much already by devolution to local bodies."

Anyone who will read the Educational Report will realise the tremendous attempt that has been made at educational reform, and that, after all, more has been done to consider and deal with agricultural problems, the problems of village life, in the last 10 years than for a long time before. Efficiency may have decreased, but you cannot say that the councils elected on the present franchise have been illliberal and still less need you fear such a result from the operation of the Bill. One word in conclusion about the other main argument, the most genuine argument, we have heard; the argument in regard to tariffs. The hon. Member for Middleton and Prestwich (Sir Nairn Sandeman) made a speech on Friday which impressed the House with its genuineness. He was able to reconcile his advocacy of the interests of the

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Lancashire cotton spinners and operatives with the interests our our Indian fellow subjects by making the very curious asumption that anything but a low revenue tariff on cotton goods must be to the disadvantage of the great masses of the people of India. That is not the sort of argument which if I were an Indian I should make to a committee responsible for the Indian tariff policy of this House. One of the main economic facts of Indian at this moment——

Sir NAIRNE STEWART SANDEMAN: Is it not a fact that 75 per cent. of the population in Calcutta and in the big mill towns like Bombay are lodgers, who want to get back to the land; who have only come into the towns to work for a short time, and whenever they have money saved want to get back to the land?

Lord E. PERCY: The economic view of my hon. Friend is too often influenced by a sort of vague remark about the toiling millions who are using the same primitive methods on the land which they have used for 100 years. Yes, quite so; but they are not the same toiling millions. There are a great many more of them. In the last 80 years the population of India has grown by something like 150,000,000. Its rate of growth for the last 200 years means that it has been nearly doubling itself every century; and the great economic fact which India has to face, and which the Government of India to-day have to face, is the growing pressure of population and the means of subsistance. When that happens in primitive agricultural countries—agricultural methods are always primitive—history teaches us that there are only two alternative lines of development—one is emigration and the other industrialisation. Almost every avenue of emigration has been closed to Indians in the last few years, and closed by none more than by the British Empire. I should be very slow to say that in view of the need for a better balance of Indian agriculture and Indian industries, difficult and dangerous as it is in view of the low standard of industrial business management, and dangerous as are the conditions which may be created by a too rapid industrialisation, that I think industrialisation, behind if necessary a good wall of protectionist duties, is as necessary to India to-day as it was to England in the early days of the industrial revolution. I implore my hon. Friend to realise that he must not get over the conflict of interests between the Lancashire operatives and his Indian fellow citizens by calmly assuming that the interests of both are the same. They are different.

What is the policy of this House of Commons? The answer of the right hon. Member for Epping is simple. He says let us follow the fiscal convention, which says that where the Viceroy and the Legislature agree the Secretary of State will not interfere. He says that when the Secretary of State does not agree with the Legislature he will tell the Viceroy not to agree with the Legislature, and all will be well. If there is no objection to Americanisms, it is a little bit like a raw deal. If that is the sort of phrasing that the right hon. Gentleman is prepared to offer to India as a sign of his honesty, his strictness and the honour of this country, then I do not wonder that he says that the Indian is beginning to doubt the honour of this country, because all that is done is to reduce the fiscal convention to a pure fraud, and that it never was.

Mr. CHURCHILL: I said, in normal circumstances.

Lord E. PERCY: Yes, but who is to tell what normal circumstances are. Really, the right hon. Gentleman was pouring scorn on what he called the vagueness and the shiftiness of our remarks about Dominion Status, and now we have listened to his definition of what the fiscal convention is. Again, I would suggest to the House that the history of the British Empire did begin earlier than the fiscal convention of 1919. It was in 1786 that the British Parliament passed a Colonial Laws Act definitely laying down that this Parliament would never again levy a tax on the plantations in America or the West Indies—not on Dominions, but on Crown Colonies, which were much more the mere projection of this House than the Government of India has ever been. It is true that that original Act contains a proviso. There was a right reserved to levy duties for the regulation of trade, provided that the yield of the duties was paid into the Colonial Exchequer, but in fact that power was not used and has not been used for something like a century.

We have accepted the principle, even in dealing with a Crown Colony, that this Parliament, which does not represent the taxpayers of the Crown Colony, must not tax that Crown Colony. What the hon. Member for Middleton was really doing is to suggest that this country should deal with the Indian tariffs in a way in which it would not deal with the tariffs of any Crown Colony, say the Gold Coast Colony.

Mr. WISE: Surely the Secretary of State has very considerable control.

Lord E. PERCY: Surely he has. Is it used? No it is not. What has been the whole difficulty? Does the hon. Member remember the time before the War, when the question of whether a system of Colonial preference was to include the Crown Colonies was raised. Mr. Bonar Law was inclined to do so, but then drew back on the ground that you could not have a system of preference including the Crown Colonies without arrogating powers or the right to tax the Crown Colonies. Really these things are the elementary foundation of British constitutional history.

Mr. WISE: I do not want to interrupt the Noble Lord, but surely there are instances within the recollection of the whole House of the Secretary of State disallowing certain duties imposed by Crown Colonies, and giving undertakings, very often to private concerns which were engaged in a new outbreak of industry, that certain duties would not be levied in the Crown Colonies?

Lord E. PERCY: That is perfectly true. Where you have a complete Crown Colony it is very often very difficult to separate the responsibility of the Secretary of State to Parliament from his responsibility for the Crown Colony itself, but, broadly speaking, I am laying down the principle from which Parliament has never departed.

Sir N. STEWART SANDEMAN: Does the Noble Lord think that the Indian import duties were increased for revenue and revenue only?

Lord E. PERCY: I suppose my hon. Friend is referring to the present surcharges? My whole argument has been that a protective policy is justified in the interests of the Indian masses. I am not defending the present tariff. I am not saying that it is not too high. But I do say that if you are going to interfere in the tariff policy of India you have to interfere with a view to regulating the protectionist policy, not merely a simple system of keeping revenue duties as low as possible in the interests of the poor consumers; you have to dictate to India the whole system of protective tariffs. Finally, I come to the surcharges. The surcharges are quite definitely put on for the purpose of revenue. I understand they are definitely intended to compensate in part for the falling off in the yield of the duty exactly as the surcharges on Income Tax are supposed to compensate for the falling off in the yield of Income Tax. What Lancashire is now complaining about is not at all the original protectionist part of the duty, but of a revenue surcharge which may have a very serious protective effect, but whose main purpose was undoubtedly a revenue purpose.

I think that this sufficiently indicates the real weakness of the arguments, so far as they are new, which have been used in this Debate against the Bill. If I have been controversial I hope that hon. Friends with whom I have been controversial will at any rate appreciate that I have attempted to deal with their arguments and to get down to their real case. I hope they will not think that in anything I have said I have exacerbated feelings which are already quite sufficiently bitter or divided. I do not think that anything in the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Middleton impressed me more than his reference to his kinsman Sir John Sandeman. I suggest that he should remember what one historian said about him as characterising the whole frontier—"He recognised that the British side of the question was not the only side." I think that that is too often forgotten.

When my hon. Friend the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Nunn) appealed to the old Anglo-Indian families, like the Lawrences and so on, he forgot many things that Lawrence said, and the folly of supposing that the aspiring and energetic among the great masses of the population would like our own dead level and would be grateful to the British for arrogating to themselves all authority and all emoluments. That was realised by the greatest and most dictatorial of the British Indian civil servants in the

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past. We are to-day doing something which will not be disapproved by these men, and I think that these men would disagree less with what they might consider our rashness than with the hit-and-miss polemics that come too often from right hon. and hon. Friends of mine, like the right hon. Member for Epping and the hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth.

8.10 p.m.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: The Noble Lord who has just spoken, like other speakers in the Debate, has spent his time not in defending the Bill, nor in answering the arguments of this side, but in attacking the right hon. Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill). If the Noble Lord found it no easy task to attack the right hon. Member for Epping—his attack was a little laboured—he has found how much more difficult it is, how impossible it is, to meet the arguments against the Bill which are brought forward by the people who have to suffer from it. There has been no attempt made to answer the objections of the Indian people. It is time that those objections were stated and clearly understood. It is the Indian people who have to work the Bill and who will suffer if what we do goes wrong.

What are the objections to the Bill? The first objection to the Bill is that it is putting the Indian people, not merely the poor but the whole of the Indian people, under the control of non-representative Princes of India. Our landlords in this country are well educated by democracy, and with all their failings are, after all, men very much like ourselves. But in India you are putting the whole of the 340,000,000 people into the hands of an aristocracy which has stood still since the 16th century, and you are doing it in spite of the fact that the Indians themselves do not want it. You are not merely condemning for all time 70,000,000 inhabitants of the Indian States to remain without rights and without liberty, but you are condemning all the rest of India to the same permanent injury. If you look at the list of proposed members of the Legislative Assembly, and still more at the list of members of the Council of State, you will see that by no possible manner of means can Congress or the Hindus ever have a majority, ever have any absolute control over that Assembly. So that the first fear of the Indians is that we are definitely removing our own hand and substituting a deader hand than ours in the control of the destinies of India.

Their next objection is one which relates to the words "Dominion status" in the Preamble. I myself attach no importance whatever to the words "Dominion status," but I do attach the greatest importance, as do the Indian people, to the question of the finality of this scheme. If this Bill becomes an Act any words about Dominion status in the Preamble will be meaningless nonsense, for we have to realise that this Bill, when we pass it, is the Act. It may have been all right in the Preamble to the Bill of 1919 to state that that Measure was the first of a series of stages in the intended development of Home Rule for India, but what would be the point of attaching a statement to this Bill suggesting further steps forward when, by the very fact of passing this Bill, we make any further step forward impossible. Even my hon. Friend the Member for Caerphilly (Mr. Morgan Jones) when dealing with this point did not realise how absolutely impossible it is to change this Bill.

Suppose we were the Government in six years' time, and suppose that we genuinely wanted to take a forward step. We should be faced with the difficulty of not only repealing an Act of Parliament, not only repealing a Constitution but of breaking a treaty with some 600 native races—and that is a thing which you cannot do. The Indians realise perfectly well that this Bill when it becomes an Act and is brought into operation in India will be the end. This is a treaty between one sovereign nation and a large number of sovereign Princes which cannot be altered without the consent of every one of those sovereign Princes. It is not merely a question of the new Indian Assembly reforming itself. I think that would be extremely unlikely, seeing that the directly elected element is so small. It is not a question of the Legislative Assembly sending resolutions to us urging that this Measure should be altered. It will be noticed that in these discussions emphasis has been laid on the fact that the only thing that can be altered by Parliament here is not this Measure but the Instrument of Instructions.

This Measure therefore is sacrosanct, and in order to realise the desperate opposition to it in India, one must realise that by its passing, all future hope of constitutional advance is destroyed *in toto*. That is the real reason why the Government stand out against a meaningless Preamble to the Bill about Dominion status. If this is not Dominion status, then nothing else can be done. The first objection then is to federation with the Indian States which puts India under the control of the Indian States and the Princes of those States. The second objection is that the Bill is absolutely final, and that there is no hope of the best-intentioned Labour Government in the future ever doing anything more. The next serious objection—which has not been once mentioned not even from these benches—is the rooted objection of the whole Hindu population to communal representation. That is an objection, the force of which must be felt by every one who understands our own institutions in this country.

So far as the Princes are concerned, they only rule at the Centre. So far as finality is concerned it only affects the Centre. But this communal objection affects every one of the Provinces as well as the Centre. We had in this country last week an admirable example of the value of democracy, in the explosion which took place in connection with the unemployment scales of pay. It was reflected immediately in this House and immediately produced an unexampled *volte face* on the part of the Government. That was a triumph of democracy. If it had been a case of a number of Labour Members on these benches complaining about those scales, their views would have been discounted and nothing would have been done. Had the Liberals complained they would have been told that they were making it into a party squabble. It was because the complaints came from the Tory benches that they produced such an effect.

Suppose that we had been living under the system which we propose for India. Suppose that the Members on these benches were elected by the trade unions, and the Liberals by the chambers of commerce and the Conservatives by some other section. Suppose that you had the Moslems sitting here and the Sikhs over there and the Hindus somewhere else each body representing select communities. A dozen Members of the Labour party or a dozen Members representing depressed classes would feel bound to get up and say something when the interests of their people were attacked. But the rest of the House would walk out. Their remarks would be treated with contempt and derision because it would be known that they would never be in a majority. The other Members would also know that they themselves had not one single constituent affected by the difficulty whatever it might be. But that is the sort of system which we are proposing to establish in India.

I notice a tendency even on these benches to consider it a matter of importance whether a minority has eight members or 10 members on a council. It does not matter a rap. Two men could express the Labour point of view on a council where there was a large anti-Labour majority but from the point of view of power 10 men would be just as helpless as one. The number of the minority is known and can be discounted and their views can be taken as read. On the other hand, if working men have votes in the constituencies and if all the members are dependent on those votes then the working men can get their views expressed as the views of the unemployed were expressed the other day in this House—by their Tory representatives. The vice of the system which we are about to import into India is inconceivable and its effects will be widespread. It means that at election time the only views which candidates will express will be views of bitter hostility to other creeds, classes and interests. It means that all politics will be directed towards hating somebody else, instead of trying to co-operate with the other people concerned.

In this country we are moderate in our views. The Conservatives are moderate. Labour is most moderate. The Conservatives know that there are some Labour people who will vote for them. We on these benches know that there are probably a good many nominal Conservatives who may vote for us. If I were elected by the Protestant Alliance or the Co-operative Union exclusively, my speeches would be directed towards the errors of the Catholic faith, or the vices of uncontrolled competition as the case might be. As it is, we represent all sections and therefore we are more moderate,

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more careful and more willing to co-operate with others. We propose to bring this vice of communal representation into this new Constitution but we know that there is not a man in this country who would tolerate it here. Yet there has been not one word from the Government in defence of it although in India it is the one issue with 240,000,000 Hindus. It is all they are thinking of in connection with this Bill and it affects every one of them.

In four Provinces, Bengal, the Punjab, the North-West Frontier, and Sind there is a statutory Mohammedan majority for all time. No matter what these people do, the Hindus will always be out of office and in a minority. No single Hindu will be allowed to vote for a Mohammedan or to choose between one Mohammedan candidate and another. He will have no vote for the ruling class, no vote for the Government, no right to vote against the Government, and no power to vote for the Government, and, above all, the Mohammedan need never demean himself by asking for a vote from a Hindu. That is a nice way of bringing people together.

The Noble Lord the Member for Horsham (Earl Winterton) said the other day how advantageous it was to have a Constitution wherein there was some chance of the person who went in for real politics getting into office, that, after all, the desire to control and rule was a legitimate desire for anyone in public life. In all the Provinces in India, under this Bill you are making it impossible for the minority ever to hold office. The swing of the pendulum cannot take place. In Madras no Mohammedan has a vote for a Hindu and he has only a small minority of the seats. The Hindu Government in Madras Province need not regard him. The Hindus, however, are a mild, gentle race—they are not accustomed to bullying minorities—but when you get up into the Punjab and, worse still, into Sind and into the North-West Frontier Province, what sort of treatment will be meted out to the statutory minorities there, the people who have no votes for their masters, the people who are 20 per cent. of the population in the North-West Frontier Province and in Sind, but very nearly 50 per cent. in the Punjab? They can never have a vote for the people who are ruling them or against the people who are ruling them.

What use the vote is supposed to be for them in these circumstances I cannot conceive. They can go on returning a body of Brahmins, but never will they have the opportunity to take office or the right of expressing effectively their detestation of the way in which the government of the Province is conducted. The Provincial Government, it should be remembered, controls education, police, public works, and water, and the whole life of the minority can be made intolerable by the hostile government of people who not only do not inter-marry with them, but who despise them, and treat them, and view them as Jews now, and who will treat them and view them as Hitler does, once they have permanent power over these unfortunate people. That is why you get these votes against this Bill in the Indian Assembly.

Turn to Bengal, where up till now 60 per cent. of the seats on the Bengal Council are Hindu seats and 40 per cent. Mohammedan seats. Under this Bill, for which the Government is responsible, communal representation is perpetuated in Bengal, against the wishes of the majority of the population, and instead of the 60 per cent. being Hindus and 40 per cent. Mohammedans, you are arranging for 80 of the seats to be Hindu seats at the outset and 119 Mohammedan, and not only at this next election, but for all time, you have a majority for the Mohammedans on that Legislative Council, so that they can never be unseated in Bengal. What do you think the teeming 48,000,000 of people in Bengal, the majority of whom are Hindus, and those Hindus perhaps on the whole better educated than the Mohammedans—what do you think their attitude is likely to be towards a Bill which deprives them of some control of their affairs and, with a gesture of benevolence to these people, hands them over to the Mohammedans and the Princes? We have just managed to block the idea of giving responsible representative Government to Palestine. Why? Because the minority of Jews objected. We have managed to stop the same thing in Cyprus because the minority of Mohammedans objected.

In India you have the wishes of this vast majority of the people, 240,000,000 out of 350,000,000, disregarded in a Constitution which no one in this House can defend, which enshrines for all time injustice, intoleration, and bullying, in a

country which up to now has enjoyed British rule, and which is at any rate free from that sort of thing. Did hon. Members notice that in the Assembly the other day, by an extraordinary miracle—I do not know how it happened—the Mohammedans joined with the Hindus in passing a resolution to the effect that this Bill was fundamentally bad and utterly unacceptable? The majority that carried that was telegraphed to us here as about 74 to 58, but of those 58, nearly 50 were not elected members, elected, that is, by the Anglo-Indians or by the Chambers of Commerce. The overwhelming majority of the elected members of that Assembly voted that this Bill was fundamentally bad and utterly unacceptable, and the only effect of that in this country is to say "Silly fools, they are only saying that in order to get more." If you go on thinking that the Indian objections to this Bill are put-up objections, simply raised in order to bluff the Government into giving more, or into taking away some of the safeguards, or something of that sort, you are in for an ugly awakening.

The impression conveyed to India to-day by the refusal to meet these objections from the Indian people, by the refusal to look at them, by the sneering way that they are always spoken of as bluffs, is that you are determined to put this Bill on the Statute Book and into operation in India against the wishes of the Indian people and even though the Indian people are diametrically opposed to it and may refuse to work it. But to refuse to work this Bill is impossible. No party in India will be fools enough not to go on to the councils and take what chance they can under the Bill. They will cut their own throats if they do not, but when they are on, then how are they going to operate the Bill? Aroused to fury by the fact that it has been imposed upon them against their wishes, with all this slobber about amity and unity and friendship thrown in to make it more bitter, they are then going to use what opportunities they have under the Bill of getting a bit of their own back on us. Why go on with this? Why persist in making enemies, doing what we do not want and doing what they do not want? What is the reason for persisting? Could we not at least put everything right even now if only we got a statement from the Government that when this Bill is passed it will be at the option of India whether it is imposed or not?

When we got out a new Constitution for Ceylon, a small island rather more backward than India, with a population of 5,000,000, we got out what I think was a good Constitution and what the Ceylon people did not. It was not good enough for them, and they bluffed, or tried to, in order to get more. They really objected to the franchise. We did not force it on Ceylon, though it would have been perfectly easy to force her. We gave her the opportunity of voting upon it, and told her frankly, "If you want it, there it is, accept it." She boggled about it for pretty nearly a year, and she accepted it by a majority vote at last. It may not have worked well since, but, at any rate, the passing of the Measure and the institution of the new Constitution was not done against the wishes of the people of Ceylon. Why cannot we have a statement from the Prime Minister before this Debate closes that if the people of India really prefer the status quo to this Bill they should at least be permitted to say so? That would prevent the Bill being put into operation against their wishes.

Mr. HOLFORD KNIGHT: Fifteen years ago my right hon. Friend and I were together with Mr. Gandhi when the first claim for Dominion status was made. I want to ask my right hon. Friend whether this scheme does not provide a larger measure of self-government than was then contemplated?

Colonel WEDGWOOD: It is not comparable in the least. What I am saying is that, even if we believe this to be a good scheme, we have no right to force it on people who do not want it. I say that so far as the federal part is concerned, it should depend upon a vote of the elected members—Mohammedans, Hindus and Sikhs—in the Assembly at Delhi; and as to the Provinces, it should be left to each present Province to decide whether to set up this new Constitution or remain as it is. I think that in all the Provinces except four the new Constitution would come into force, but I am confident that Bengal, Punjab, North-West Frontier and Sind would reject it, and go on rejecting it. It will always be in the power of India to take a step forward once the Hindus and the Mohammedans can come together on a sound democratic basis without this communal system of election. I am tired of putting this point of view

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to the Government, but really it has never been put in this Debate at all. It is question for the Indians, and not for the English, to decide whether this Constitution should become law.

8.38 p.m.

Sir EDWARD GRIGG: I had hoped to be able to catch your eye, Sir, before the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) intervened in the Debate, because I wished to address to him an argument and an appeal based upon a speech which he made in this House earlier in his career in circumstances not really unlike the circumstances in which we have been debating this Bill. Unfortunately, the opportunity for that has passed, and, since the time left to us is very short, I am afraid I must let the right hon. Gentleman off this evening. There is only one point with which I should like to attempt to deal. When this Bill was first introduced it seemed to me to give a perfectly clear statement of our intentions in regard to the Central Government of India. Since then a further statement has been made bringing in the phrase "dominion status." Since it is a phrase with many meanings, the Bill has, I am afraid, been obscured and complicated, and nobody quite knows now what our intentions are in India. I am sorry that this vague phrase has once again made its appearance. It is bound to lead to misunderstanding and to charges of breaches of faith unless it is cleared up in the near future. I hope that as the Government have gone to the length of deciding that something more than the language of the Bill is necessary, the Preamble of the 1919 Act should be resolved to be still valid. I hope they will go yet further and decide in the near future to make a declaration on the question of the future constitutional development of India which will leave no room for misunderstanding.

Let us consider what dominion status can possibly mean in regard to India. It suggests at once—and this is why it is so misleading—development on the same lines as the Dominions. That seems to be quite impossible in India. I am glad that the Archbishop of Canterbury called attention to that fact the other day, and he rendered a great service in doing so. There is no possibility whatever of India developing on the same lines as the Dominions towards dominion status because it would infallibly make an end to both her peace and her unity. The Dominions have developed in an entirely different manner in different conditions, and, while I am certain that India will be able to take her place in the Commonwealth of Nations side by side with the Dominions, I am certain that her internal constitution will be entirely different. She has already dominion status in two important respects. She became a member of the Imperial Conference in 1917 with the Dominions in recognition of her great services during the War. She also signed the Peace Treaties and became a State member of the League of Nations in 1919.

The only difference now between India and the Dominions lies in the character of her internal constitutional system. The Dominions differ from each other in their constitutional systems, but they are all based, as India cannot be based, on the union of a group of similar Provinces. The central governments in the Dominions have been modelled more or less on the long practice of constitutional government in the Provinces, and in the central governments, as in the Provinces before the union, the Crown and the representatives of the Crown played a purely constitutional role. In India the Crown and the representatives of the Crown play an important part. In a Dominion the Crown is essential to its membership of the Empire, and I do not agree from that standpoint that the Statute of Westminster allows for the right of secession, but the Crown is not essential to the unity of any Dominion. It is conceivable that the Crown might be eliminated, but the Dominion would remain united.

The case of India is different. Unity there must involve three separate and entirely different factors. It must involve the Indian States, which are self-governing autocracies. Even after Federation, even if the Princes declare their adhesion to the Federation and come in under instruments of accession, they will not be subject to the Federal Legislature. They will still be related to the Crown by treaty. The Crown, therefore, will be absolutely indispensable in India as the link between the Princes and the Federation. The Provinces are

the second factor. The Provinces by then will also be self-governing, like the Indian States at the present moment.

But the whole system of provincial self-government which we are establishing depends on two things. It depends, in the first place, on the position of the Crown as the guarantor of the communal settlements, and from that point of view the Crown is indispensable. It also depends on the fact that the Crown, and the British forces subject to the Crown, guarantee India's internal peace and external security. Those forces must be controlled by an impartial authority, they would not guarantee the peace of India otherwise, and the Indian Constitution, therefore, cannot possibly follow Dominion lines. It is much more conceivable that it should follow the lines broadly laid down in the Constitution of the United States of America, where there is a similar magnitude and a similar diversity. That must mean that there will be a strong central executive independent of the legislature, in India as in the United States. But in India the central executive must be impartial in a sense which is not required in America. It cannot possibly be an elected authority, it must be impartial and must be appointed by the Crown. Therefore, a strong central executive appointed by His Majesty, the King Emperor seems to me essential to Dominion status in India, because it is essential to Indian unity. That is not a purely Conservative argument, still less is it a diehard argument, that India must always contain it its constitutional system a central, impartially-appointed executive authority. Here is a quotation from a very different source. It is from an interesting book, the author of which I will name in a moment:

"What Indians have to realise is that provisions of this kind"—

that is, safeguards for the independence of the central executive—

"are in no sense a reflection on them. In no similar area in the world, whether in Europe, America or Asia, could orderly government or nationali unity be maintained without the strongest powers being freely conceded to the Central Government. The American Commonwealth, which is the nearest parallel, bristles with vetoes and limitations, and no American considers them undemocratic or a reflection on his competence. A strong Central Government, freely conceded the powers it must have, is, to my eye, the key to what is called responsible government in the Provinces."

That is not from a Conservative author; it is from a book on "The Changing East," by a Liberal thinker and writer, Mr. J. A. Spender, and I am very glad to know that that argument has not only been steadily addressed by him to Indian Liberals and others, but that the book is being reprinted shortly with a preface which reinforces that argument. I maintain, then, that under any system of Dominion status which India can reach the Crown will remain the keystone of the Indian arch; without it that majestic structure would crumble in a night. I am not inclined to agree that India will fail to co-operate in the development of that kind of constitutional progress towards Dominion status. I believe that India will accept the authority of the Crown, but on one condition, and that is that the authority of the Crown is believed to be really impartial, representing what Indians regards as the spirit of the King-Emperor.

The Crown is an immense power in India. The hon. Member for Chertsey (Sir A. Boyd-Carpenter) spoke last week of the veneration still felt for the memory of Queen Victoria. There is the same veneration among millions in India for the present King-Emperor, and Indians will accept his authority when they are not prepared to accept an outside authority which they believe to be controlled by outside and un-Indian interests. There is no disloyalty in that. It is precisely what the Dominions also have done. New Zealand, the most loyal of the Dominions, was perhaps one of the earliest examples. It was Godley, one of the superintendents of Canterbury back in the nineteenth century, who said: "Better have a Nero on the spot than a committee of archangels in Downing Street." And if that was said in New Zealand in the 1860's, it may well be said in India at the present moment. I do not believe the objection of India is to a central impartial authority under the Crown if it is believed to be impartial. What India fears is the shadow of Downing Street, the shadow, also, of Threadneedle Street, and the pressure from a great and interested electorate.

I dwell on this subject because it is of immense importance to the trade of this country. Good will between this country

[Sir E. Grigg.]

and India must mean, if it is to continue, good and mutually satisfactory trade relations, though it will never be established unless Indians feel that they are free to choose and that they are under the pressure of an interested outside authority. There is no time to develop this argument further, but I should like to say that the Preamble to the 1919 Act seems to me to be obsolete in many respects at the present moment. The declarations which have now been made in regard to Dominion status leave the situation still obscure, and unnecessarily obscure, and that is dangerous, and I hope that occasion will be taken to make some further statutory declaration which will make our position perfectly clear, and make charges of breach of faith on our part impossible in future.

In the two or three minutes that remain to me, I would like to say a word about one other most important factor in the success of the Bill, the Second Reading of which I shall vote for this evening. That factor is the character and quality of the men we send to India, especially in the position of Viceroy and Governor. That has always been immensely important, and it is going to be more important than ever before under the new Constitution. I regret, and I have always regretted, that in the appointment of Indian Governors there has been a tradition of party patronage which, curiously enough, does not apply to any other great administrative appointments throughout the Empire, so far as I know. It is a curious anomaly that always there has been a strong tradition of party patronage in regard to the appointment of the Viceroy and Indian Governors. I think an end should be made of that tradition. The net should be thrown as wide as possible in the selection of men for the position of Governor, and, above all, there should be no political bias whatever in the choice that is made. I understand that under the Act of 1919 it was laid down that the Viceroy was entitled to advise on the choice of Provincial Governors. I am sorry that in that respect the Act of 1919 will no longer have statutory effect, and I hope it will be laid down again that the Viceroy is entitled to be consulted in the future on the choice of Provincial Governors. But, most important of all, of course, will be the choice of the Viceroy himself. He is the lynch-pin of the Constitution.

This is a delicate subject to mention, but, if I may put my hope in what, I trust, is dutiful and loyal language, I would venture to express the hope that His Majesty may take occasion in the future to declare that, in his choice among his subjects of men to fill this position he will never allow his Prerogative to be affected in any way by a partisan or a narrowly political recommendation. I believe that would give a much greater sense of security in India, and it would certainly give a greater sense of security here. The occasion might possibly arise in the Proclamation that will be issued upon the setting up of the Federation. It is too late, I fear, for me to address the argument and the appeal which I wished to address to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping; in any case, he is not in his place, and I therefore reserve them for another occasion.

8.56 p.m.

Duchess of ATHOLL: The subject of India is so vast that in spite of four days' Debate, there are many important points in regard to the Bill which have not yet been made clear to the House, and we have heard a good deal of repetition of political maxims current in the West without much recognition of some of the realities which make it difficult to apply those maxims to the situation as it exists in India. Speaking last Wednesday, the Secretary of State for India did not make clear to the House what were the Safeguards in the present Fiscal Autonomy Convention, nor did he make clear whether that Convention was to stand or not. I think it is quite clear from the terms of the Bill that the Convention inevitably goes. I am very glad that my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) has reminded us of, at any rate, one of the safeguards of the Convention, in order that we may realise something of what we shall lose in the proposed transfer of commerce to the control of a responsible Minister.

My Noble Friend the Member for Hastings (Lord E. Percy) rather objected to my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping's interpretation of the Convention, and spoke as if Indian politicians might regard it in those circumstances as

rather a fraud. On the responsibility of someone who was a member of the Indian Legislature during the Debates of 1930-31, when the higher tariffs were being imposed, I can say that the view which was then accepted by the Indian members of the Legislative Assembly was that if the Government of India objected to a tariff, the Secretary of State for India had the right to intervene.

I would also like to tell the House from how many well-informed sources, from men of long and recent experience in India, I have heard of the real desire of the Indian masses to buy British goods, particularly cotton goods, as they were better than their own, and being of better finish are more comfortable. I have been assured—and I believe that the facts recorded make this quite clear—that the boycott of British cloth from 1930 to 1932 owed any success it had to consistent and often violent intimidation, and that when Lord Willingdon, early in 1932, made an Ordinance rendering intimidation with boycott illegal, which it was not before, wherever there was adequate legal protection to see that the Ordinance was carried out the boycott collapsed.

Again, my Noble Friend spoke as if he greatly desired a rapid industrialisation of India, and wished a high tariff to that end. I would remind him that a very contrary opinion was expressed to the Joint Select Committee by a representative of the Bengal trade unions, who deplored the trend that led men from the villages of India into unhealthy factories very much to the detriment of their health and of amenities generally, and often with very insufficient pay. It seems to be far more in the interests of the Indian peasant that we should do all we can to help him with improvements in ariculture—such improvements as were desired by the Royal Commission on Agriculture in India—improved irrigation, improved sanitation and measures against disease, and so on.

Returning to the speech of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for India, may I remind the House that the right hon. Gentleman told us that the purpose of the Bill was to continue recruitment as at present. I would ask hon. Members who heard that speech: Who would have understood from this that under the Bill the right hon. Gentleman would hand over his powers of recruitment for such very important subjects as irrigation and forestry, and that such powers as he is going to retain in the meantime with regard to recruiting for such vitally important Services as the Indian Civil Service, the police, and the Indian medical service, he could, under Clause 251, at any time transfer to another authority in India? That seems to be a very big point which has not yet been made clear to the House.

The right hon. Gentleman went on to say that in the view of the Government and of the Joint Committee,

> "no pensioner need feel anxious as to the security in future of his pension."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 6th February, 1935; col. 1165, Vol. 297.]

I wonder if my right hon. Friend remembers the memorandum sent by the Indian Police Association to the Secretary of State for India in 1930, protesting against the proposal of the Simon Commission to transfer their force. They begged that they might be given security for their pensions, such as they had had in the years before the Montagu reforms were contemplated, namely, before 1917, days in which it would have been possible to insure their pension for not more than one-half of 1 per cent. I have here a letter from a firm of insurance brokers affirming that down to 1919 they were insuring Indian pensions at 1½ or 2 per cent. but that since 1919 they have not been able to get any quotation for an Indian pension. I have heard from another source that a few years ago an Indian pension could be insured for 8 per cent., but for the last few years, all my information goes to show that that has been quite impossible; though the other day the hypothetical case arose of someone aged 55, to whom would fall due a British pension of £400 a year, and who was able easily to get a quotation or from 5s. to 6s. per £100. I maintain that the figures which I have just given to the House show that there is expert financial opinion which fully justifies the fears expressed in regard to pensions by the Civil Service Association to the Joint Statutory Committee on the first day of their meeting.

My right hon. Friend went on to say that the Chapter on the Judicature in the Bill would not prove controversial. Who would understand from that that the

[Duchess of Atholl.]

Clauses dealing with the High Court, that is, the chief court in each Province, would give away the proviso which at present exists that not less than one-third of the judges in each High Court must be men in the Indian Civil Service, British or Indian, who have inherited the high tradition of that Service, and that another third must be men, British or Indian, who have had the benefit of qualifying at the British Bar? It is widely held that the greatest boon that we have brought to India has been increasing impartiality of justice, but there is much evidence that however conscientious an Indian or Mohammedan judge may be in trying cases in which men of the other community are concerned, it may be very difficult for him to win the confidence of members of that other community. It seems to me a very serious fact, to which, I repeat, no attention has been drawn, that the present provision that the High Court shall have a due complement of members of the British Bar or of the Indian Civil Service is to go.

Then my right hon. Friend spoke of finance, and said that there was to be a transfer, from the Provinces to the Central Budget, of a burden of about £4,000,000 a year. He said that that was not in any sense attributable to the constitutional proposals. But, like my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, he omitted to tell the House of the remission of tributes from the Princes, which will gradually amount to a sum of £750,000 a year, falling on the proposed Federal revenue. I know that my right hon. Friend, in November, 1933, strenuously denied the suggestion that these remissions of tribute were in any way connected with the Federal proposals. He told the House that "they were only a part of the general question of the relations between the Princes and British India which formed the main scope of the Harcourt Butler inquiry in 1928." I have taken the pains to look up the Harcourt Butler Report, and I can find no mention whatever in it of these tributes or of the question of their remission; and when my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, on page 164 of his report dealing with this subject, recommended the remission of these tributes, he said in the most specific and emphatic terms that he was not authorised to suggest the remission of tributes except in the case of Princes who entered the Federation.

Therefore I claim that this charge of £750,000, mentioned by the Secretary of State in his speech last Wednesday, is a direct result of the constitutional proposals, and is obviously a monetary inducement to various Princes to enter the Federation. My right hon. Friend said that the £4,000,000 he mentioned would be only 4 per cent. of the total revenue of India. But, as the £4,000,000 is to be a burden on the central revenue only, and the central revenue amounts to about £58,000,000 a year, it is obvious that the £4,000,000 is an additional burden of more like 8 per cent. on the central revenue than of only 4 per cent. Then my right hon. Friend made the very important announcement that the Government were going to move for the insertion in the Bill of the Preamble to the Act of 1919. I, of course, with all those who share my views, warmly welcome that insertion, but I venture to say that the greater part of the Preamble seems to be quite inconsistent with the action which the Government are taking.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Butler): My right hon. Friend said that, when the question of repealing previous Acts was reached during the Committee stage, he would move to provide that the Preamble to the Act of 1919 was not actually repealed, but only the other portion of that Act, excluding the Preamble; that is to say, that the whole Act excluding the Preamble would be repealed.

Duchess of ATHOLL: I do not think I have in any way misstated the case. At any rate, I understand that the Preamble is to stand. Now, the Preamble contains two extremely important points which have not been referred to in this Debate. One is that Parliament alone must decide what the various stages of advance towards self-government in India are to be; and yet, by the Secretary of State's own admission, the Instrument of Instructions to the Governor is to allow for growth and flexibility, which, of course, means that an Indian Assembly may in some way add to its powers. Moreover, Clause 108 of the Bill and other Clauses point to the fact that, with the previous consent of the Governor-General, there are different respects in which the Constitution Act may be

amended by the Indian Federal Assembly. I submit, therefore, that any power of that kind is in direct conflict with this very important point in the Preamble.

Another very important point in the Preamble is that it makes all advance towards self-government dependent on the co-operation and sense of responsibility of those to whom all these powers are entrusted. I do not want to go into the question at any length, but there is ample evidence, in the official report year by year, of the continued and increasing inefficiency of local authorities; we have the evidence of the Simon Commission for the inefficiency of education; the Joint Select Committee heard evidence of deterioration in the medical services; the Secretary of State himself admits irresponsibility on the part of many of those to whom powers have been transferred; and it seems to me, therefore, that a Bill which proposes to make such a very much larger transfer of powers, in spite of the considerable evidence that there is that the powers already transferred have not been used as well as they might have been, flagrantly disregard an important part of the Preamble.

I turn now to the speeches which have been made by other hon. Members. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ross and Cromarty (Sir I. Macpherson) spoke of the meticulous examination made by the Joint Select Committee, and said that he readily accepted their findings. I pay tribute, as we all do, to the great amount of time spent by the committee in examining this subject, but, great though that time was, the subject is vaster still, and many important matters were left on which no evidence was heard. Evidence was heard on only one of the transferred subjects, namely, health. No evidence was heard as to education, or agriculture, or the work of local authorities, or public works. No one was heard who had had any long experience of the Finance Department of the Government of India; no one was heard who had had experience of land revenue and land settlement, which involves working in the closest touch with the people; and no Indian member of the Government Services appeared before the Committee. Lord Salisbury, speaking in another place, said that the committee had not so much examined the proposals on their merits as sought to see how they could give effect to the proposals that had been made.

When I hear enumerations of the many distinguished men with experience of India who sat on that Committee, I cannot forget that the only two men on the Committee who had had more than five years' responsible service in India were my hon. Friend the Member for the English Universities (Sir R. Craddock), with his 35 years' experience, and a Noble Lord who had served for 15 years in the Indian Army. Therefore, I feel that the weight of experience of men who really know life in India at first hand, and have had close contact with the masses of the people, was with Lord Salisbury's minority.

Next my hon. Friend the Member for Morpeth (Mr. G. Nicholson) commented on the fact that I and others had not been to India. Some of us, perhaps, have not gone there because we know that civil servants are not free to speak their minds——

Lord E. PERCY: Oh!

Duchess of ATHOLL: Only yesterday morning a man who retired a year or two ago from a responsible position in a Government service, when I spoke to him on this matter, replied to me at once in that sense. My Noble Friend has not served in the Government service in India. He has had much experience, but not that. A year ago a man who had retired three or four years previously from a high position in the police in India also enlarged to me on this point, saying that men who were serving out there were very chary of making any comments on the action of the Government, particularly Members of Parliament, because some Members of Parliament who, unlike my hon. Friend, had written books on their return in which they feel that their views have been misrepresented. He went on to say that for that reason civil servants either kept silence to Members of Parliament who were anxious to discuss public questions with them, or, if they spoke, they pulled their legs.

Viscountess ASTOR: Does not the Noble Lady think that if she had taken the trouble to go to India she would have got a different feeling? Does not she also think that, if her leader the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping

[Viscountess Astor.]

(Mr. Churchill) had joined the Joint Select Committee, they would all have been in a better position than they are to-day and would know more about the subject?

Duchess of ATHOLL: For many years I have wanted to go to India more than to any country in the world, but I have never had the opportunity, and I feel that, in present circumstances particularly, it must be very difficult for serving civil servants to speak freely to Members of Parliament in India. I can get much more freedom of speech in my drawing room.

Mr. GODFREY NICHOLSON: The Noble Lady has quoted me specifically. I do not like to say that she is necessarily wrong, but, if she still held the same views after having gone to India, they would carry more weight.

Duchess of ATHOLL: I have never said anything on this question for which I could not give chapter and verse either from an official report or from someone of long service in India. I can only say to the hon. Member that of all the people that I have met in the course of my life I have never found men so desperately anxious about any public proposals as the men of long experience and of recent experience in India with whom I am in touch.

Then the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Darwen (Sir H. Samuel) and others are in favour of these proposals because they think it will be easier for Indians to deal with some of the social reforms which I know that my Noble Friend and others, myself included, would like to see carried through in India. I think we ought to remember that we made suttee, infanticide and slavery illegal, and that we managed to do that without alienating the orthodox Hindus, who claim that there is idealism behind some of the social customs of their religion. The orthodox Hindus I believe to be a very loyal element in the population. I have also realised that they profoundly distrust the westernised Hindus who, rather late in the day, appear to be beginning to reform some of these customs. Seeing how very bitterly Indians are divided from each other and how very outspoken they can be when they differ from each other, I cannot but believe that we still have a part to play in seeking to get reforms of this kind carried out without alienating the orthodox Hindus, who more than any other body represent the great mass of the people in India.

Then the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Hitchin (Sir A. Wilson) told us that, while he had been opposed to the Montague reforms, he had been pleased to find that they had not led to as much bloodshed as he had expected. I should like to ask him how serious was the bloodshed that he anticipated from these reforms, because it seems to me that there is a very terrible tale to tell. In communal riots in Bengal in 1926 some 160 persons were killed. In Bombay in 1929 there were what were officially described as mass murders, in which 200 were killed and about 1,000 injured. In Bombay 61 persons were killed in 1930, the worst year of civil disobedience, and in Bengal in the same year, as the result of civil disobedience and terrorism, 101. In Bombay again in 1932 in communal riots there were over 200 killed and some 2,500 injured. In Cawnpore in March, 1931, in a terrible riot a senior military officer present counted 20 lorries piled high with dead and there were hundreds besides brutally mutilated. Most of these terrible happenings were due to communal tension which the Simon Commission clearly stated had increased as a result of the Montagu reforms. I ask the hon. and gallant Gentleman if this is not a terrible enough toll of life to have justified all the anxieties that he felt in 1919.

The hon. Member for North Bristol (Mr. Bernays) spoke of the civil disobedience campaign which he had seen at its height in Bombay in 1930, when women supporters of Congress lay down in front of the trams. He said that if we did not give everything that the Bill proposed we should have to meet trouble of that kind again, and we should have to adopt the methods of Hitler to put it down. The answer given to me by an ex-police officer to whom I mentioned what had been said was to the effect that the instinct to protect their women is a very fundamental one with Indians, and that therefore they do not bring the women out to help them in demonstrations unless they believe the Government is so weak that very little is likely to

happen. The moral, therefore, is to act at once when trouble occurs to nip it in the bud. But that is exactly what was not done, as we know, in the civil disobedience troubles in 1930. At the beginning of that year the Congress party pulled down the Union Jack at Lahore and proclaimed independence. Yet Gandhi was allowed to begin his march to the sea and the movement, like a snowball, gathered size and momentum as it went, and finally reached the position in which the hon. Member found it. This need for instant action when troubles threaten, is a very important point, because it is just that prompt action which will be so difficult under the proposals of the Bill. Broadly speaking, the safeguards proposed in regard to the police will give the Governor power to do something when he sees that something has gone wrong, but by the time that becomes evident a great deal of harm may have been done. It is obvious that there will be many influences at work on the Minister to make him delay taking effective action at once—many more than there are to-day on the Governor or Member of the Council responsible.

Now I come to our attitude towards the Bill. We feel that it is entirely contrary to the spirit of the 1919 Act and its Preamble to hand over the Centre until Provincial self-government has proved itself a success. I know the Government hope that the representatives of the States will be a moderating element in the Federal Assembly, but the Congress party has shown itself so determined and so powerful and it is so difficult in India for men to stand up to a very determined lead, that I cannot believe that the States representatives, the majority of whom will be Hindus, will find it easy to make an effective stand against the Congress Hindu party. We know also that power is to be given to the Governor-General to resume control of any Department in the event of a breakdown of government, but seditious influences obviously have a great chance in a country in which 92 per cent. of the people are illiterate, who are almost all so poor that an anna or two a day is something of value and where the strength of communal caste and family feeling make fetters on personal independence to an extent which is difficult for us to realise.

An instance of the almost ridiculous influences which may affect Indians in the lower ranks of Government services is to be found in the Ordinance which Lord Willingdon had to pass making mock funerals illegal. We also have the authority of the Secretary of State for the fact that Communism has increased, that terrorism is no longer confined to Bengal but is to be found in all the Indian Provinces; and that there has been even a revival of the dangerous movement among the Sikhs which caused so much trouble during the War. There is real reason, therefore, for the fear that, if things reach a pass where a breakdown of government is recognised to have taken place, the Government Services in their lower ranks may be so demoralised that they may prove a broken reed in the hands of a Governor or Governor-General. The Army too may be held up by trouble on the railways or in the posts or telegraphs, and may well be in less close touch with the police than it is to-day.

Then we regret that the Bill will not enable the Central Government to have any power of guidance over Provincial Departments, or at least some of these Departments. My right hon. Friend the Member for Epping spoke of his desire that power should be taken to the Central Government to make grants to Provincial Departments and to appoint inspectors to keep them up to a certain standard. The Simon Commission laid down that they wanted the Central Government to have the power of giving guidance and advice on Provincial subjects—and power of making grants, with or without inspectors, would mean that something could be done to advise and guide Provincial Ministers on important subjects such as education and agriculture in a way quite impossible under the Bill. We feel, therefore, that the proposals for complete and exclusive Provincial Autonomy will lead to continuing and increasing inefficiency.

Sir FRANCIS FREMANTLE: Does the Noble Lady realise that this power is given in Section 140.

Duchess of ATHOLL: It is not the power which the Simon Commission desired. Simply to dole out money without doing anything to restore efficiency is not at all the same thing.

[Duchess of Atholl.]

Finally, I would say that the Government have seen one pillar after another on which they have relied in this matter fail. They ignored the Congress policy, but it has forced itself to the front, and it has rejected the report. They pinned their faith to the Liberals, but the Liberals have rejected the report also. And at the moment in which this is happening there is reason to believe that the Government of India have grave fears that Mr. Gandhi, under the cloak of his Village Industries Association, is starting a new and very important civil disobedience movement. It seems to me, therefore, that the Government have ample justification for pulling things up. They have shown their desire to give India a generous settlement and it has been rejected by all parties. Surely, then, they have ample cause to say: "Well, if you will not have our scheme—the scheme we have thrashed out with your representatives—now we will consider for ourselves what we feel it is safe and advisable to give you."

After all, the situation has profoundly changed since the Simon Commission reported. Since they recommended the transfer of law and order there has been a tremendous increase of communal trouble and terrorism. This does seem to me to make a situation in which the whole question ought to be thought out afresh. I would appeal to the Government, therefore, to drop their Federal proposals and to think out again proposals for further self-government in the Provinces which will enable some guidance and assistance such as was desired by the Simon Commission to be given to Provincial Departments, and which will not put into the hands of Ministers responsible to an elected legislature powers actually affecting the life and limbs of the people. If they would do this, they would safeguard in the main the life of the masses of the people. They would also safeguard the livelihood of thousands of our workers and would save this country and the Empire from what I believe is likely to be the greatest disaster in our history.

9.31 p.m.

Mr. LANSBURY: I would like to remind the House that we are discussing the affairs of a country that has possessed a much better civilisation than our forefathers enjoyed. We are discussing the rule of India for 450 years, by what is an alien race—a race that went to India for the purpose of trade and remained there as conquerors of the country. Our rule there has certainly been different, I think, from that of any other conquerors in a similar position. During these discussions we have talked of the Dominions and have displayed pride in our country for having planted our institutions in various parts of the world. If any of us go out to Australia we glory in the fact that we become Australians. If we go to Canada the same thing happens—we are the same kith and kin. But if we go to India, as a Civil Servant or in any other way, we never expect to become absorbed into the Indian nation. We remain English or British, and we hope to save enough money by serving there to come home and spend the rest of our lives here. In the next place we draw from India—and I hope no one will think I am saying this in an offensive manner—enormous wealth in the form of salaries, pensions, travelling allowances, holidays and so on, in addition to very considerable sums in dividends and repayments for loans for public works. If we remained in India and spent there the wealth which has to be sent to this country I do not believe that the people of India would be living under the terribly poverty-stricken conditions they are living under to-day.

I am old enough to remember the campaign on behalf of the Egyptian bond-holders, somewhere about 1880. It was proved at that time that many of the loans that had been raised had not been spent in Egypt but had been spent in the capitals of Europe. It was pointed out then, I think by the late Lord Morley, that that kind of indebtedness, that that kind of drain on a nation could only mean ultimate ruin. And so it is to-day in India. The Indians with whom I have talked all ask me to remember that while the British connection may have built railways and while the British connection may have protected them, the Indian people have found all the money required for these purposes, and that the maintenance of a British Army in India is a terrific strain on the resources of that country. It is not that India is a poor country, but that her population is very poor. Something like 63½ per cent. of the money raised at the Centre has to be spent on the Army, the

cost of which has tremendously increased because it is a British Army and not an Indian army.

It is sometimes said that the Indians cannot defend themselves. It is certain that the British have not allowed the Indians to have an army, and part of the reason is that an Indian must not be put in control of white troops. I hope that when we come to Amendments on this subject the Committee of the Whole House will consider these matters. Education, as the Noble Lord said just now, may have improved a little during the last two years, but it is certain that education and social services cannot advance very far until the drain upon the resources of India is in some way stayed.

It has been said during these Debates that we should answer one another. No one has answered a single speech made from these benches during the whole of the Debate, and no one has challenged any of the statements as to the conditions of the masses in India that have been made from this Box and elsewhere during the discussions. I think that the reason they have not been challenged or that no attempt has been made to answer them is that there is no answer; they are facts. I become rather impatient when I hear the story of what we have done for India and the great benefits which we have bestowed upon her. In the article quoted by the Attorney-General to-day I paid whatever tribute I could to those who have gone out to India, whether as civil servants, missionaries, or doctors, or in any other capacity, for the work that they have done. But the position in India is exactly the same as it is in this country. You cannot cure poverty and destitution until you get down to the causes of poverty and destitution, and the causes in India are the same as in every other country, except that they are imposed in India by an alien Government. We read very often of the magnificent pageantry of the Viceregal court, and, when pictures of these scenes are printed, we ought also to see pictures of the infamous housing conditions in the cities.

We are sorry that in these discussions we should have to take what appears to be the same line as the friends of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill), because we would have liked, if there were three Lobbies, to have been in a Lobby by ourselves, and I am sure that the right hon. Gentleman would have liked the same sort of thing. But in this world we have to take things as they are, and there are only two Lobbies in the House. We oppose this Bill, as hon. Members have heard from our speakers time after time. I have seen the same sort of thing happen to other parties besides our own. I am told that the Lord President is to make a statement about the time to be allocated to the Bill, and, if so, I want him to know that we are not in favour of the Motion that this Bill should take up practically the whole of the time of this Session. The condition of the people question, as Carlyle would call it, is of equal importance to the India Bill, and I would like the Lord President to know that we intend to do our best to bring before the House the social and economic conditions of the country. We intend that the unemployment question, which, I am sorry to say, is not in quite as favourable a condition as it was a month or six weeks ago, shall not be allowed to go by the board.

I wish to answer something else which has been put forward. It is that our opposition to the Bill is not a real opposition, but only an opposition because we are the Opposition. I would not stand at this Box to oppose a Bill, not even the smallest Bill, merely because we are the Opposition. I have seen enough of that sort of jiggery pokery in this House, and I certainly do not intend to take a hand in it myself, and I have never done so. I want the House to understand that we have our point of view in this matter, and it is a very simple one. The voice of India ought to be heard in this country either through broadcasting or in some other way. The nation ought to know what Indians themselves are thinking of the Bill. We and other hon. and right hon Gentlemen know, because we have been told by our friends or by the Indian press, but that is not enough for the country. Indian speakers ought to be allowed to go to the microphone of the British Broadcasting Corporation and put their own case.

The Attorney-General quoted something which he had taken from an article I wrote in the "Clarion" back in the summer. I do not take back a word of

[Mr. Lansbury.]

that article. I sent for it, and I have read it, and it is in line with the policy adopted when the Prime Minister, who has been conspicuous by his absence from these Debates, was leader of our party. In our judgment, the Bill fails to give the people of India that advance in self-government to which we think they are entitled, and it does not fulfil the principle of self-determination. Our declaration, to which the Prime Minister agreed—it can be found in the Official Report many times during these discussions—can be summarised in this way. We declared at our conference at Blackpool for self-government and self-determination for the Indian people. Self-determination, as the Attorney-General will agree, means the right of the people themselves to decide their form of government. The point that I want to make on that is, that India is to be, from our point of view, a partner of her own free will in the British Commonwealth of Nations. This Bill does not fulfil that principle at all. The Indian people have not been consulted during the period of the present Government. There is no one on the Government side who will stand at the Box and say that the Bill is supported by any body of opinion in India. Until we can allow them to produce a Bill for their own government and for our acceptance, we cannot satisfactorily settle this matter.

While I was ill I read the story of Canada and Lord Durham's tremendous fight in order to bring about a settlement there. In the end, it seemed to me that he had to bring into all kinds of conferences, the French and the English and, finally, he evolved a scheme which every one admits enables two different races to live together. When the Australian Commonwealth was first discussed, this House did not sit down and draft a Commonwealth Bill. The Australians themselves did it, although they were only a population of a few millions of people, and that Bill came to this House and was accepted practically as it was sent here. Therefore, I do not think that anyone has any right to say that we in our party are wanting to break up the British Empire or, as I prefer to call it, the British Commonwealth of Nations, because we desire that the people of India themselves, those who take part in their affairs, in the Congress, in the trade unions, in the Liberal party and in the women's associations, should draft a Measure and send it to us for our consideration. I believe that all the talk about the Indians desiring to break away is only because they are continually treated in the discussions that we hear in this House as a sort of inferior race.

That brings me to another point. The Attorney-General as I understood him to-day, was at some pains to tell us that the right to secede did not exist in the Statute of Westminster. I think he will agree that if South Africa or Australia desired to go out of the British Commonwealth of Nations no one would say that we should go to war to keep them in. If you can say that of those two Dominions, or of any of the Dominions, what right have you to say that the Indian people must stay in whether they will or will not. My view of that matter is a simple one. I should like to say, in passing, that although I have not visited India for I do not know how many years, I have met Indians of all classes, many Princes, many of their representatives in the trade union movement and in the Congress, and I have never yet met any one of them, even Mr. Gandhi himself, who has advocated cutting the painter with this country and going free, away from us.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Free?

Mr. LANSBURY: I mean in the sort of language that the right hon. Gentleman would use, "cutting the painter." I am quite certain that of all the Indians whom I have met, and my hon. Friends here have met many of them, the one thing that they want is partnership, comradeship and friendship with us, but what they do say is that after 150 years of being under the control of British rulers it is time that they should be given an opportunity to rule themselves. That brings me to the speech of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. He made one of the best speeches in the Debates. He had not the torrential eloquence of the right hon. Member for Epping but he had many more facts to give us than had the right hon. Gentleman. I think he made the case for the Indians to be consulted better than any of us have made it, because he visited the Princes, and he has come back full of admiration for the

manner in which Indians rule in their own States, and full of admiration for their capabilities. Then why should we draw a line and say: "Here, the Indians can manage their own affairs, but there, they cannot." I do not understand it.

I cheered the Chancellor of the Duchy because I felt as he went along that he was making an excellent case for British India. That is why I cannot understand why he is not joining us in the Lobby to-night against the Bill. He knows perfectly well, and the Lord President of the Council knows perfectly well, that no Prince is going to be forced into this Federation. They are coming in of their own free will, with all their rights and privileges safeguarded. The only people who are not to be consulted and who are not to be asked to agree to the Bill are the masses in British India. It is an amazing contradiction to me, and I do not understand how the Chancellor of the Duchy is going to get away from that. Either the Indians can manage their own affairs or they cannot. Where they have an opportunity of managing their affairs, he says "Bravo, they are splendid." Where they have not got that chance, he says: "You are unfit for it."

The CHANCELLOR of the DUCHY of LANCASTER (Mr. J. C. Davidson) *indicated dissent.*

Mr. LANSBURY: There is another thing which the right hon. Gentleman knows, but I will remind him of it, and that is that the bulk of the population in the States are Hindus and not Mohammedans. They are of the same religion; and how in the name, I was going to say, of common sense, he can support this Bill passes my comprehension. The argument is put forward that Indians are always fighting one another about religion. We have done our whack of that in our time. Religion is the one thing about which people quarrel most because they have so little of it. Where people hold their faith strongly they do quarrel about it. But are we to point to their political differences? Here is the Tory party smashed almost to atoms. The right hon. Member for Epping is running up and down the country calling the Prime Minister—I would not like to repeat what he said about him at Manchester, and other people running about the country contradicting the right hon. Gentleman and the poor Liberals running in between trying to be a kind of Jack of both sides. A few are very rude because the Indians happen to disagree. You do not give them a chance to agree. You have not put the Bill to them in the same way as you have to the Princes. You say to British Indians, "Take it or leave it." That is all wrong, and it is another reason why we oppose the Bill. I hear tariff reformers arguing that India ought not to have the right to put duties on, ought not to have the right to control their own fiscal policy. That is a very extraordinary thing. Are not Indians entitled to say "Buy Indian goods," if you have the right to say "Buy British." Have they not the right to ask their own people to buy their own goods?

Sir H. CROFT: The right hon. Gentleman will agree that the whole of our policy has been to give complete free trade to Indian goods in this country, and all we ask is that we should have the same treatment.

Mr. LANSBURY: But if they do not sell their goods here or elsewhere you cannot get your pensions and allowances. The idea is that it is a good thing for us to manage our own fiscal affairs but not a good thing for 300,000,000 of people to manage their own industries in the best interests of their own people. Why should they not? No one can say that there is any argument, ethical or economic, which gives us the right to say that they should serve our interests first. I should like to see the Bill taken back and the Government send out not a big commission but three or four men, one a Member of this House—[*Interruption*]—I am not aware that there is anything to create hilarity in the suggestion that three or four people, one of whom should be a woman, should go to India to consult with British Indians about this Bill, whether in their judgment it can work, and whether it is a Bill which they think should be passed by this House. I should have thought it was rather a sane proposition coming from one who wants to see self-government in India, and who is quite certain that you cannot get a satisfactory system without the consent of the people in British India. I do not believe the Measure can work. You are foisting on the people of British India a system of government which will be costly and practically unworkable.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Hear, hear!

Mr. LANSBURY: One or two hon. Members have referred to General Smuts and his statement about Asia. We are all worried and distressed about trade and industry in our own country. You are not going to settle questions which will arise in regard to China and Asia generally by building great fleets or getting ready to fight in the Pacific. We are being told of the danger that is rising there. I should like to say to the House—I do not suppose anyone will take much notice, and I do not care whether they do or not, I am going to say it because I want to say it. It is a mad world. Here is General Smuts, one of the greatest thinkers of our time, or supposed to be, warning us of the terrible difficulties which are likely to arise in Asia. He said that we shall settle our affairs in Europe—I am not so sure about that—and then went on to speak about Asia. When I think of Sir Maurice Hankey going around on a pleasure tour and incidentally consulting first in Africa, then somewhere else and finally at Singapore, I ask myself whether the world of men and women is not going really crazy. What is it that people go to war about? What are we worried about in regard to India? We are afraid that we are going to lose a market, in some way lose the means of amassing wealth and finding occupation for our people.

We speak very often of abundance. In a way there is too much, but it is all artificial; there is not enough for the needs of mankind. There are teeming millions of people in China and in India who are living lives of which we who call ourselves Christians ought to be ashamed. It might be tolerable if we could not help it. Instead of first asking what are we going to give India in the way of government we should rather be consulting them on the bigger question as to how we can help them and their masses of people to get out of the quagmire of misery and destitution in which they live. I believe that we would do not only the world but our own country a service, if we took that line. I believe, further, that there is room enough in the world for the Japanese and all their tremendous productive power. The Chinese need to be lifted out of a terrible morass of poverty and destitution. But we are being warned against the rise of these people.

I would like to know——[*Interruption.*] I would like to know——[HON. MEMBERS: "Order, order!"] It does not matter; if I do not get listened to here, I get listened to elsewhere. This is the most contemptuous House of Commons that I have ever spoken in. One of my hon. Friends stood up to speak to-night and the whole House at once nearly emptied, and he was left to speak to a few dozen people. I personally am too old and I do not mind. I know perfectly well that I shall get as many thousands to hear me outside as will any Member of this House, so I am not bothering about the insults. On the last occasion a right hon. Gentleman said he was determined to be heard. I am determined to be heard. I think that the friends of the right hon. Gentleman might treat my friends a little more decently than they do. We are subjected to a continual chattering of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite. [HON. MEMBERS: "No!"] Excuse me, I can see and hear; I am neither blind nor deaf. But I will finish what I was saying. I think that if instead of doing what we are doing, that is passing a Bill which no one in India wants——

Mr. CHURCHILL: Hear, hear.

Mr. LANSBURY: If we endeavoured to pay back to the Indian people something of what we have taken from them all these years, and if instead of men like General Smuts and others fearing the rise of the Asiatics, we were to extend to them the hand of friendship and co-operation, and if the civilised Governments of the world, instead of relying on force and domination, were to ask those other nations in the Pacific to join us in controlling raw material and in sharing the market—there is raw material enough and there are markets enough for all the peoples of the world—it would be far better. Instead of doing that first of all we are forcing this Bill on the people of India, and at the same time we are talking of what may happen in the Pacific because of the rise of the Japanese.

An Empire cannot last when it is built on force and domination. All history proves that. Whatever we have not learned, we have learned that from the merest history book. Empires rise on military power, on the strength and force and domination that come from a virile race. But in this Empire of ours this

is what we are faced with: We may have the British flag flying over the seven seas; we may have the greatest finance houses in the world; but here, right in the heart of the Empire, we have a mass of people decaying both mentally and physically because we cannot find them the means of livelihood. What benefit is it that we rule in India if masses starve or are semi-starved here? What benefit is it to those in my constituency and in other constituencies, whatever you may do in India? You have to find some other and more excellent way, and the only more excellent way is to apply the principles that the late Bishop of Bombay wrote about recently in the "Times"—to have the wisdom of foolishness sometimes—and that is the wisdom which enables men to take big risks and to say that they will not put their trust in force, but will put their trust in giving to others the hand of friendship and brotherhood.

The hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. G. Nicholson) spoke the other day about his recent visit to India. As he was speaking I thought of that beautiful poem in which Rupert Brooke wrote:

> "If I should die, think only this of me:
> That there's some corner of a foreign field
> That is for ever England. There shall be
> In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
> A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
> Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
> A body of England's, breathing English air,
> Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home."

When I heard the hon. Member's speech I thought of the Indians in France, on the battlefields in the Great War. Why should not Indians think of India as Rupert Brooke thought of England? We think we know better than they do. We think we are superior to them and that we have a civilisation better than theirs. I do not believe we have. I believe they have as much right to their own country, as much right to rule and control their own country, and to love their own country, as we have to love ours.

10.15 p.m.

The LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Mr. Baldwin): If I may be allowed for one moment to refer to an observation or two which fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition just now, I should like to assure him that I always listen to his speeches with attention and with enjoyment, because, although I cannot always agree with him, and although sometimes life does not appear to me to be as simple as it is to him, yet I recognise that the right hon. Gentleman places before this House certain aspects of life which might otherwise be forgotten.

Before I proceed to the terms of the Amendment which has been moved by the Opposition I desire to inform the House of an agreement which has been reached with regard to the time to be devoted to the Committee stage of this Bill, and I should like to give expression to my own opinion, it I may, upon it. I think this agreement redounds immensely to the credit and the common sense and the responsible sense of the House. I am grateful to all sections of the Opposition for having joined in it, and I am also grateful to my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) for his reception of it and for the way in which he put it to the House. I am glad to say that when we get to the business part of this Bill we are going to deal with it, thoroughly, I hope, and with due deliberation but fairly speedily. I am sure we all feel convinced, whatever our views of the Bill may be, that when once the general principle is decided upon, it is not a good thing for India or for this country that too long a time should elapse before they know exactly what the Bill is, and it will also be agreed that the Bill should have an early opportunity of proving itself in action.

The agreement is this. The Government propose to allocate 30 days for the Committee stage of the Government of India Bill, and 26 of those days will be apportioned by a time-table Resolution, so that the House may have a definite programme, while the remaining four days will be reserved and drawn upon if it should be found that any particular apportionment is inadequate. I think that a very wise and sensible provision. It will enable certain great matters of principle to be debated at length and I think will constitute a useful precedent which might well be followed in the future. If this proposal can be worked with good will, the elasticity of such an arrangement will undoubtedly lead to the convenience of Members. I am pleased

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to be able to inform the House that the Chief Whip has secured a large measure of agreement with regard to the arrangement of the time-table. It is proposed that an informal committee representing all parties and all sections shall meet and draw up a time-table for the 26 days in the most convenient form, and the Chairman of Ways and Means has kindly consented to take the chair of that Committee.

I should like to be the first to give notice that very likely the stunt press to-morrow will say that the speed with which we are dealing with this Bill means that there is going to be an Election at Whitsuntide. I am told by my friends who read with more care than I do the hebdomadary issue of the papers on the Sabbath that there were wars and rumours of wars yesterday with regard to the Government; that we were said to be on our last legs and that an Election was imminent. I have no consciousness of being on my last legs, and I have not even considered the question of an Election yet. There is work to be done, and I hope that the House will get on with it.

Mr. GEORGE GRIFFITHS: The Prime Minister cannot get on his legs at all.

Mr. BALDWIN: There can only be one at a time. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping came in just after the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition had begun his speech. The Leader of the Opposition made an observation which perhaps I ought to pass on to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping. He wished that there were three Lobbies as it was no pleasure to him to appear in the same Lobby with the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. CHURCHILL: I can cordially reciprocate.

Mr. BALDWIN: My right hon. Friend will probably remember that immortal picture by John Leech representing the little Cockney sportsman saying to the Duke "The beauty of 'unting, your Grace, is that it brings together people who would not otherwise meet."

Now I should like to devote some little time to the consideration of the Amendment moved by the official Opposition, which will ultimately be put to the House. It is divided into two parts. One part says that:

"In the opinion of this House, no legislation for the better government of India will be satisfactory which does not secure the good will and co-operation of the Indian people by recognising explicitly India's right to Dominion status and by providing within it the means of its attainment,"

The second part continues:

"and which does not by its provisions as to franchise and representation secure to the workers and peasants of India the possibility of achieving by constitutional means their social and economic emancipation."

On the first part of the Amendment, I have not much to say; on the second part, I would rather speak at a little greater length. I regret very much that the spirit of the series of conferences which began several years ago, the conferences of all parties, ultimately failed. I always felt it of the greatest importance that so far as possible all the parties in this country should be as unanimous as possible on whatever scheme might be formulated for the government of India. That dream, I confess, has been shattered, but it was not till after the second Round Table Conference that the party opposite withdrew from co-operation. I only repeat that I regret it, and there is no more to be said on that, but I do feel about the first part of this Amendment a certain ambiguity. It is not clear to me exactly what it does mean. I listened to the hon. Member for Limehouse (Mr. Attlee), and he, so far as I could follow him in his speech, said that this phrase in the Amendment meant more than merely saying in a Preamble that Dominion status was the goal. It meant the recognition of the right of India to Dominion status and an admission that the Indians had the right to deal with their own constitutional affairs. But I am not clear what that does mean. I do not feel that it is clear and free from ambiguity as a statement, and that is a statement that comes from a spokesman of a party which may one day, in the near or the less near future, hold the responsibilities of Empire on their shoulders. When that day arrives it is as well, I think, that all such statements should be as clear as possible and as free from ambuguity.

We all agree probably that, so far as possible, there should be continuity in policy either abroad or in the Empire.

Alternations of policy at home may cause trouble and difficulty, but that alternation does not have the same effect at home that it has abroad. It always seems to me that a well defined, consistently pursued policy is the only one if we are to maintain our prestige and authority in the world, and that rapid alternations of policy, whether Imperial or foreign, only cause trouble in the long run and have in times past been the source of some of the greatest mistakes that we have made. The strength of our position both abroad and in the Dominions consists in letting people know exactly where we stand and just where we can be relied upon and in making them realise that our undertaking shall be fulfilled. Therefore, there is a real danger, it seems to me, of implying in words that you will undertake something that it is extremely problematical that you will be able to do in the near future. The Government have tried to base themselves on that principle. The statement that the Secretary of State made on behalf of the Government is clear and unambiguous. It preserves a line which successive Governments have taken. We stand on the pledge of 1919, endorsing, as the Secretary of State said, the interpretation placed upon it by Lord Irwin. This is what I want to draw the attention of the House to and this is really all I want to say on this first portion of the Amendment; the second in many ways is the more important.

What is the position of the Opposition to-day? In 1929 it was made quite clear in the Debates, both in this House and in another place, that there was no intention in the minds of the Labour Government of widening the aim of British policy prescribed in the Preamble of 1919. There was a desire, as was freely stated by the Secretary of State at that time, to get what he called a more sympathetic treatment. I do not think that is a phrase to which anyone could have any objection. There was a development of procedure by the setting up of the Round Table Conference. I do not know that there is any profound difference of opinion on that. But there was no extension of the objects of our policy. That was acknowledged beyond any question by the spokesman of the Labour Government at that time. I just wish to make that point clear before passing on to what I think is the gravamen of the Opposition Amendment. I feel strongly about it, because I do not think that the wording of the Amendment is justified, and I do not think I shall have much difficulty in showing that that is the case. It is, in effect, a statement alleging that the Constitution we are offering is a denial of democracy. The Amendment speaks of "provisions as to franchise and representation" which do not

> "secure to the workers and peasants of India the possibility of achieving by constitutional means their social and economic emancipation."

The hon. Member for Limehouse in the same speech seemed to represent a definite decision that India is to be ruled by the wealthy and the privileged. [HON. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear!"] I hear hon. Members say "Hear, hear," but that is not my view; it is not the view of the Government, and I do not think it can be the view of the House. It is true that the remarks in the hon. Member's speech which follow were particularly applicable to the Provincial Governments, as I understood him, but that is natural, because practically all the problems affecting the daily lives of the people and the practical questions of social and economic reform arise in the Provincial sphere. There is no difference in view—I was going to say between the Government and the party opposite—but I am convinced there is no difference of view in the whole House as to the urgency and importance of the social and economic consequences. There may be differences as to how to deal with them, but at this moment there is no difference as to their importance. These are the very questions which the British Government is largely precluded from dealing with from the very fact that they are rooted in the religious practices of the nation. We look upon this consideration as one of the main arguments which justify autonomy in the Provinces, and that was definitely the view both of the Simon Commission—or, as I think we now call it, the Statutory Commission—and of the Joint Select Committee.

I do take strong exception if it be said that, recognising these facts, we fail thereby to recognise what we have done and what, in my belief, we shall do, in India. It is due to us that there is any conception of unity in India, that there is a unity in India from which she has

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been estranged for centuries. That is due solely to us. We have established the rule of law and order, we have created the credit of India, we have run railways all over India, and we have built up a great system for the relief of famine and the prevention of disease. We have organised agricultural and veterinary services. We have developed institutions for education and for research. All these will go on. The inestimable value of these services is so well established and so well realised in the minds of Indians that they will not voluntarily let them deteriorate, nor seek to deprive themselves of the help which will still be available to them for their maintenance and their expansion.

I do not look upon it as a complete answer that in some services the maintenance may not always have been at the high level to which we are accustomed. We must remember that there has not yet been any real responsibility on the shoulders of the Indians, nor can we expect, with the best will in the world, that the standards maintained by men—or by the help of men—of the experience of those who have done that work can be reached in a moment. Of the desire for the services and of the spirit that will be put into them by India I myself have no doubt, but the problem of raising the standard, it may well be, of the masses of India cannot be resolved by such methods alone. When you have irrigated the last acre of land that remains to be irrigated in India and when you have brought into being all the schemes that you hay have, the growth of population, stimulated again by the *Pax Brittannica*, by our improvement in the health services, by our measures for dealing with pestilence, will still continue to press harder and harder upon the means of subsistence.

We are reaching the point, if we have not reached it already, when nothing will avail but profound changes in those deep-seated customs and habits of thought which we are powerless to touch, because they have their sanction in religion. They are matters with which only Indians can deal, and unless we place responsibility upon their shoulders and furnish them with a constitutional means for dealing with these matters, as we maintain we are doing, and as I hope to prove in a moment, we incur the risk of making ourselves responsible for the perpetuation of conditions that must always stand in the way of an improvement in the conditions that must always stand in the way of an improvement in the condition of the people. May I remind the House that such changes as are mooted would, in the more natural order, precede an advance in democratic government, yet owing to the very circumstance that their environment is a religious environment, the changes must be made after the democratic change has been made which gives the people tools to use to effect those changes, if they choose to use them.

It has been one of the principal objects of the Bill to establish that conditions, which are in the interests of the ordinary, common people, and not those of any narrow oligarchy, will prevail. We believe, and I think the Opposition believe this with us, that the voters of India will soon learn to use political power through the vote. Practical intelligence does not necessarily depend upon literacy, or I should abandon all hope for our people after reading yesterday's Sunday Press. The Indian peasant is no less shrewd than the peasants of other countries, and if his political leaders abuse his confidence, he will soon be aware of the fact, and will choose others. The electorate proposed amounts to some 35,000,000; that is, four or five times the present provincial electorate. It amounts to over 40 per cent. of the adult population, and three-quarters of them are rural voters; the majority, or all of them, will be drawn from what Mr. Gladstone called, the masses. The representation of the Depressed Classes is being increased out of all knowledge. The special representation provided for what might be called the privileged classes, that is the commercial interests, the universities and the landlords, does not amount to more than 7 per cent. of the total provincial seats, and in proportion to the present provision for these classes the representation in the future will be reduced. It will give these classes an adequate voice in debate, but it will not give them a disproportionate influence. If, as the Government believe, the peasantry are able to assert themselves through the vote, a franchise on the scale recommended will certainly enable them to do so, but the mere doubling of the franchise would,

therefore, have no effect one way or the other. The franchise now proposed is the largest that the administrative machine is capable of dealing with at present. There is nothing to be gained by creating an unmanageable electorate that could no more effect what is our desire than the electorate that we have brought into being.

I want to say a word or two on the subject that interests the Opposition as well as all other sections of the House—not that I think all sections of the House are not interested in what I have just been speaking about. I want to say a word or two about trade. There is a tendency, and there always has been in this country, to look at this country's trade with India from a sectional point of view, that is, from the Lancashire point of view. It is very natural that the cotton trade should figure largely in all discussions about Indian trade, because it has figured very prominently both in our political and in our economic life for the last half-century or more, and the story has not always been a happy one. I have no time, however, to go into that to-night. I want the House to remember that, while the cotton trade is the most important single item, it does not amount to more than a quarter of our total exports to India. Of the remainder, the group which includes the various metal and machinery trades amounts to about one-third of the whole of our exports, and the miscellaneous exports, including such things as chemicals, rubber manufactures, paints, paper, soap and woollen manufactures, add up to about twice the value of the exports of cotton yarn and textiles.

Mr. REMER: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the figures he is giving represents volume or value?

Mr. BALDWIN: Value, I think. Many of these industries have had practical experience of co-operation. Let us keep all these interests in our minds. There are elements who speak for Lancashire, and there are some elements in Lancashire that would like us to believe that they speak for British trade as a whole. But we have evidence of the views of British trade as a whole in the recorded opinion of the Association of British Chambers of Commerce, which, of course, includes the Manchester Chamber of Commerce. They passed unanimously, on the 2nd January of this year, the following resolution:

"The Executive Council of the Association of British Chambers of Commerce, having considered the Report of the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform, with special reference to the recommendations therein directly affecting trade relations with India, and having compared those recommendations with the views submitted on its behalf to the Joint Committee by Sir Alan Anderson, its President, resolve as follows:

'The Executive Council supports the foregoing recommendations made by the Joint Select Committee, including the safeguards against commercial, financial and shipping discrimination and penal tariffs. The Council trusts that such provisions will be included in the forthcoming Bill as may be found necessary to make those safeguards effective.'"

Those safeguards are included. I would like to make an observation or two on trade in general. Trade to-day is perhaps the greatest anxiety, not only of this country and of India, but of all countries, and trading and economic interests, especially now that all countries are seeking the maximum of independence, have become of greater and greater importance. But the House may remember that after Ottawa I said that we had laid the foundations of inter-Imperial trade, but that it would require real statesmanship in all parts of the Empire to build on those foundations. Though I say it, never were truer words spoken. In India we have begun, in the same way that we are attempting with the Dominions, to make trade arrangements freely by good will and in accordance with our mutual interests. I do not say it is going to be easy. It is not easy with the Dominions, and, indeed, it would be quite true to say that very often it is more difficult to come to happy financial arrangements with your cousins than it is with strangers. From all that I saw of India at Ottawa I am quite certain that she desires as much as we do that she may take her full part in trade agreements not merely with us but with the Dominions. I am convinced that that is the right line of development. I am not upset by one or two setbacks which have occurred. There have been some very encouraging results as well to put against them. But I am quite sure that, when these days of discussing the Bill are over, the less we discuss our trade

[Mr. Baldwin.]

relations with India or with the Dominions on the platform and the more we do it in council the better will be the result.

I wish to say a word on a subject on which we have had something said, but I want to try to think clearly on it. That is the question of pledges and breach of faith. The great pledge, of course, is the statement made, I think, in 1917 and in the Preamble of the Bill of 1919. I accept—I have said it on previous occasions—all that my right hon. Friend has said on that subject of the House of Commons being the judge of the pace of progress or whether it should be retrogression or progression. The Government of the day has a perfect right to adopt any of those methods if after examination it thinks right, but I wish to submit this to the House. We are bound, it seems to me, to go as far in the direction of giving effect to our pledges as our judgment of the present circumstances of India permits. As long as we do that, no one can charge us with breach of faith. If we fall short of that, we break faith with the Indian people and we are untrue to the tradition of Imperial policy. If our Empire to-day is loyal, as it is, it is largely because we have conceded with good judgment and in good time, the reasonable claims of the units of that Empire gradually to become the controllers of their own affairs. The principle applied elsewhere equally applies to India. The sole question is to determine to the best of our power the extent of the advance that is feasible. It is a very difficult question and a profoundly important one. We have spared no pains in this matter. I will not weary the House by repeating what has taken place in these years of examination before the final proposals were reached which are embodied in this Bill.

Infallibility in political affairs is unfortunately an unattainable ideal. I do not pretend to it and I doubt if any Member of the House does, but I am convinced that on this particular subject we shall never get nearer to it or with a more united opinion than we are now, because we have the opinion of the great majority of the Joint Select Committee and we have the endorsement of both Houses of Parliament. In those circumstances, if the Government failed, and if Parliament failed, to pass a Bill based upon these conclusions, in my view we should lay ourselves open to the reproach of having broken faith. I am not dismayed at these reports that have come from India about people who say they will not collaborate. All the official advices that we get are that the Bill will be worked in India. I will observe this. In time of conflict, such as has been going on about this Bill, and will until the Bill becomes law, there is uncertainty in men's minds. Many things are said, Many things are said in India. I would ask the House to take my right hon. Friend the Member for Epping. I was always under the impression that he wanted to get rid of the National Government. Then I am told on Sunday that he is perfectly willing to join one.

Mr. CHURCHILL: I said I would stand as a candidate on a Conservative and National footing, but I have never suggested for a moment that I was anxious to be included in my right hon. Friend's Administration.

Mr. BALDWIN: My reading was very cursory, but I thought the right hon. Gentleman specified the colleagues he would like to work with.

Mr. CHURCHILL: My right hon. Friend is thinking of the right hon. Member for Carnarvon Boroughs (Mr. Lloyd George).

Mr. BALDWIN: Perhaps we cannot have one without the other. One thing which my right hon. Friend asked me was whether it was possible to take the Bill in two parts. Much as I should like to meet my hon. and right hon. Friends, it cannot be done, and for this reason. The Bill stands as a whole, comprehensive, single scheme which cannot be divided, and Federation is an essential part. Speaking for myself, and, I know, for many of my colleagues, the views to which we have come in approaching this subject are such that we should be extremely apprehensive about granting the measure of Provincial Autonomy that is provided for if it were not for what we believe to be the security in Federation for India. I should like to say a good deal more, but other opportunities may arise in the Debates on the Committee stage of the Bill. I would, however, like to make one or two observations of a general kind. I remember very well the Debates of 1919. I re-

member the attitude of the Chamber when the Debates took place. I remember that there was no Division. I remember very well the speech made by my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft). Some words he used that day, divided as we are at this moment, represent my own views, except that he is not ready for them and I am. He said:

"I am glad to say that I am one of those who, many years before this Measure was introduced, had always held out the dream of India holding Dominion powers in the Indian Empire."

It is quite true that he qualified those words by saying: "Do not wreck the machine in your haste," or words to that effect. But I regret that that dream of his, in the process of the years, has now become a nightmare to him. It is a dream that I see approaching. He and I, and there may be a few more in this House—my right hon. Friend the Member for Sparkbrook (Mr. Amery), and my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Sir A. Chamberlain)—in our different capacities have worked for Imperial unity and Imperial preference for 32 years. We have had our difficulties, but we have seen that great policy adopted by the nation, and adopted, I venture to say, in such a way that it will be the policy of this country for many years to come. I believe that there is no part of the Empire that can play a greater part than India. We are offering her the opportunity of making a considerable step forward to the day when she will be a full partner with us in the Empire. Let us welcome into our Commonwealth of Nations the Indian people, the majority of whom, I am confident, have no greater ambition than to see their country play a worthy part in that Commonwealth. We have said, as I said one day in this House, no secular feud with the Indian peoples, as, alas, our people had in Ireland. There have been mistakes, but again, as I said, we have always had more friends in India than we have had enemies. Let us, in offering what we believe to be a precious gift, do it in no huckstering spirit, After it has passed through Parliament, let them know that we offer it willingly, generously, with a full heart and with full sympathy for the difficulties they will have to undergo, but in full confidence that, whatever the trials and tribulations may be through which they may have to work their way in the course of the next generation, the end is assured, and India with the rest of our Empire banded together indissolubly under one British Crown, may exist for the peace and for the betterment of this world for generation after generation.

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out, stand part of the Question."

The House divided: Ayes, 404; Noes, 133.

Division No. 45.] AYES. [11.0 p.m.

Acland, Rt. Hon. Sir Francis Dyke
Adams, Samuel Vyvyan T. (Leeds, W.)
Agnew, Lieut.-Com. P. G.
Ainsworth, Lieut.-Colonel Charles
Albery, Irving James
Allen, Sir J. Sandeman (Liverp'l, W.)
Allen, Lt.-Col. J. Sandeman (B'k'nhd.)
Allen, William (Stoke-on-Trent)
Amery, Rt. Hon. Leopold C. M. S.
Anstruther-Gray, W. J.
Apsley, Lord
Aske, Sir Robert William
Assheton, Ralph
Astor, Viscountess (Plymouth, Sutton)
Baillie, Sir Adrian W. M.
Baldwin, Rt. Hon. Stanley
Baldwin-Webb, Colonel J.
Balfour, Capt. Harold (I. of Thanet)
Balniel, Lord
Barclay-Harvey, C. M.
Barrie, Sir Charles Coupar
Barton, Capt. Basil Kelsey
Bateman, A. L.
Beauchamp, Sir Brograve Campbell
Beaumont, Hon. R.E.B. (Portsm'th, C.)
Benn, Sir Arthur Shirley
Bennett, Capt. Sir Ernest Nathaniel
Bernays, Robert
Bevan, Stuart James (Holborn)
Bird, Sir Robert B. (Wolverh'pton W.)
Boothby, Robert John Graham
Borodale, Viscount
Bossom, A. C.
Boulton, W. W.
Bower, Commander Robert Tatton
Bowyer, Capt. Sir George E. W.
Boyce, H. Leslie
Braithwaite, J. G. (Hillsborough)
Brass, Captain Sir William
Briscoe, Capt. Richard George
Brocklebank, C. E. R.
Brown, Col. D. C. (N'th'l'd., Hexham)
Brown, Ernest (Leith)
Buchan, John
Buchan-Hepburn, P. G. T.
Bullock, Captain Malcolm
Burghley, Lord
Burgin, Dr. Edward Leslie
Butler, Richard Austen
Butt, Sir Alfred
Cadogan, Hon. Edward
Campbell, Vice-Admiral G. (Burnley)
Campbell-Johnston, Malcolm
Caporn, Arthur Cecil
Cassels, James Dale
Cautley, Sir Henry S.
Cayzer, Sir Charles (Chester, City)
Cayzer, Maj. Sir H. R. (Prtsmth., S.)
Cazalet, Thelma (Islington, E.)
Cazalet, Capt. V. A. (Chippenham)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. Sir J. A. (Birm., W)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. N. (Edgbaston)
Chapman, Col. R. (Houghton-le-Spring)
Chapman, Sir Samuel (Edinburgh, S.)
Clarke, Frank
Clarry, Reginald George
Clayton, Sir Christopher
Cochrane, Commander Hon. A. D.
Colfox, Major William Philip
Collins, Rt. Hon. Sir Godfrey
Colman, N. C. D.
Colville, Lieut.-Colonel J.
Conant, R. J. E.
Cook, Thomas A.
Cooke, Douglas
Cooper, A. Duff
Copeland, Ida
Courthope, Colonel Sir George L.
Cranborne, Viscount
Craven-Ellis, William
Crooke, J. Smedley
Crookshank, Capt. H. C. (Gainsb'ro)
Croom-Johnson, R. P.
Cross, R. H.
Crossley, A. C.
Cruddas, Lieut.-Colonel Bernard
Culverwell, Cyril Tom
Curry, A. C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davidson, Rt. Hon. J. C. C.

Davies, Edward C. (Montgomery)
Davies, Maj. Geo. F.(Somerset,Yeovil)
Denman, Hon. R. D.
Denville, Alfred
Despencer-Robertson, Major J. A. F.
Dickie, John P.
Doran, Edward
Dower, Captain A. V. G.
Drewe, Cedric
Duckworth, George A. V.
Dugdale, Captain Thomas Lionel
Duggan, Hubert John
Duncan, James A. L. (Kensington, N.)
Dunglass, Lord
Eady, George H.
Eales, John Frederick
Eastwood, John Francis
Eden, Rt. Hon. Anthony
Elliot, Rt. Hon. Walter
Ellis, Sir R. Geoffrey
Elliston, Captain George Sampson
Elmley, Viscount
Emrys-Evans, P. V.
Entwistle, Cyril Fullard
Essenhigh, Reginald Clare
Evans, Capt. Arthur (Cardiff, S.)
Evans, R. T. (Carmarthen)
Fermoy, Lord
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Fleming, Edward Lascelles
Flint, Abraham John
Foot, Dingle (Dundee)
Foot, Isaac (Cornwall, Bodmin)
Fox, Sir Gifford
Fraser, Captain Sir Ian
Fremantle, Sir Francis
Galbraith, James Francis Wallace
Ganzoni, Sir John
Gault, Lieut.-Col. A. Hamilton
Gibson, Charles Granville
Gillett, Sir George Masterman
Gilmour, Lt.-Col. Rt. Hon. Sir John
Gledhill, Gilbert
Glossop, C. W. H.
Gluckstein, Louis Halle
Glyn, Major Sir Ralph G. C.
Goff, Sir Park
Goldie, Noel B.
Gower, Sir Robert
Graham, Sir F. Fergus (C'mb'rl'd, N.)
Greaville, Edgar
Grattan-Doyle, Sir Nicholas
Graves, Marjorie
Greaves-Lord, Sir Walter
Grenfell, E. C. (City of London)
Griffith, F. Kingsley (Middlesbro',W.)
Grigg, Sir Edward
Grimston, R. V.
Guest, Capt. Rt. Hon. F. E.
Gunston, Captain D. W.
Guy, J. C. Morrison
Hacking, Rt. Hon. Douglas H.
Hall, Capt. W. D'Arcy (Brecon)
Hamilton, Sir George (Ilford)
Hamilton, Sir R. W.(Orkney & Zetl'nd)
Hammersley, Samuel S.
Hanbury, Cecil
Hanley, Dennis A.
Hannon, Patrick Joseph Henry
Harbord, Arthur
Harris, Sir Percy
Harvey, George (Lambeth,Kenn'gt'n)
Harvey, Major Sir Samuel (Totnes)
Haslam, Henry (Horncastle)
Haslam, Sir John (Bolton)
Headlam, Lieut.-Col. Cuthbert M.
Heilgers, Captain F. F. A.
Henderson, Sir Vivian L. (Chelmsf'd)
Heneage, Lieut.-Colonel Arthur P.
Herbert, Major J. A. (Monmouth)
Hills, Major Rt. Hon. John Waller
Hoare, Lt.-Col. Rt. Hon. Sir S. J. G.
Holdsworth, Herbert
Hope, Sydney (Chester, Stalybridge)
Hopkinson, Austin
Hore-Belisha, Leslie
Hornby, Frank
Horne, Rt. Hon. Sir Robert S
Horobin, Ian M.
Howard, Tom Forrest
Howitt, Dr. Alfred B.
Hudson, Robert Spear (Southport)
Hume, Sir George Hopwood
Hunter, Dr. Joseph (Dumfries)
Hurd, Sir Percy
Hurst, Sir Gerald B.
Hutchison, W. D. (Essex, Romf'd)
Inskip, Rt. Hon. Sir Thomas W. H.
Iveagh, Countess of
Jackson, Sir Henry (Wandsworth, C.)
Jackson, J. C. (Heywood & Radcliffe)
Jamieson, Douglas
Janner, Barnett
Jennings, Roland
Jesson, Major Thomas E.
Joel, Dudley J. Barnato
Johnston, J. W. (Clackmannan)
Johnstone, Harcourt (S. Shields)
Jones, Henry Haydn (Merioneth)
Jones, Lewis (Swansea, West)
Ker, J. Campbell
Kerr, Lieut.-Col. Charles (Montrose)
Kerr, Hamilton W.
Kirkpatrick, William M.
Knight, Holford
Lamb, Sir Joseph Quinton
Lambert, Rt. Hon. George
Latham, Sir Herbert Paul
Law, Richard K. (Hull, S.W.)
Leckie, J. A.
Leigh, Sir John
Leighton, Major B. E. P.
Lewis, Oswald
Liddall, Walter S.
Lindsay, Kenneth (Kilmarnock)
Lindsay, Noel Ker
Lister, Rt. Hon. Sir Philip Cunliffe-
Little, Graham-, Sir Ernest
Llewellin, Major John J.
Llewellyn-Jones, Frederick
Lloyd, Geoffrey
Locker-Lampson, Rt.Hn. G.(Wd. Gr'n)
Lockwood, John C. (Hackney, C.)
Loder, Captain J. de Vere
Loftus, Pierce C.
Lovat-Fraser, James Alexander
Lumley, Captain Lawrence R.
Lyons, Abraham Montagu
Mabane, William
MacAndrew, Lieut.-Col. C. G.(Partick)
MacAndrew, Capt. J. O. (Ayr)
McCorquodale, M. S.
MacDonald, Rt. Hon. J. R. (Seaham)
MacDonald, Malcolm (Bassetlaw)
Macdonald, Capt. P. D. (I. of W.)
McEwen, Captain J. H. F.
McKeag, William
McKie, John Hamilton
McLean, Major Sir Alan
McLean, Dr. W. H. (Tradeston)
Macmillan, Maurice Harold
Macpherson, Rt. Hon. Sir Ian
Magnay, Thomas
Makins, Brigadier-General Ernest
Mallalieu, Edward Lancelot
Mander, Geoffrey le M.
Manningham-Buller, Lt.-Col. Sir M.
Martin, Thomas B.
Mason, David M. (Edinburgh, E.)
Mason, Col. Glyn K. (Croydon, N.)
Mayhew, Lieut.-Colonel John
Meller, Sir Richard James
Mills, Sir Frederick (Leyton, E.)
Mills, Major J. D. (New Forest)
Milne, Charles
Mitchell, Harold P. (Br'tf'd & Chisw'k)
Mitchell, Sir W. Lane, (Streatham)
Mitcheson, G. G.
Molson, A. Hugh Elsdale
Monsell, Rt. Hon. Sir B. Eyres
Moore, Lt.-Col. Thomas C. R. (Ayr)
Moreing, Adrian C.
Morgan, Robert H.
Morris, John Patrick (Salford, N.)
Morris, Owen Temple (Cardiff, E.)
Morris-Jones, Dr. J. H. (Denbigh)
Morrison, G. A. (Scottish Universities)
Morrison, William Shepherd
Moss, Captain H. J.
Muirhead, Lieut.-Colonel A. J.
Munro, Patrick
Nation, Brigadier-General J. J. H.
Nicholson, Godfrey (Morpeth)
Normand, Rt. Hon. Wilfrid
North, Edward T.
O'Connor, Terence James
O'Donovan, Dr. William James
O'Neill, Rt. Hon. Sir Hugh
Ormiston, Thomas
Ormsby-Gore, Rt. Hon. William G. A.
Orr Ewing, I. L.
Owen, Major Goronwy
Palmer, Francis Noel
Patrick, Colin M.
Peake, Osbert
Pearson, William G.
Peat, Charles U.
Penny, Sir George
Percy, Lord Eustace
Perkins, Walter R. D.
Peters, Dr. Sidney John
Petherick, M.
Peto, Geoffrey K.(W'verh'pt'n, Bilston)
Potter, John
Powell, Lieut.-Col. Evelyn G. H.
Pownall, Sir Assheton
Procter, Major Henry Adam
Pybus, Sir John
Radford, E. A.
Ramsay, Alexander (W. Bromwich)
Ramsay, Capt. A. H. M. (Midlothian)
Ramsay, T. B. W. (Western Isles)
Ramsbotham, Herwald
Ramsden, Sir Eugene
Ratcliffe, Arthur
Rea, Walter Russell
Reed, Arthur C. (Exeter)
Reid, Capt. A. Cunningham-
Reid, James S. C. (Stirling)
Reid, William Allan (Derby)
Renwick, Major Gustav A.
Rhys, Hon. Charles Arthur U.
Rickards, George William
Roberts, Aled (Wrexham)
Robinson, John Roland
Ropner, Colonel L.
Rosbotham, Sir Thomas
Ross Taylor, Walter (Woodbridge)
Rothschild, James A. de
Ruggles-Brise, Colonel Sir Edward
Runciman, Rt. Hon. Walter
Runge, Norah Cecil
Russell, Albert (Kirkcaldy)
Russell, Alexander West (Tynemouth)
Russell, Hamer Field (Shef'ld, B'tside)
Russell, R. J. (Eddisbury)
Rutherford, John (Edmonton)
Rutherford, Sir John Hugo (Liverp'l)
Salmon, Sir Isidore
Salt, Edward W.
Samuel, Sir Arthur Michael (F'nham)
Samuel, Rt. Hon. Sir H. (Darwen)
Samuel, M. R. A. (W'ds'wth, Putney)
Sassoon, Rt. Hon. Sir Philip A. G. D.
Savery, Samuel Servington
Selley, Harry R.
Shakespeare, Geoffrey H.
Shaw, Helen B. (Lanark, Bothwell)
Shaw, Captain William T. (Forfar)
Shepperson, Sir Ernest W.
Shute, Colonel Sir John
Simmonds, Oliver Edwin
Simon, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Sinclair, Maj. Rt. Hn. Sir A.(C'thness)
Skelton, Archibald Noel

Smith, Bracewell (Dulwich)
Smith, Sir J. Walker- (Barrow-in-F.)
Smith, Louis W. (Sheffield, Hallam)
Smith, Sir Robert (Ab'd'n & K'dine, C.)
Smithers, Sir Waldron
Somervell, Sir Donald
Soper, Richard
Spears, Brigadier-General Edward L.
Spender-Clay, Rt. Hon. Herbert H.
Spens, William Patrick
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Fylde)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Oliver (W'morland)
Steel-Maitland, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur
Stevenson, James
Stewart, J. Henderson (Fife, E.)
Stones, James
Storey, Samuel
Stourton, Hon. John J.
Strauss, Edward A.
Strickland, Captain W. F.
Stuart, Hon. J. (Moray and Nairn)
Stuart, Lord C. Crichton-
Sueter, Rear-Admiral Sir Murray F.
Sugden, Sir Wilfrid Hart
Summersby, Charles H.
Sutcliffe, Harold
Tate, Mavis Constance
Thomas, Rt. Hon. J. H. (Derby)
Thomas, James P. L. (Herefofd)
Thomas, Major L. B. (King's Norton)
Thompson, Sir Luke
Thomson, Sir Frederick Charles
Titchfield, Major the Marquess of
Todd, A. L. S. (Kingswinford)
Train, John
Tree, Ronald
Tryon, Rt. Hon. George Clement
Tufnell, Lieut.-Commander R. L.
Turton, Robert Hugh
Wallace, Captain D. E. (Hornsey)
Wallace, Sir John (Dunfermline)
Ward, Lt.-Col. Sir A. L. (Hull)
Ward, Irene Mary Bewick (Wallsend)
Warrender, Sir Victor A. G.
Watt, Captain George Steven H.
Wedderburn, Henry James Scrymgeour-
Weymouth, Viscount
Whiteside, Borras Noel H.
Williams, Charles (Devon, Torquay)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wills, Wilfrid D.
Wilson, Lt.-Col. Sir Arnold (Hertf'd)
Wilson, Clyde T. (West Toxteth)
Winterton, Rt. Hon. Earl
Womersley, Sir Walter
Wood, Rt. Hon. Sir H. Kingsley
Wood, Sir Murdoch McKenzie (Banff)
Worthington, Dr. John V.
Young, Rt. Hon. Sir Hilton (S'v'noaks)
Young, Ernest J. (Middlesbrough, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—
Captain Margesson and Mr. Blindell.

NOES.

Acland-Troyte, Lieut.-Colonel
Addison, Rt. Hon. Dr. Christopher
Alexander, Sir William
Allen, Lt.-Col. Sir William (Armagh)
Applin, Lieut.-Col. Reginald V. K.
Atholl, Duchess of
Attlee, Clement Richard
Bailey, Eric Alfred George
Balfour, George (Hampstead)
Banfield, John William
Batey, Joseph
Beaumont, M. W. (Bucks., Aylesbury)
Bevan, Aneurin (Ebbw Vale)
Blaker, Sir Reginald
Boyd-Carpenter, Sir Archibald
Bracken, Brendan
Braithwaite, Maj. A. N. (Yorks, E. R.)
Broadbent, Colonel John
Brown, C. W. E. (Notts., Mansfield)
Browne, Captain A. C.
Buchanan, George
Burnett, John George
Burton, Colonel Henry Walter
Caine, G. R. Hall-
Cape, Thomas
Carver, Major William H.
Cecil, Rt. Hon. Lord Hugh
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston Spencer
Cleary, J. J.
Cobb, Sir Cyril
Cocks, Frederick Seymour
Courtauld, Major John Sewell
Cove, William G.
Craddock, Sir Reginald Henry
Cripps, Sir Stafford
Critchley, Brig.-General A. C.
Croft, Brigadier-General Sir H.
Daggar, George
Davies, David L. (Pontypridd)
Davies, Rhys John (Westhoughton)
Davison, Sir William Henry
Dawson, Sir Philip
Dixey, Arthur C. N.
Dobbie, William
Donner, P. W.
Edwards, Charles
Emmott, Charles E. G., C.
Everard, W. Lindsay
Ford, Sir Patrick J.
Fuller, Captain A. G.
Gardner, Benjamin Walter
Goodman, Colonel Albert W.
Greene, William P. C.
Grenfell, David Rees (Glamorgan)
Gretton, Colonel Rt. Hon. John
Griffiths, George A. (Yorks, W. Riding)
Gritten, W. G. Howard
Groves, Thomas E.
Grundy, Thomas W.
Hartington, Marquess of
Hartland, George A.
Hepworth, Joseph
Hicks, Ernest George
Hunter, Capt. M. J. (Brigg)
Jenkins, Sir William
John, William
Jones, Sir G. W. H. (Stoke New'gton)
Jones, J. J. (West Ham, Silvertown)
Jones, Morgan (Caerphilly)
Keyes, Admiral Sir Roger
Kimball, Lawrence
Kirkwood, David
Knox, Sir Alfred
Lansbury, Rt. Hon. George
Lawson, John James
Lees-Jones, John
Lennox-Boyd, A. T.
Leonard, William
Levy, Thomas
Lockwood, Capt. J. H. (Shipley)
Logan, David Gilbert
Lunn, William
McConnell, Sir Joseph
Macdonald, Gordon (Ince)
McEntee, Valentine L.
McGovern, John
Maclean, Neil (Glasgow, Govan)
Macquisten, Frederick Alexander
Mainwaring, William Henry
Maitland, Adam
Marsden, Commander Arthur
Maxton, James
Milner, Major James
Nall, Sir Joseph
Nathan, Major H. L.
Nicholson, Rt. Hn. W. G. (Peters'fld)
Nunn, William
Oman, Sir Charles William C.
Parkinson, John Allen
Peto, Sir Basil E. (Devon, Barnstaple)
Purbrick, R.
Raikes, Henry V. A. M.
Rathbone, Eleanor
Rawson, Sir Cooper
Ray, Sir William
Reid, David D. (County Down)
Remer, John R.
Salter, Dr. Alfred
Sandeman, Sir A. N. Stewart
Sanderson, Sir Frank Barnard
Slater, John
Smith, Tom (Normanton)
Somerset, Thomas
Somerville, Annesley A. (Windsor)
Strauss, G. R. (Lambeth, North)
Taylor, Vice-Admiral E. A. (P'dd'gt'n, S.)
Templeton, William P.
Thorne, William James
Thorp, Linton Theodore
Tinker, John Joseph
Touche, Gordon Cosmo
Wayland, Sir William A.
Wedgwood, Rt. Hon. Josiah
Wells, Sydney Richard
West, F. R.
Williams, David (Swansea, East)
Williams, Edward John (Ogmore)
Williams, Herbert G. (Croydon, S.)
Williams, Dr. John H. (Llanelly)
Wilmot, John
Wise, Alfred R.
Wolmer, Rt. Hon. Viscount
Wragg, Herbert

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—
Mr. Paling and Mr. D. Graham.

Bill read a Second time.

Bill committed to a Committee of the Whole House for To-morrow.—[*Captain Margesson.*]

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA [MONEY].

Considered in Committee under Standing Order No. 69.

[Sir DENNIS HERBERT in the Chair.]

Resolved,

"That, for the purposes of any Act of the present Session to make further provision for the Government of India, it is expedient to authorise—

(*a*) the payment out of moneys provided by Parliament of the salary of the Secretary of State, of the expenses of his department (including the salaries and re-

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muneration of the staff thereof, whether transferred or subsequently appointed thereto, and expenses incurred by the Secretary of State for the purposes of the provisions of the said Act relating to Burma, of salaries not exceeding thirteen hundred and fifty pounds a year to the advisers of the Secretary of State under the said Act, of subsistance allowances not exceeding six hundreds pound a year to such of those advisers as are at the date of their respective appointments domiciled in India or Burma, and of such superannuation allowances, compensation allowances, retiring allowances, and additional allowances, such sums in commutation of any such allowances, and such gratuities, as may by virtue of the provisions of the said Act become payable out of moneys provided by Parliament, to or in respect of officers and servants who were on the permanent establishment of, or were employed in the United Kingdom, by the Secretary of State in Council;

(*b*) the payment into the Exchequer of sums from the revenues of the Federation of India, of the Governor-General in Council, and of the Government of Burma in respect of expenses of the department of the Secretary of State attributable to the performance by that department of functions on behalf of the Federation, the Governor-General in Council, or the Government of Burma;

(*c*) the charging on and payment out of the revenues of the Governments constituted by the said Act and of the Governor-General in Council of any expenditure which is, under the provisions of the said Act, to be charged on or paid out of the said revenues, respectively. (*King's Recommendation Signified*)—[*Sir S. Hoare.*]

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

The remaining Orders were read and postponed.

ADJOURNMENT.

Resolved, "That this House do now adjourn."—[*Captain Margesson.*]

Adjourned accordingly at Twenty Minutes after Eleven o'Clock.