BOOK X

National India, 1905-47

CHAPTER 1

The Political and Personal Thread, 1905-47

The Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon was the last blaze of the old self-confident benevolent imperialism, conceived by Wellesley, nurtured by the Panjab school, and disciplined by Dalhousie. In many ways it pointed to the future, but in its essence it was of the past. From 1905 India entered into a new era. Politically it marked the transition from paternalism to independence and from centralism to a twin society; economically it covered the emergence of India as an industrial power fully participating in world markets, and spiritually in the rapid acclimatization of two ancient societies to the bleak and bracing air of the twentieth-century western society. Through these years grew to maturity a twin nationalism which seems likely to dominate events in the next historical period. The essential motive power behind these changes was the desire of India to make terms with the modern world in her own way and in her own right, and her increasing ability to do so. The course of events was modified by a number of factors. It is a feature of this period that these factors were no longer mainly British in origin; they were increasingly both Indian and cosmopolitan. They were both personal and impersonal, foreign and domestic. Here it is proposed to trace in outline the thread of these influences, leaving the final chapters for the treatment of more particular themes.

Before 1900 the only outer world which really impinged upon India as a whole was the British. From Britain came impulses of policy, innovations and ideas, persons and institutions, and from Britain came resistance to certain Indian desires. Britain’s position in the world seemed to be unchallengeable and likely to remain so. The importance of the rest of the European world was probably underestimated, but as a whole the West loomed over the eastern world as irresistible in its power and incalculable in its intentions. The only hope lay in some sort of accommodation with it. The first break in this vision of supremacy came with the triumph of Japan in the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-5. The effect was all the greater because Japan had admitted the West later than India and Russia was thought to be the greatest European
power after Britain. Japan was now the ally of Britain. If she could be a great power, why not India? The next step was the revolution in China which was thought, prematurely as it proved, to herald Chinese freedom from western interference. The case of China, along with the Young Turk revolutions of 1908–9 and the Persian liberal movement all suggested that the path of progress consisted in using western techniques and ideas to regenerate ancient societies and then to use western weapons against western supremacy. The belief in an irresistible West from which nothing but pure imitation could procure even a modicum of self-respect was broken. India and the East might look forward to independent life again, albeit at the price of radical internal adjustments.

These events proved the prelude to the much greater shock of the first World War. The West was now seen to be fiercely divided at its centre as well as vulnerable at its periphery. American democracy emerged as a force which might counter the old western imperialism. President Wilson’s Fourteen Points and his doctrine of self-determination shot a thrill of expectancy through Asia, for whatever the difficulties of internal self-determination, it was certain that the Asian nations were determined in the desire to rule themselves. The American influence changed the emphasis of political discussion from constitutionalism and legal rights to the abstract rights of man. A more radical tone came into political discussion which, if it sometimes led to dangerous unreality, increased the self-confidence and determination of the new popular leaders. As Europe was seen to be no longer invincible, Britain was realized to be less powerful in the European system than had previously been thought. This new evaluation of Britain and the West encouraged the organizers of anti-government movements. What before 1914 would have seemed hopeless quixotry now became calculated policy. There was a limit to British power and there was no certainty of its continuance. This view was confirmed not only by the patent British exhaustion after the war, but by such developments as the League of Nations, where Britain appeared as an important but by no means dominant member, and India itself was represented. This changed mental estimate of Britain was confirmed by the events of the thirties, for the revival of German and Russian power relatively reduced that of Britain. At the same time distaste for the aggressive European dictatorships, too reminiscent of phases of the Indian past, increased sympathy with British ideals. The way was being prepared for the substitution of ideas for power as the basis of the Anglo-Indian connexion.

The second World War hastened the completion of this change of view. The spectacle of Britain fighting for her life and for European freedom warmed Indian hearts. But India saw no reason why she should not be free too. As the war closed it became clear that British power was now dwarfed by that of America and Russia, and that the future relationship of the two countries would depend as much upon India as Britain.
The second great factor in determining Anglo-Indian relations in these years was the British public. The general election of 1906 marked a great radical revival which swept into the limbo of the archaic notions of an endless wardship of a permanently adolescent India. The ideas of Gladstone and Ripon came now to be accepted by the larger part of both parties. If even Morley regarded full Indian self-government as a distant goal, as a hope rather than a policy, even men like Curzon and Lansdowne realized that progress must proceed along these lines. The Morley-Minto reforms were the first tentative steps in that direction. Opposition to them came more from members of the Indian services than the British political public; more political heat was engendered by the unseating of Calcutta as the capital than the enlargements of the councils or the admission of Indians to high places. The first World War increased this process of the change of opinion about India in Britain. The declaration of 1917 was the product of a coalition government drafted by Lord Curzon himself and prepared by a Conservative Secretary of State. It meant that Indian self-government had been brought forward, in British political thinking, from the horizon to the middle distance. It was still 'far off' but no longer in the dim distance. It could be aimed at and prepared for, not kept in reserve for the perorations of ceremonial speeches. The path to freedom was now to be planned, systematic, and regulated. The first fruits of this changed outlook were the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, with their planned reviews at the end of each decade.

Henceforth the controversy with Indian nationalists was essentially on the question of timing rather than on the goal of reform. Before the British governing class would willingly hand over power they wished to feel assured that there was someone to whom to hand it. The Congress claimed to be that someone, but during the twenties the British were not convinced. It was Lord Irwin (later Lord Halifax) who persuaded both British parties that advance must be rapid, that the Congress possessed a hard core of strength and must be dealt with as a negotiating party. The struggle of 1930–1 emphasized the correctness of this analysis. The declaration of 1929 that dominion status was the goal of Indian constitutional development was the outward sign of this change of mind. It brought Indian autonomy at a stroke from the middle distance to the forefront of the Indian political scene. The Act of 1935 expressed this new attitude in constitutional terms. Had no second World War intervened it is probable that full dominion status would have come within the following twenty years.

The third great force to be reckoned with was the growing power of Indian public opinion. Mid-Victorian Viceroy's had mainly British and service opinion to consider. The only visible concessions to articulate public opinion before 1900 were the measures of Ripon and the Indian Councils Act of 1892. Under Curzon the Congress protested but was disregarded. But Gokhale was on terms with Morley and the confidant of Hardinge, and from the post-war years Indian reactions to British
measures became a major concern to government statesmen. The procession of Indian public men to the Viceroy’s House ‘for consultation’ became a familiar spectacle, reaching its height in the time of Linlithgow. The opinion of the dynamic Indian minority was mainly expressed by Congress until the Muslim League under Jinnah, like a moon from the parent sun, broke away to form a second nucleus of opinion and power. The changes of opinion within the Congress itself were great, and can be related to the developments already touched upon. Curzonian disregard, Japanese success, and the advent of Liberalism to power in Britain stimulated the Congress to the first definite formulation of its political goal. This was defined in 1908 as a position identical with that enjoyed by Canada and the other self-governing colonies. This was really internal autonomy only, but served until the shock of the first World War for the majority of the political class. The war enlarged the general political horizon from autonomy to dominion status in its wider post-war sense. By the time the new dominion status was defined at the Imperial Conference of 1926 as virtual independence and legally embodied in the Statute of Westminster in 1931 the Congress had leaped forward (in 1929) to independence as its formal goal. But the new dominion status continued to satisfy the majority of nationalists. The real conflict of opinion within the nationalist ranks between the wars concerned methods. The issue lay between direct or constitutional, peaceful or violent action. These views were closely related but not identical, since one could be unconstitutional and also non-violent. This was in fact the course advocated by Mahatma Gandhi, and to which he periodically converted the main body of Congress. To his influence must be ascribed the minor part played by terrorism and violence in the Panjab and elsewhere, as also to his influence the growing discredit of constitutional methods of political agitation. After 1918 he converted a potentially violent revolt into a peaceful unconstitutional movement, which he called off when it threatened to degenerate into violence. Thereafter the pendulum swung from constitutional to direct action according to the Mahatma’s calculations of political chances, but never got destructive or seriously out of hand. The greatness of this achievement should not be underestimated because of the completeness of its success. In fact he may be said to have kept Indian opinion on the constitutional path, for his campaigns against government were so closely related to moral principle that they may be considered extra rather than anti-constitutional. He brought in the moral law to supplement rather than supplant official law, and thus saved India during the British period from large-scale terrorism, massacre, and race-hatred.

There only remains to record, in this connexion, the growth of Muslim opinion until it became mentally a separate nation. It was the direct foil to the growth of Congress power in necessarily mainly Hindu hands. This subject is dealt with more fully in Chapter 5 below.

We can now return to the thread of British policy from 1905. The
new Liberal ministry had John Morley, the radical biographer of Gladstone, for its Indian Secretary of State. He united an aristocratic temper with radical principles, and this may have helped so to foreshorten his political vision that he saw no trace of self-government in Indian political prospects. The new Viceroy, the great-grandson of the first Lord Minto, was a public servant rather than a party man, just returned from a successful constitutional rule as Governor-General of Canada. He realized the necessity of reform and by tact rather than drive made it possible to inaugurate the Morley-Minto reforms with the consent of both British parties and the acquiescence of the Indian services. His successor was Lord Hardinge¹ who as permanent head of the Foreign Office wielded great influence and enjoyed the confidence of King Edward. Cold and correct in his manners, he appears dull and opinionated in his memoirs. But this unpromising exterior and these chilling relics concealed a strong will, a lively intelligence, and a keen insight into the needs of the time. He was chosen in preference to Lord Kitchener, who ardently desired the post, and his appointment thus saved what might have proved a disaster to Anglo-Indian relations. He managed the Delhi Durbar and King George V’s visit to India in 1911, and carried through with unflinching firmness against much local opposition in Calcutta the transfer of the imperial capital to Delhi and the reconstitution of eastern India into the governorships of Bengal and Bihar and Orissa, with a revived Chief Commissionership of Assam. The Partition was thus undone and an historic site provided for the capital to the great satisfaction of national opinion. Calcutta (and Curzon) never forgave him for the loss of its status, but the act has been justified by the developments of half a century. It proved to be a vital administrative step in the preparation for Indian nationhood. Undeterred by attempted assassination in 1912² he cultivated close relations with Gokhale and other Congress leaders, and in 1913 he became a national hero by championing, in a speech at Madras, the cause of the South African Indians. The new Union ministry had severely limited Indian immigration and prohibited Indians in the Orange Free State ‘from trading, farming or holding real property’. His action resulted in the setting up of a committee of inquiry in South Africa which lead to the Smuts–Gandhi agreement. The Act which embodied the agreement was described by Mahatma Gandhi (then the Indian leader in South Africa) as the Magna Carta of South African Indians. This proved to be optimistic but the agreement eased the situation for the next ten years. Lord Hardinge’s régime marked something of a honeymoon between British and Indian Liberals, which might have lasted some years longer but for the outbreak of the first World War.

Lord Chelmsford’s appointment in 1916 is still something of a mystery, for though nearly fifty he had only held two Australian

¹ He was the grandson of the Governor-General of 1844–8.
² On his state entry into Delhi as the capital.
governorships. His chief claim to distinction was his fellowship at All Souls, which may have appealed to the classically minded Asquith. But Greek verbs are not necessarily talismans to statesmanship; India suffered from inadequate though well-meaning leadership. It is difficult to resist the impression that the interests of the country were sacrificed to the war crisis at home, which made good men anxious to remain near the centre of danger, and to the lack of force of the premier, who failed to insist on a suitable appointment. In quiet times Chelmsford might have ruled with success, but quiet times, as Auckland found earlier, do not commonly wait for quiet men. Chelmsford took charge just as the early enthusiasm for the allied cause had subsided, to be replaced by rising discontents, and on the eve of the discredit which befell the government of India on account of the Mesopotamian campaign. The difficulties of the developing situation would have taxed the energies of a Dalhousie. Chelmsford never recovered the initiative from the events which crowded upon him; he always appeared to be driven by influences which were too strong for him. He was more nearly an agent, and less of a policy-maker than any Viceroy in the last period of British rule. After the military trouble came the Declaration of 1917, elaborated in London. The subsequent policy of reform became identified with the masterful Edwin Montagu. Chelmsford’s part was by no means negligible, but it was subordinate rather than formative. He was unable to manage the increasingly restive public opinion and betrayed his lack of popular touch in the handling of the Rowlatt Bills. Nor was he more happy in dealing with the Panjab troubles in 1919. When he retired the new reforms had indeed been inaugurated by the Duke of Connaught, but the government was faced by a formidable non-co-operation movement led by Mahatma Gandhi, and an unprecedented alliance between Hindus in the Congress and Muslims in the Khilafat movement.

Lord Reading’s appointment by Lloyd George\(^1\) marked a return to the selection of men of cabinet rank for the Viceroyalty. A former Attorney-General, Chief Justice, and ambassador to the United States, he had a judicial temper well suited for dealing with the passions of the day and a diplomatic tact which imported a new touch in official dealings with political leaders. His mission was to make the constitution work, and this meant to create confidence and remove suspicion, to clarify, and to tranquillize. First he had to convince the country of the government’s continued strength. He divined the essential weakness of the Hindu-Muslim coalition, arrested Gandhi when he was temporarily discredited by an outbreak of violence, and thereafter did all he could to make the reforms a reality. His political genius was to perceive that the differences that divided the opposition were at bottom more acute than those which separated the different sections from the new self-governing governmental policy, and to have the patience and nerve to allow the coalition to break up of itself. By 1926 non-co-opera-

\(^1\) Lord Willingdon was very nearly selected.
tion had collapsed, the Muslims had broken with Congress and the Congress was torn with dissension. Lord Reading was often reproached for lack of positive action, but this view overlooks the fact that the situation as he found it demanded inaction rather than dramatic gestures. A busybody Viceroy at that juncture might have been disastrous. In quietness and confidence he found his strength. Lord Reading's weakness lay in his inability to give the country a positive lead, and so to capture its active sympathy for the policy of partnership, during the second half of his term when the country was disillusioned with its leaders and realized that the British would be with them for some time longer.

This effort was made by his earnest and influential successor. Lord Irwin gave up a cabinet post to shoulder the Viceroyalty, was the friend of the prime minister Baldwin, and the grandson of Sir Charles Wood, the coadjutor of Dalhousie. Never before had such moral earnestness been combined with such high-mindedness and ability. If some of the results of his actions were unlooked for their fruits were nevertheless notable, for it was he who was mainly responsible for convincing the British public that the partnership policy must be pursued to its logical conclusion on the one hand, and the Indian public that the British meant what they said on the other. Though lacking in the arts of popular appeal he came to be more respected and even loved than any Viceroy since Ripon. And this he achieved though the storm and stress of a civil disobedience movement. Probably no other Englishman could have emerged from such an ordeal with enhanced respect in India, or used the occasion for reaching and understanding with the national leader himself. His weapons were integrity, patience, and charity of mind, displayed in a personality of great ability. In the stressful year 1930–1 these qualities enabled him to pursue a steady course, withstanding the pressures of opinion at home, in India, and from within his own government. His reward was the creation of a new, if sometimes only half-convinced respect for British intentions and a new willingness to work towards the common goal. In the long run the declaration of dominion status as the goal of constitutional development proved more significant than the civil disobedience movement, and the round table conferences than the revival of this movement in 1932. Irwin's relationship to Gandhi somewhat resembled, in the altered circumstances, that of Hardinge and Gokhale before.

Lord Willingdon's earlier success in Bombay and Madras augured well; he was known to be liberal-minded; he was charming, competent, and experienced; his wife was the outstanding viceregal lady of the series. But he was sixty-five years of age and, in fact, lacked the energy to give the country the lead it needed. He presided urbanely over a government which in effect marked time while constitutional discussions proceeded in London. Political India, resentful of the represssion which marked the beginning of his term but weary of 'direct action' in the altered circumstances, adopted an attitude of watchful waiting.
Mahatma Gandhi
Willingdon’s break with Gandhi on the latter’s return from the second round table conference at the beginning of 1932 was perhaps unavoidable though unfortunate, but his failure to heal the breach later was a political blunder. He committed no major indiscretion as Chelmsford had done before, but, as in the case of Lord Reading, he failed to cover the newly strengthened hand of the government with the glove of the appealing gesture. Partnership remained as a policy as it had been in Reading’s time, but no longer as an ideal. Thus the last real opportunity of uniting Indian hearts and heads was lost.

By the time that the Government of India Act became law in 1935 Willingdon’s term was drawing to a close. It fell to Lord Linlithgow to supervise the new elections and launch the new constitution. He was chosen by the national government for this purpose and had prepared himself by long study of Indian affairs and the chairmanship of an agricultural commission. He was of cabinet standing though he had not actually held cabinet office. He was industrious, clear headed, patient, and capable; no other Viceroy worked harder or more conscientiously during his long term of office. His fault was over-application to detail which at times caused him to miss the wood for the trees; his patience sometimes ran to procrastination, as in the Bengal crisis of 1943, and he lacked the intuitive sense of ‘a tide in the affairs of men’. But for this, federation might have been a fact before the second World War broke upon the world in 1939. From then on he was immersed in war problems. He showed the ability to control and direct without the power of inspiring. His rock-like firmness under the threat of Japanese attack in 1942 and the subsequent Congress insurgence was of incalculable value. His personal contacts and conferences were unremitting, but he lacked that imaginative spark or personal warmth which might have prevented nationalist impatience from turning to hostility. It is too early yet to assess his place in the viceregal roll because we are imperfectly acquainted both with his difficulties and his personal share in events.

The same verdict must be applied to his two successors. Lord Wavell’s mandate in 1943 was to hold the country and to organize victory. In this he was very successful, and soldier as he was, came nearer to the hearts of the people than anyone since Lord Irwin by his handling of the Bengal famine on his arrival. From the time of the fall of Japan in August 1945 his mission was to prepare for a handover of power and to secure an agreed transfer to the two great parties. The time has not yet come to pass judgement on his efforts or on the wisdom of the government which recalled him. It must suffice to say that this least militant of soldiers and least obtrusive of rulers concealed a subtle and powerful mind beneath a gaited and taciturn exterior. In effect the last, he was by no means the least in the line of British Indian Governor-Generals. Lord Mountbatten came with an order to organize retreat, in military parlance an ‘operation’. That work was carried out brilliantly whatever may be thought of the
immediate consequences of partition in the Punjab. Here, too, historical judgement must hold its hand until time has added perspective to the scene and a key to the archives.

AUTHORITIES

The political and personal veils have not yet been lifted sufficiently for an authoritative bibliography to be possible. The *Cambridge History of India* provides a factual survey up to 1918, and H. H. DODWELL an incisive summary to the same year. G. T. GARRATT and E. THOMPSON, *British Rule in India*, carry the story to 1934. P. E. ROBERTS, *History of British India* (3rd ed., 1952), completes the period in outline.


RECENT PUBLICATIONS

S. R. MEHROTRA’s study *Indian and the Commonwealth, 1885–1929* (1965) is valuable and S. D. WALEY’s *Edwin Montague* (Bombay & London, 1964) is a personal memoir. Further titles of memoirs, etc. will be found under the separate chapter headings.
CHAPTER 2

Edwardian India

The years 1905 to 1914 form a clearly defined period in modern Indian history, which may be described as Edwardian India. The emphasis on efficiency and paternalism to be operated by a vigorous head and an enlightened bureaucracy was changed to a regard for self-government and self-expression. ‘Freedom rather than discipline, autonomy rather than efficiency’ were the new watchwords. There was a new approach to the now obviously rising Indian national party, a certain recognition that they, rather than the aristocrats or princes, were the dynamic minority in the country with whom the future lay. There was a response from the side of popular leadership and there developed a rapprochement between government and popular leaders which was not seen again until the brief two years before the second World War, and then not so completely. At the same time the impetus which Lord Curzon had imparted to all branches of the national life continued; material progress continued apace, and India was on the way to becoming an industrial state. Economically as well as politically she was developing the flesh of autonomy beneath the outer skin of the British raj.

The first problem which faced the administration was a personal one. Lord Minto, sent by the Conservatives to carry on Curzonism without Curzon and to work Kitchenerism with Kitchener found himself faced with a Liberal landslide in Britain and a radical Secretary of State in John Morley. Morley had supported Curzon on the Kitchener question and had denounced the Partition of Bengal. But politicians are rarely embarrassed for long by charges of inconsistency. Morley disappointed radical hopes by deciding to accept the fait accompli in both cases. The commander-in-chief became head of the army department and an ordinary member of council, and a military supply department was created. But in 1907 even this last relic of Curzonism was removed. In Bengal he accepted the fact of partition while emphasizing a prospective change of methods. This was revealed in the restraint put upon the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Sir Bampfylde Fuller, when he wished to disaffiliate two schools for allowing their boys to take part in political meetings. Fuller’s offer of resignation was accepted, to his surprise and indignation.

The second legacy with which the new government had to deal was the appearance of a terrorist movement, hitherto almost unknown in British India. There had been signs of this in western India during the plague crisis, but both the grievances and the ideals which stirred the
terrorists were local. Now it appeared in western India, Bengal, and the Panjab. In western India it was connected with B. G. Tilak's cult of patriotic orthodoxy; in Bengal it was a highly emotional cult linked with the goddess Kali and clearly the outcome of partition strains and stresses; in the Panjab activity seems to have been linked with agrarian grievances stimulated by men from down country. In Bengal the movement would seem to have been most directly linked with emotional stress arising from political causes; in Bombay the movement really marked the return to activity of an extremist group long underground; while in the Panjab, where the rule of law and regular administration had hardly yet endured for sixty years, the appeal to violence never lay far below the surface. The whole episode had for its background a price rise unprecedented in the previous fifty years. Political measures dealt with the major political discontents; it was the economic discontent which accounted for the spasmodic continuance of the movement throughout this period. A number of murders occurred, culminating in that of Sir Curzon Wyllie in London in 1909 by a Panjabi. The Secretary of State reluctantly sanctioned two Acts making incitement to murder felonious and the making of explosives illegal. Tilak was imprisoned for six years for incitement to murder when commenting on the Muzaffarpur outrage. With the advent of reforms the movement gradually died away, its last important shot being the attempted assassination of Lord Hardinge on his state entry into Delhi in 1912. The movement naturally caused alarm, but it was in fact the work of very small bodies unsupported by the main mass of political India. It was a symptom of the increasing self-consciousness of political India, and of the danger of neglecting to provide a safety valve of public institutions for the new desire for public self-expression.

A third inheritance of the new regime was the Tibetan question. The home government had already reduced the Tibetan indemnity from 75 to 25 lakhs payable in annual instalments of a lakh and had allowed the evacuation of the Chumbi valley after three instalments had been paid. The Indian government still saw Russians wherever snow lay, but Morley was determined to end the entanglement. In 1906 the Pekin convention secured Chinese agreement to the treaty of Lhasa; it secured a guarantee against any interference in Tibetan affairs provided China applied the same exclusion to the other powers. Finally, the Chinese were allowed to pay the indemnity on behalf of the Tibetans. When this was done in 1908 the home government ordered the evacuation of the Chumbi valley against the wishes of Calcutta. This could now be safely done because the whole situation in Asia had been transformed by the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907. The period of diplomatic flux mentioned in Book IX, Chapter 8, was now ending. The Anglo-Russian entente, following the Anglo-French entente of 1904, completed the arrangement of the European powers into two armed camps. To present a united front with France against Germany and Austria with their now hesitant partner Italy,
Britain and Russia found it expedient to settle their Asiatic differences. Both powers agreed to respect Tibetan territory, to treat it as a dependent of China, and to send no agents to Lhasa. In Afghanistan the existing position was confirmed. In Persia both countries agreed to respect Persian independence and also recognized Russian and British spheres of influence in north and south Persia. This was little more than a recognition of existing facts and gave little comfort to Persian patriots, but it did prevent a possible clash between the two powers and gave the nascent Persian national movement a chance to develop. This is the best that can be said for it. Sir Edward Grey, the Liberal Foreign Secretary, was never happy about it; the situation was summed up by the cartoonist who pictured the Persian cat between the British lion and the Russian bear while the bear said to the lion: 'You stroke the tail while I stroke the head and we can both stroke the back.'

The Tibetan settlement had unlooked-for results. To the Dalai Lama India now appeared as a friend and the Chinese, whose interference was increasing, as the enemy. His differences with them led to his flight to Darjeeling in 1910 whence he returned to Lhasa after the Chinese revolution of 1911 and the troubles which followed it had led to a decline of Chinese power.

We can now pass to the political measures which gave to Edwardian India its special stamp. Both Minto and Morley were convinced that something must be done to associate articulate Indian opinion more closely with the government. But neither were yet prepared to admit that something must be in the direction of elected representative bodies and eventual self-government. In the case of Minto this was natural; he was a man of affairs rather than a politician who accepted without question the oriental basis of Indian society. To him what was needed was an extension of the machinery for providing local advice to the ruling authority. The British Indian durbar must have Indian councillors as well as European. Morley's case was much more perplexing. The development of self-governing institutions on western lines had been liberal doctrine since the days of Ripon and Gladstone, and Morley prided himself on being an advanced radical in his opinions. But he also possessed an authoritarian temper which made him delight in his position as Secretary of State, and loath to part with any of its attributes of power in India. Yet his whole mode of thought was democratic and representative, which led him to cast the changes he proposed in a western mould. To the last he endeavoured to convince himself that the new measures would not lead to self-government, though he defended the extension of western institutions on the plea that the issue had been prejudged by the introduction of western education in 1835. In this he was right, but it remains a mystery why he could not carry the inherent logic of the situation a little further. But Morley, for all his bold words, was a somewhat timid man who shrank from the immense implications of his own actions. He is not the first man of words who has hesitated when it came to acting upon
them and before we condemn his hesitation we must remember the very different mental climate which prevailed before 1914. The sun of imperialism was still scarcely clouded and its total eclipse seemed then to be remote.

The two men, so different in their origins and natures, proved useful foils to each other. Minto’s patience enabled him to sustain urbanely his Secretary’s verbal shafts; Morley’s keen intellect and influence clarified issues and achieved results which Minto could not have attained without him. The efforts of both were needed to breach the defences of conservatism and vested interests in the India Council and the services in India. Credit belonged to both for the results which were achieved.

The problems to be solved may be divided into the securing of better representation of important Indian interests, the enlargement of the powers of the existing legislative councils, and the introduction of an Indian element into the executive. Minto’s first proposal under the first heading was the creation of advisory councils in addition to the existing legislative councils which would be representative of all classes including the princes, but possess no legislative or other power. This was an attempt to embody the durbar idea and to further the familiar policy of associating the princes with the imperial government which led to Lytton’s abortive ideas of an Indian peerage. The stone intended to wing two birds hit neither, for the princes refused to join such councils whose obvious impotence excited criticism. Recourse was then had to the enlargement of the existing councils, thus continuing the line of development on the western model which had proceeded since 1854. Election was the method of selection for the majority of non-official members. The election was in most cases indirect, being by provincial legislatures in the case of the centre, and by a great variety of public bodies representing various facets of the national life, in the case of the provinces. Municipalities and district boards, chambers of commerce and universities, landholders and special interests such as tea and jute all played their part. In addition to an increase of membership, the proportion of non-officials was increased. The Imperial Legislative Council consisted of 60 members with the Viceroy presiding as compared with 25 under the Act of 1892. There were 28 nominated officials including 1 from each of the 9 local governments, and 32 non-officials, of whom 27 were elected. The official majority, though small, was thus preserved, a fact which assumed great importance a few years later. In the provinces, however, non-official majorities were introduced.

The powers as well as the numbers of the councils were also enlarged. The councils under the 1861 Act could only consider Bills which were laid before them. The Act of 1892 allowed the asking of questions and a discussion on the annual budget. This permitted a general discussion on policy and gave Gokhale the opportunity for his famous annual budget surveys. The Act of 1909 permitted, in addition, the asking of supplementary questions and the tabling of resolutions.
The council still possessed far from full parliamentary powers, for no unofficial Bills could be introduced and no votes of censure tabled. But it was now well on the way to attaining that stature. The new powers accorded to it crossed the boundary from what was really an advisory body of counsellors only slightly connected with the general public to what was in fact a deliberative public body. A dignified semi-private council had become a miniature popular assembly. The government could neither be defeated or censured it is true, but information could be extracted on awkward subjects by means of questions and views on subjects of moment to the non-official world could be ventilated by means of resolutions. Full advantage of these facilities was taken by Gokhale, one of whose actions under the new régime was to table a motion in favour of universal education.

In the executive sphere no changes were made. The government could enforce its will at the centre through its official majority, and in the provinces through the powers of the governors. But the number of executive councillors in Bombay and Madras was increased from three to four, the way being left open for the appointment of a non-official, an executive council was created in Bengal, and provision made for the creation of executive councils elsewhere on certain conditions.

The appointment of Indians to high office was an object cherished by both Minto and Morley. It did not require specific legislative enactment in a racial sense, as a result of the Charter Act of 1833, but there were other obstacles. The presidency councillorships were limited to men with years of official service behind them, which virtually excluded Indians owing to the small number of Indian members of the civil service. This difficulty was surmounted by the provisions noted above. For the appointment of Indians to the Viceroy's Council and the Council of India in London there was no legal bar. But the members of both bodies resisted the idea, and when the question of an Indian appointment to the Viceroyal Council was put to the cabinet, it was rejected. Minto's proposal to his executive council, wrote Professor Dodwell, 'startled some of them, like a pistol pointed suddenly at their heads'. Morley had therefore to be content with nominating two Indians to the India Council in 1907.1 After the passage of the Councils Act Sir Satyendra (later Lord) Sinha was appointed to the Executive Council.

For all its caution and regard for precedent there are certain special features to be noted in the Act. The first was the introduction of the principle of direct election and of communal representation by a side wind, as it were. As soon as it was known in 1906 that constitutional changes were in contemplation a Muslim deputation asked Lord Minto for representation of Muslim interest through special constituencies. Their reason was that they were, as a group, under-represented on the bodies which were likely to be the electoral units, and that in any general electoral roll based on a property qualification, they would

1 Messrs. Krishna Govind Gupta and Sayyid Husain Bilgrami.
be under-represented on account of their poverty. The government's attitude to the Muslim community was now very different to what it had been after the Mutiny. As a result six special Muslim constituencies of landholders were created for the Imperial Legislative Council, and others in some of the provinces. This measure, which seemed but an expedient to secure representation for an important body of opinion, was one of the deepest import. It may perhaps be described as the official germ of Pakistan. A second feature was the emphasis on the experimental nature of the changes. Nothing was to be final; all was to be subject to review and modification. If this left the door open to a return to the durbar system of respectful advice by nominees it also left it open for advance towards responsibility and self-government. The emphasis on empiricism answered beforehand the arguments of those who said that India could never proceed on western lines, and made it possible for those who had scouted such developments to agree to them later without loss of consistency. A third but less significant feature was the syndicalist nature of the electoral bodies in the provinces. Had the system been extended India might have developed a unique type of guild constitution. But the urge to orthodox representation proved too strong and that development never occurred.

The Indian Councils Act, the core of what is generally known as the Morley-Minto reforms, became law in 1909. In many ways it only marked an extension of existing tendencies and in the after-years, when the impact of the first World War had radically changed the outlook of both India and Britain, it became customary to regard it as a rather small matter which created a disproportionate stir. But the significance of events must be estimated in relation to the circumstances of the time in which they occurred. A furlong's advance before 1914 required an effort which would have secured a mile afterwards. Viewed from this standpoint it must be adjudged a major landmark in the progress of India towards self-government. It did not, it is true, go beyond the consultative principle or impinge upon the powers of the irresponsible executive. But it reached the limit of that principle so clearly, that no further progress was possible without entering into new constitutional fields. And that progress was virtually inevitable since the whole Act exemplified the principle of development. It prided itself on its development from the past and it clearly implied a development in the future. Had there been no war, further progress would no doubt have been slower in coming, and the next step perhaps less radical, but progress there must have been. The Councils Act in this respect may be compared to the Anglo-French entente of 1904; as the latter implied an alliance without a commitment to one, so the former implied an evolution towards responsible government without any avowal of the process. In both cases statesmen denied vigorously what they knew to be implied and in both cases the logic of fact proved stronger than the dialectic of debate.

The working of the reforms fell to Lord Hardinge who succeeded
DELIHI DURBAR

Minto in October 1910. They were on the whole received well by political India. The Congress leaders, who had shed their extremist wing in 1907, looked with suspicion upon communal representation and were disappointed that no large popular constituencies had been created. They could not accept Morley’s disclaimer of fostering parliamantarism, but they had obtained more than they had expected and were privately gratified and hopeful. Hardinge worked on these feelings, not only through his public measures, but by maintaining private contacts with prominent men, and particularly Gokhale. A sort of unavowed consente grew up; the government and nationalist opposition were more nearly in accord than at any time between 1888 and 1937.

Hardinge’s first task was to organize the customary Delhi Durbar for the new King George V in 1911, which this time was graced by the king-emperor and his consort themselves. As a spectacle the durbar was magnificent and as a gesture it was successful. It marked perhaps the peak of British authority in India. But apart from pomp and prestige the occasion was marked by three significant Acts. The first raised Bengal to the status of a governor’s province. The second undid the partition of Bengal, and the third transferred the capital of India to Delhi. The promotion of Bengal to gubernatorial rank was long overdue on account of both the size and importance of the province. Hitherto the presence of the supreme government in Calcutta had hindered such a rational step, but the removal of the capital now made it politically possible as well as administratively desirable. It pleased the patriotism of the Bengali people and provided a solace for those who mourned the departed mighty. The partition was officially ‘re-arranged’. The two Bengalis were united to form the new governor’s province, Assam was again reduced to the status of a chief-commissioner, and a new province of Bihar and Orissa (including Chota Nagpur) was created. This settlement stood the test of time. It gratified Bengali sentiment; it proved administratively viable; it provided a focus for the backward but potentially important region of Bihar. The main criticism of the measure was that it represented a concession to agitation; but if that line were consistently taken, what concessions by authoritarian governments would ever be made? It was more plausibly said that bombs bred boons, but again, if bombs were allowed to block boons, what would there be save more bombs? The important fact was that the government of India was playing from strength and its action as a whole was received in that spirit. The third measure was one of the few secrets successfully kept in modern India. Calcutta and Lord Curzon at home were thunderstruck; neither forgot or forgave. But India as a whole was delighted. The action was certainly designed to appeal to Indian sentiment, but it had other solid arguments to support it. From the time of Lord William Bentinck (who had Allahabad in mind) suggestions were periodically made for moving the capital up-country. Lord Curzon himself thought of Ranchi. The remoteness

* For the development of the Congress party from 1900 see the next chapter.
of Calcutta from the main scenes of Indian action was the reason for the much criticized annual sojourn in Simla. In fact the government spent much longer there each year than in Calcutta. The argument for finding a more central situation was strong. The difficulty was to find a place whose historical associations might unite with practical convenience in justifying the large outlay which would be necessary. Delhi, covered by the Panjab and Frontier Province, possessing Mughul associations without important Mughul survivals, forming a vital centre of communications and being near to the Simla hills, now provided such a centre. The decision was justified in the circumstances of the day, and it proved even more important than its authors imagined. It provided the monument in stone which the British had hitherto lacked, and the new India with a ready made capital.

Lord Hardinge's years before the outbreak of the first World War were occupied in pursuing the lines of policy thus laid down. The new capital was occupied in 1912 and energetically developed by Sir Malcolm (later Lord) Hailey. The liaison with Congress was maintained by the appointment of G. K. Gokhale in 1912 to the Islington Commission on the Public Services. Owing to the war the commission did not report until 1917 but it served to advertise the paucity of Indians in the higher services, to make more difficult the opposition of vested interests, and to make changes inevitable. Gokhale was also sent to South Africa to state the Indian case during the dispute between the South African Indians led by the young Gandhi and the new Union government. In November 1913 the Viceroy electrified India by expressing 'the sympathy of India, deep and burning, and not only of Indians, but of all lovers of India like myself, for their compatriots in South Africa in their resistance to invidious and unjust laws'. This caused some dismay in Britain but was too popular to be disavowed. It led to palliative action in South Africa which solved, or at least postponed, the problem of the position of Indians in the union for another ten years.

Thus India was proceeding in growing trust between government and popular leaders, in increasing prosperity, and gathering self-confidence when 'the lights went out' in Europe as the first World War began.

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RECENT PUBLICATION

A full study of the revolutionary Har Dayal is by Emily C. Brown (Arizona, 1975).
CHAPTER 3

The First World War and the Montford Reforms, 1914–21

(i) The World War and after, 1914–21

The first World War forms the portal through which India entered the stage of the modern world from the hall of Victorian India, Edwardian India forming, as it were, the vestibule between them. India had enjoyed nearly fifty-six years of total peace. She had come to regard Europe as a region adjacent to Britain which itself was a place one went to and came from and was the mainspring of all significant happenings. In spite of the stirrings of the previous few years, India was still as a whole colonially-minded as she was still colonial in political status. The first reaction to the war was as to something exciting but remote, and it took some time for the realization to spread that the familiar Indian landscape was involved in the earthquake that had overtaken Europe.

The outbreak of the war in August 1914 called forth an outburst of loyal sentiment among both the political classes and the princes. All believed that the war would be short and that Britain would emerge on the winning side. For the princes it was an opportunity for action while popular leaders more soberly calculated that present service would mean future rewards. Lord Hardinge reaped the fruits of the existing goodwill to his government as well as the accumulated prestige of the British. There was a general cessation of embarrassing activity and a general support of war measures. In this atmosphere of goodwill, 1,200,000 men, 800,000 of whom were combatants, were recruited, £100 million were given outright to Britain for the prosecution of the war and £20–30 million contributed annually. India was denuded of both troops and officials so that at one time only 15,000 British troops remained in the country. The national pride was stirred by the dispatch of an Indian army corps to France in the autumn of 1914, and later of troops to East Africa, Egypt (for the defence of the Suez Canal), and to the Persian Gulf.

If the war had ended in six months as first expected the government might have emerged stronger than before. But as it lengthened year by year, growing ever more severe and more doubtful, feelings underwent a change. The collapse of Russia in 1915 ended all hope of a speedy finish. Enthusiasm turned to impatience and economic difficulties bred discontent and bitterness. The campaign against Turkey imposed a severe strain on the Muslim community, still in the main orthodox in its outlook and accepting the Turkish Sultan as the Khalīfah. The fall of Kut-el-Amara in Iraq in April 1916 and the revelations of mismanagement which followed shook the credit of a government thought
to be efficient as well as powerful. By the end of the second year of the war the mood of India had altered from enthusiasm to one of critical impatience, restlessness, and expectation of change. It was seen that the old world was in ruins, that Britain was neither all-powerful nor all-wise; expectations were raised, and tempers shortened. Economic difficulties leading to a rise in food prices, the over-zeal of recruiting agents in the Panjab and western India, and the great influenza epidemic of 1918 which swept away 5 million people accentuated these tendencies. By the end of the war India was as war-weary, restless, and irritable as Britain itself.

An early sign of discontent was the revival of revolutionary activity in Bengal and the Ghadr conspiracy in the Panjab in 1915. Its leader, Har Dayal, went to Berlin and endeavoured to foment a Muslim rising from Kabul, but his efforts never rallied large-scale support, and were troublesome rather than dangerous. On the constitutional side the developments were rapid and portentous. As the war proceeded all parties, both in Britain and in India, realized that things could never be the same again. In 1914 the prime minister Asquith said that ‘henceforth Indian questions would have to be approached from a different angle of vision’. All the parties concerned realized that the tempo of events had quickened; the difficulty lay in the fact that each of them had their own notions of the new scene. From this time onwards all were playing, so to speak, from the same ‘score’, but none were agreed on the timing. Lack of unison led to discordance and discordance to recriminations. In the process each unconsciously learnt from the other, British from Indian and Indian from British, Muslim from Hindu and Hindu from Muslim. Acknowledgements were few, but looking back on events we can remark rather on the speed with which all parties adapted themselves to the new situation than on their obstinacy in clinging to the past.

The instinct of the British was to postpone all positive action until the end of the war. Its protracted and doubtful nature and the magnitude of the Indian effort both in Europe and the Middle East, made this impossible. The first, almost unnoticed steps, were the ending of the system of indentured emigration for Indian labourers overseas and the raising of cotton import duties without a countervailing increase in the cotton excise. On 20 August 1917 the coalition government took a step which proved a starting-point for the developments of the next thirty years. In form it was a declaration made in the House of Commons by the new Secretary of State, Edwin Montagu. The keynote was the definition of the object of British policy in these words.

The policy of H.M. 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 Empire.

The united character of the declaration was shown by the fact that a
Conservative, Austen Chamberlain, had produced the first draft, while Lord Curzon had given it its final form. To the policy of Indian association with government administration and of responsible government were added the conditions of progress by stages and of judgement by the home and Indian government of the time and nature of each advance in accordance with the extent of the co-operation received and responsibility shown. In spite of the grandmotherly conditions attached, the declaration was an epoch-making document which officially committed Britain to the development of Indian self-government along parliamentary lines and permitted no logical distinction between that goal and dominion status. The next step was to decide on the first stage of the journey. The Secretary of State himself toured India during the cold weather of 1917–18 and produced with the Viceroy the Montagu-Chelmsford report in July 1918 at the height of the final crisis of the war. The report was unusually philosophic in style as well as unconventional in tone; it was perhaps more important for its general propositions than for its detailed proposals which seemed almost timid by comparison. The most controversial of these had a prophetic ring: ‘We believe that nationhood within the Empire represents something better than anything India has hitherto attained; that the placid, pathetic contentment of the masses is not the soil on which Indian nationhood will grow, and that in deliberately disturbing it, we are working for her highest good.’1 Thereafter a Franchise and Functions Committee toured India in 1918–19. Parliamentary consideration occupied most of the year 1919 and the reforms became law in December. The year 1920 was occupied in the necessary administrative preparations and the first elections, so that the new constitution was not inaugurated by the Duke of Connaught until March 1921. A sketch of the new system is given at the end of the chapter; here it is sufficient to say that the Act greatly enlarged the legislatures, providing general constituencies and an individual franchise; that it gave the provinces independent powers by devolution from the centre and introduced the principle of responsibility into the provincial executives by the device known as dyarchy.

The deliberate instancy with which the new measure was evolved may seem all too typical of Indian governmental procedure, but it was in fact mainly caused by the magnitude of the measure, by the necessity of consultation and administrative preparation, and by the exigencies of the parliamentary system. Nevertheless, the delay involved was both unfortunate and dangerous in the fluid situation of the end-of-war and post-war days in India. What was in the main necessary deliberation to secure general consent seemed to many in India to be deliberate procrastination. The tension which such a time lag created was increased by another factor. The tempo of thought of the British officials in India, while broadly set in the new direction, lagged sensibly behind that of the London authorities, and still farther, of course, behind that

1 Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms (Cd. 9109), p. 120.
of the Indian public. Reluctance to renounce the older glories was easily taken for stark hostility, distrust of innovations and untried personnel for contempt, expostulations and forebodings for attempts at sabotage. The British official and the home government too often appeared to be speaking from different briefs. If to this we add the social distresses caused by the influenza epidemic, economic dislocation, and the sudden return of thousands of men from abroad to a disorganized countryside, we shall find it easier to understand the complete change of outlook which overtook the Indian public between 1916 and 1919.

It is now time to turn to political India. In 1900 Indian nationalism was still in the main a tendency among middle class intellectuals rather than an organized political movement. The National Congress was a propaganda society rather than an organized political party. Its leaders like Gokhale, Tilak, Surendranath Bannerjea, Satyendranath Sinha, and Phirozeshah Mehta were already generals of note, but they were generals without a real army. The Congress was largely indebted to Lord Curzon for the next stage in its growth. His educational measure of 1903 touched an interest dear to the whole middle class while the Bengal partition was an issue which not only aroused passionate feelings in Bengal, but the sympathy of all educated India. These two issues, set against the background of the Russo-Japanese conflict, served to draw the new class together and to create a new sense of unity and common purpose. In Bengal, with its mammoth demonstrations and burnings of foreign cloth and its swadeshi movement, the excitement spread to the people at large, but elsewhere the middle class found itself endowed with a heightened self-consciousness and a quickened zeal. Instead of arranging for the decent demise of a dying institution, Lord Curzon by his measures welded a society of nationalists into a dynamic political party. By 1905 the Congress may be said to have captured the whole middle class and to have become the recognized organ of political India. But it had not as yet (except for a fleeting moment in Bengal) extended its influence to the masses. It could still be belittled as the plaything of the few, as unrealistic and doctrinaire.

During the Indian Edwardian era the Congress rapidly increased in stature while remaining confined to the class which gave it birth. It owed this to the distinction of its leaders, to the sanity of its judgement, and the recognition of its significance by the new governments in Britain and in India. It now underwent the experience of all nationalist movements, of tension between moderates and extremists. A small revolutionary group had already broken off; there remained a left-wing or 'extremist' group led by B. G. Tilak, anxious to continue uncompromising opposition to government and not proof against playing with the fire of violence, and a right wing or 'moderate' group who held to the tenets of classical liberalism, who saw in British officials their opponents but in British institutions their hope, who preached moderation in agitation and co-operation in action. A first sign of the new
status of the Congress was its acceptance in 1908 of the form of
colonial freedom enjoyed by the dominion of Canada as its political
goal. A second and more convincing sign was its handling of its own
inner tension. The clash between moderates and extremists came in
1907 at the Surat Congress. The meeting broke up in disorder because
of extremist attempts at coercion, but the episode ended with the
assertion of moderate supremacy under Gokhale, Bannerjea, Sinha,
and Mehta. A year later Tilak, whose nationalism had always been
provincial and sectarian rather than all-Indian, and who had never
been a constitutionalist except from expediency, was imprisoned for
six years for incitement to violence. From then until the outbreak of
war the moderates dominated the national movement. A third sign of
growth was the part played by the leaders in elaborating and working
the Morley-Minto reforms. In the rarefied atmosphere of Edwardian
India they showed that they could breathe freely, could affect decisions
and influence policy. The countenance of the government increased
their prestige because it was seen that it was moving in their direction.
The caution of its steps was not yet felt to be a serious hardship because
hitherto it had not moved at all.

The outbreak of war brought forth, as has been mentioned, an out-
burst of enthusiastic support from the middle class for the allied cause.
This was in itself an expression of its inner satisfaction with the de-
velopments of the last few years. But the mood soon changed. Expecta-
tions were largely increased, to be soured by British delays and the
inconveniences and disappointments of the lengthening war. In these
circumstances the extremists, who were virtually the nationalist opposi-
tion party, found a new hearing. In 1915 Gokhale, the wisest and
ablest of the moderates, died at the early age of forty-nine. In 1916
Tilak, who had been released in 1914, emerged from his retirement.
His views had enlarged since 1908 while his skill remained unchanged.
He showed that he could now think both nationally and politically. He
joined forces with Mrs. Besant and her Home Rule League, persuaded
the Muslim League to support his programme in the agreement known
as the Lucknow Pact,¹ and captured the Lucknow Congress at the
close of the year. Henceforward the once formidable ‘moderates’
receded into the background. Within a few years they had meta-
morphized themselves into the Liberals, eloquently led by Srinivasa
Sastry; thereafter they gradually dissolved into a number of generals
without followers and finally became a group of elder statesmen of
distinction. They remained fruitful of ideas, as in the case of Sir Tej
Bahadur Sapru; they were influential in private, and useful in public
as go-betweens between government and Congress in times of diffi-
culty. But they could no longer lead or command. They were the
political harcarahs of modern India.

The Congress was now committed to a demand for immediate home
rule while the government was contemplating ultimate self-government.

¹ The Lucknow Pact included the recognition of separate electorates.
The aim was the same, but the rate of progress different. A third member of this untuneable political orchestra might now be mentioned. Until 1906 the Muslims followed in the main Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's advice to hold aloof from the Congress. In 1906 the prospect of reform led them to form the Muslim League and to ask for special or communal constituencies which were embodied in the Morley-Minto reforms. Now they suddenly awoke to life. They had been made uneasy by the misfortunes of Turkey before 1914; the further disasters which befell her thereafter caused widespread alarm. Britain was dismembering the Caliphate and therefore must be resisted. Thus the Khulafat movement was born, to be fostered by the pan-Islamic propaganda of the Young Turk movement, and brought to strength by the dismemberment of Turkey at the close of the war. The Muslims therefore joined forces with the Hindus in a joint national movement before the incredulous eyes of the British.

Such an alliance was loose and unstable, but for the moment the current of events bore it along. A final and personal element has now to be added to the situation, the advent of the Gujarati lawyer Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. Gandhi (soon to become Mahatma or 'Great Soul') came from an orthodox bania group in Kathiawar, which he defied in order to read for the bar in London. He spent many years in South Africa where he experimented on diet, developed pacifist convictions, and led a life of simplicity and service to mankind. He was a stretcher-bearer in the South African war. He championed the rights of Indians in the Union and led with great skill and determination a satyagraha movement against the government which extorted the respect of General Smuts and the admiring sympathy of Hardinge and India. In 1915 he returned to India, a disciple, as he believed of Gokhale. For some time he studied the situation; it was not till 1918, when Tilak was dying, that he came to the front. Then his western training enabled him to deal with the British on equal terms, his simplicity of life captured the imagination of the masses, whose feelings his uncanny insight enabled him to arouse at will, and his non-violent views alternately gratified, baffled, and exasperated the government. Here was the predestined leader of the New India, the man who could unite in a common purpose the peasant and the townsman, east and west, orthodox and radical. Gandhi was responsible for two great features in the next stage of nationalism. He made the movement nation-wide and he kept it non-violent.

The dissonance which finally brought the members of the orchestra into conflict concerned the administration of the public safety laws. At the outbreak of war the government armed itself, amid general consent, with a Defence of India Act, and possessed in addition Regulation III of 1818. By 1916 both sides were beginning to feel irked by these restrictions, the Congress because they interfered with the new home rule propaganda and the government because they

1 Literally 'soul force'.
wanted more powers against terrorism and revolutionary activity. Here again there was no real difference of principle between government and Congress, but a fateful difference of emphasis. Nationalists supposed that the new powers were really intended against themselves, and were strengthened in this belief by the fact that the government probably over-estimated the extent of the revolutionary menace. In 1917 a committee of inquiry was appointed under an English judge, Mr. Justice Rowlatt, which produced much evidence of detailed subversive activity and made proposals for strengthening the law. Publication almost coincided with that of the Montagu-Chelmsford report; the two were read together. But whereas the proposals of the first were embodied in Bills in a matter of weeks, action on the other was delayed for a year. A now excited and irritable public read the worst into this unfortunate but only partly avoidable conjunction of events. In November 1918 the war ended; the government, however, continued with the Bills because the Defence of India Act would now lapse and they wanted to retain emergency powers. Indian suspicions thus seemed to be confirmed. The two Bills allowed judges to try political cases without juries in specified cases and gave provincial governments power of internment. ¹ The Bills became law early in 1919 against the vote of every non-official Indian in the Imperial Legislative Council. The government's miscalculation of the original emergency was revealed by the fact that the powers of the Acts were never actually used.

The wind of suspicion and resentment was now fanning the already smouldering discontents of the people. To economic dislocation were added the special irritants of the first post-war months; the return of soldiers to altered conditions for which no preparations had been made, the mania of speculation leading to further distress, the failure of the average European to realize the radical changes which had occurred in India and the world, and the heady wine of self-determination now being decanted by President Wilson, who seemed then to be the master of Europe and the prophet of a new age. At this moment Mahatma Gandhi stepped forward into leadership. He organized hartals in protest against the Rowlatt Acts which speedily turned into riots in Delhi, Ahmedabad, Lahore, and Amritsar. In Amritsar on 13 April a prohibited meeting was held in the large enclosed space known as Jallianwallah Bagh, and was broken up without warning by a body of troops under General Dyer. The casualties were officially estimated at 379 killed and over 1,200 wounded.² This was followed by the proclamation of martial law, severe punitive measures, and humiliating orders.³ Order was restored in the Panjab but a scar was drawn across Indo-British relations deeper than any which had been inflicted since the Mutiny. Racial feeling was intense. That resentment did

¹ Regulation III of 1818 only applied to the supreme government.
² There was only one exit which the troops occupied.
³ e.g. public floggings and a crawling order.
not flame into an insurrection must be attributed to two factors. The
government (though tardily in October) appointed a committee of
inquiry⁴ which censured General Dyer and criticized the administra-
tion of martial law. Secondly, the national movement was now led by
Gandhi who set his face against violence, though many of his actions
seemed to incite it. He was, in a sense, the government’s best friend at
that time. In August 1920 the Congress rejected the new reforms and
launched under Gandhi’s leadership a non-co-operation movement
with the government. This included resignation of office, withdrawal
from schools and colleges, and boycott of the coming elections. The
movement gained an unprecedented all-India character from the sup-
port of the Muslims of the Khilafat movement, led by the adventuring
brothers Muhammad Ali and Shaukat Ali. It was at this time that Pt.
Motilal Nehru of Allahabad donned the Congress uniform of khaddar
to become shortly second only to Gandhi in authority. The positive
success of the movement was limited; resignations from office were
few, the schools and colleges were dislocated only for a time, one-third
of the electorate went to the polls.² Congress was not represented in
the new councils, but ministries were formed, and the new system
worked. But great excitement prevailed for many months marked by
periodical outbreaks of violence always regretted by the Mahatma. By
the end of 1921 it became clear that the movement had passed its peak
and that the government would not be overthrown. The Moplah out-
break in Malabar in August 1921 alarmed moderate opinion; the
attempted boycott of the Prince of Wales on his visit in the autumn of
1921 led to further violence and early in 1922 Lord Reading used the
occasion of the Chauri-Chaura outrage to arrest Gandhi himself. He
was sentenced to six years imprisonment but released early in 1924.
Thus the movement ended in apparent failure. But things were never
the same again. These events formed a psychological watershed in
the development of modern India. The ‘colonial’ mentality had been
thrown off; nationalists felt themselves to be members of an adult
nation, able to treat with the government on equal terms. The govern-
ment, on its part, never sank back into its old complacency. It realized
that the Congress was a formidable force, though it was not yet willing
to admit that it was the dominant force in the country. It was confirmed
in the new policy, if by nothing else, by the knowledge of the con-
sequences of any attempt to go back on it. After four years of storm
and stress government and people began slowly and painfully to
approach each other again.

(ii) The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms

The principles of the Montagu-Chelmsford proposals, usually now
known as the Montford reforms, were the recognition of self-govern-
ment as the goal of British policy in India, the realization of that

¹ Report of the Hunter Committee 1920 (Cmd. 681).
² In 1952 the percentage was about 50.
principle by instalments and judgement by the British of the moment and manner of taking each step as a result of the co-operation received and responsibility shown. This last provision was secured by the necessity of parliamentary enactment for each change in India and the provision in the Act for an inquiry at the end of each decade as a basis for further action. Self-government meant responsible parliamentary government, for nothing further was heard of the old 'durbar' principle. The introduction of responsibility into the constitution was effected by means of 'dyarchy', the invention of the apostle of imperial unity, Lionel Curtis. Self-government, which had begun at the local level, was now to be extended to the provinces. In addition the principle of devolution was introduced as a means of giving greater scope to the provincial governments, and of forming a half-way house between the old centralism and federalism for which opinion generally was not ready.

We will begin with the policy of devolution, which intimately affected the whole administrative structure. Hitherto the provinces had been subordinate to the centre in both finance and legislation. Devolution was effected in the financial sphere by abolishing the former 'divided heads of revenue'. Instead, revenue from irrigation, excise, land tax, and stamps was allotted to the provinces, while that from customs, income tax, posts, salt, and the railways went to the Centre. The provinces were thus endowed with a certain financial flexibility with which to finance their own measures. In the legislative sphere powers over certain subjects devolved upon the provinces, the others being retained by the Centre. Power to legislate on certain subjects, though provincialized in administration, were also retained by the Centre. Exceptions could be made with the Governor-General's sanction. The powers retained by the Centre were those which pertained to the whole of India; they included defence, foreign affairs, communications, commerce, customs, the all-India services, and in addition the 'residuary' powers of legislation, or all powers not specifically handed over to the provinces, were retained by the Centre.

In the executive sphere there was no radical change in the central government. The executive was still irresponsible. But power was taken to enlarge the executive council and it was understood that, apart from the Viceroy and the commander-in-chief, half of the members would be Indians. In practice there were three Indian members in a council of seven besides the Viceroy. In the provinces the new principle of dyarchy was introduced. This was in idea a division of the administration into halves, one of which was controlled by councillors responsible only to the governor and ultimately the Secretary of State, and the other by ministers responsible to the provincial councils as well. To match this division of executive authority there was also an

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1 The founder and for many years editor of The Round Table.
2 Land tax, income tax, stamp duties, and excise.
3 e.g. irrigation, High Courts, prisons, factories, new universities.
administrative division. The subjects of administration were divided into ‘Reserved’ and ‘Transferred’. The reserved subjects were directly controlled by the governor and his councillors. These covered land revenue and laws, justice, the police, irrigation, and labour matters. The transferred subjects were controlled by the responsible ministers. They were local self-government, education, public health, public works, agriculture, and co-operative societies. The broad distinction made was between ‘law and order’ and ‘nation-building’ departments.

Great changes were made in the legislative councils. At the Centre a bicameral legislature was instituted. The Legislative Assembly replaced the Imperial Legislative Council with 106 elected and 40 nominated (25 of them official) members. It sat for three years with the power of earlier dissolution. To it was added a Council of State of 61 members, with an unofficial majority, elected for five years. The official ‘bloc’ at the centre thus disappeared. The provincial councils were also largely increased.¹ At least 70 per cent. of their members were to be non-official. To accord with the new status of the provinces and make the new system possible the United Provinces, the Panjab, Bihar and Orissa, and later Burma (1923) and the Frontier Province (1932) were given both governors and councils.

The possibility of deadlock between an irresponsible executive and the legislature at the centre was obvious. The partially irresponsible executive in the provinces might be faced with hostile council votes or a refusal of the council to support any ministers. These difficulties were provided for by the reserve powers of the Viceroy and governors. The governors were empowered to administer the transferred departments themselves in the event of the absence of ministers. Viceroy and governors were given a power of legislation by ordinance valid for six months in the event of emergency. They were allowed to pass Bills over the heads of the legislatures if they were certified to be necessary for the safety and tranquillity of India and also to authorize expenditure in the same way. This was the process known as ‘certification’.² Certain heads of expenditure, such as that of defence at the centre, were not subject to popular vote.

The array of new councils was backed by a new electoral system. This had two features, the nature of the franchise and the arrangement of constituencies. Apart from certain special qualifications, such as the possession of a university degree or membership of a chamber of commerce, the general qualification was based on property, the payment of income or house tax in the towns and of land tax in the country. This was graduated from provincial council to Assembly and Council of State, being varied according to local conditions with the purpose of enfranchising the same class of persons everywhere. The system gave over 5 million voters to the provincial councils, nearly

¹ The Bengal Council had 139 members, Madras 127, and Bombay 111.
² In the provinces this power was limited to reserved subjects.
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1 million for the Legislative Assembly and some 17,000 discreet persons for the Council of State.

The constituencies were divided into 'general' and 'special'. The special constituencies, as before, represented special interests such as universities, great landholders, industry, and commerce. The general constituencies contained the voters provided by the franchise explained above. But they were further divided not as to qualification, but as to the class of the voter. This was the principle of communal representation, first allowed in 1909 for six Muslim seats and now reluctantly but widely extended. The general division was between Muslims and non-Muslims for all elections, on the plea that Muslim voters (through poverty) being fewer in numbers proportionately to their population in any given constituency, would be in danger of being swamped by the others. But the Sikhs had such constituencies in the Panjab, the Indian Christians in Madras, together with Anglo-Indians and Europeans in certain provinces. Communal representation had come to stay.

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RECENT PUBLICATIONS

CHAPTER 4

The Montford Era

Few Acts of state have aroused more criticism from more varied points of view than the Government of India Act of 1919. It was criticized for going too far and for not going far enough, for being unworkable, and for working all too effectively. But a constitutional measure must be judged by all its results, by what it makes possible in the future as well as by its defects and omissions. Over the years a noticeable shift in the centre of critical emphasis was observable. At first the question at issue was—does the Act accomplish anything positive at all? Both British and Indian left wing thought believed that it did not. During the middle twenties the argument revolved round the question, are the reforms workable? From the late twenties attention was concentrated on the further query, what is the next step? The first shift in emphasis implied acceptance of the positive content of the reforms, and the second of their practicability. Much criticism assumed the permanence of the reforms, whereas they were avowedly temporary and progressive in character. On the whole we may say that the criticism which insisted on the incompleteness of the reforms proved to be valid, that which pronounced them unworkable or pernicious, fallacious. The real case for consideration is how far they were suited to cover a transitional period in constitutional development. Here it may be said that on the whole they achieved their purpose in spite of serious defects in design. They transferred enough power to induce enough people to take part in them to make them workable. They proved capable of large developments along the lines laid down; they prepared the way for full responsibility and for federation; they provided an invaluable training in public life for the rising governing class. On the other hand they did not go far enough to disarm serious opposition from without or to remove suspicion and irritation from those who were within the system. The reforms were valid in that they provided a habitable posting house towards freedom. The achievement, all things considered, was great; the only sound criticism is that it might have been greater.

The great need of the day was to create confidence in the new (or newly revived) official outlook, and this could only have been achieved by going farther than the circumstances of the time in Britain made possible. A central point of criticism was the plan of dyarchy. The system certainly created suspicion without and friction within. The association of ministers with an irresponsible executive tended to discredit them in the eyes of ardent patriots; they were blamed for acts which were not their own. The more successful joint consultation proved, the more sweetly governors charmed ministerial fears and
doubts, the more the ministers were apt to be suspected of straying from the path of patriotic virtue and to find their popular position being undermined. In the executive itself lack of popular control over finance caused some ministers to feel that their departments were being deliberately starved of funds, while governors of good will found their efforts to promote development handicapped by the lack of flexibility in the provincial revenues. The sources of income like customs and income tax which were readily expansible were allotted to the Centre. Another difficulty, this time on the British side, was that the unpopular but necessary work of government, like the raising of taxes and the suppression of riots, fell to the irresponsible or reserved half of the administration. The British suffered all the odium for this kind of public act, while the ministers, for reasons given above, received little of the credit for their often real constructive work. There was another hindrance to the working of the reforms which was not in the nature of the reforms themselves. Apart from the Congress party, which represented national aspirations in general, there were few well-organized political bodies. With the Congress holding aloof, it was therefore easy for governors to fall into the habit of ‘making a majority’ by drawing ministers from opposing or self-seeking groups, who by their faction or inaction threw discredit on the system. Compromising coalitions usually produce loaves and fishes for the politicians rather than bread for the multitude.

The first period of the Montford era covered the term of the first elected councils from 1921 to 1924. The Congress boycotted the elections but could not prevent one-third of the electors going to the polls, or the moderates, who had dissociated themselves from the non-co-operation of Mahatma Gandhi, from being elected. Ministries could therefore be formed, but they worked under the shadow of an external opposition of unknown strength and of great prestige. At the centre there were no ministers, but it was soon seen that the disappearance of the official ‘bloc’ had made the supreme government newly sensitive to nationalist opinion. The Rowlatt Acts and the Press Act of 1910 were repealed, social measures dealing with conditions in factories and mines and workmen’s compensation were passed, a beginning was made with the Indianization of the officers’ cadre in the army under Lord Rawlinson’s guidance, Indian membership of the new League of Nations was secured, her status alongside the dominions in the Imperial Conference assured, and the cause of Indians overseas (specially in South Africa) championed. The Lee Commission recommended a process of Indianization which would give Indians half the appointments in the senior services. On the other hand, the salt tax was doubled by the new process of certification in order to balance the budget. The loss of credit proved greater than the financial gain. The government had to cope, through 1921, with the non-co-operation movement and to quell frequent riots especially on the occasion of the Prince of Wales’s visit. The negative aspects of these measures loomed more largely in the
popular mind than the positive; suspicion was not dissipated and political India, if somewhat impressed in spite of itself, remained unconvinced of the sincerity of British intentions.

In the provinces ministries were duly formed, but only in one province, that of Madras, was a single party strong enough to take office unaided. This was the Justice or non-Brahman party. Here the governor, Lord Willingdon, seized the opportunity to make its leader, the Raja of Panagal, Chief Minister, and so produce a semblance of responsible party government. This ministry carried out educational reforms and a radical measure affecting temple endowments which a British administration would have hesitated to launch. In the Panjab there was also a hopeful experiment. Mian Fazli-Husain and Choudhri Chothu Ram (both later knighted) combined to form an intercommunal zamindars' or country party in opposition to the urban interests. The party did not actually control the new council, but through the personality of its chiefs it dominated the situation. A programme of educational expansion was launched, land reforms carried through, and the troublesome problem of the control of Sikh gurudwaras settled in 1925 by handing them over to a popularly elected board of trustees. Elsewhere the ministries represented coalitions of groups and were hampered in their working both by financial stringency and the lack of firm public support.

Behind and beyond the councils ran the ebb and flow of the Congress non-co-operation movement. Mahatma Gandhi stimulated enthusiasm by promising seivray within a year and with the unprecedented support of the Muslim Khilafatists there seemed for a time to be no limits which he might not pass. But in Lord Reading he found a statesman who had, in his own way, an insight as keen and a mind as subtle as his own. At first Reading's attitude seemed to be one of olympian detachment. He was in fact studying the situation and measuring the strength of the opposing forces. He divined the essential difference of their aims and the temporary nature both of their union and of the enthusiasm of the component parties. His policy was to watch and wait for the inherent disharmonies and illusions of the parties to reveal themselves and do his work for him. In the case of the Congress the maintenance of enthusiasm depended upon swift success. It could not stand either the steady functioning of government or a prospect of prolonged disorder or anarchy. The maintenance of government during 1921 and the disorders which punctuated that year and the beginning of the next provided both conditions. Enthusiasm cooled, apprehension increased; the final arrest of Mahatma Gandhi in 1922 came as a relief. A reaction within Congress began against his leadership which covered the next few years. The other half of the coalition had much weaker roots than the Congress. Its leaders were adventurers and its followers were buoyed up by romantic sympathy for the Turkish Khalifa. The reckless hijrat or migration to Afghanistan proved disastrous. Muslim fears were
calmed by Ataturk's success in reviving Turkey and the ground was
finally cut from beneath the feet of the movement by the deposition of
the Sultan in 1923 and the abolition of the Khilafat itself in 1924. In
these circumstances Muslim fears of Hindu domination reasserted
themselves and the fraternalism of 1921 was replaced by the communal
riots of 1924.

The collapse of the non-co-operation movement in 1922 left India
in the relaxed condition of a patient released from a bout of fever.
There was an interval of apathy in public feeling which was used for
a reconsideration of policy by the various parties concerned. On the
Muslim side there was a return to Indian horizons and communal
politics. Within the Congress there was much heart-searching. The
new doctor's non-violent drug had failed to effect the promised cure
of foreign domination. The sceptics were led by C. R. Das, the last of
the great Bengali leaders, and Pt. Motilal Nehru from the United
Provinces. In 1923 it was determined to fight the new elections and to
endeavour to subvert the reforms from within the councils. This was a
point gained for the new régime for it admitted the significance of the
councils; it was also a threat to it because a paralysis of the ministries
might prevent the public from realizing their possibilities. The Congress
secured forty-five seats in the Legislative Assembly, which was enough
to fulminate, but not to wreck without assistance, and enough strength
in Bengal and Bombay to prevent the formation of ministries. For the
next few years the party fulfilled the role of a nationalist opposition at
the centre, and was increasingly involved in the give and take of group
politics in the provinces. A splinter group of 'Responsivists' under
M. R. Jayakar appeared in Maharashtra. C. R. Das died in 1925, when
it seemed that he might be about to play with Lord Birkenhead the
part of a Gokhale with Morley in working out a fresh understanding
between government and people. Leadership therefore remained with
Motilal Nehru, a powerful figure who introduced a new discipline into
his party. These years saw, on the government side, the final abolition
of the hated cotton excise in 1926, the acceptance of the Lee Commissi-
ion's proposals for the equalization of the proportions of Indians and
Europeans in the higher services, and the mission of Srinivasa Satr
to South Africa followed by his appointment as the first Agent-General
in 1926. But it was in the political question that the Congress and the
country were really interested. For all the criticism of dyarchy it was
now clear that there could be no going back on it; one could therefore
only move forward. The Congress aim was to accelerate this move-
ment, but it remained divided as to methods. As the disillusionment
which came from the failure of non-co-operation led to the decision
for council entry, so disappointment with the fruits of constitutional
obstruction led to a revival of interest in direct action. The Mahatma,
in ostentatious political retirement, carried on his 'untouchable' reform
or harijan movement while waiting for an opportunity to swing the
Congress again to his views. In these circumstances all sections looked
to government for a sign, which might prove a signal for renewed action or real co-operation. About 1925 government and Congress were in fact cautiously approaching one another. A conjunction like that of 1909 did not in fact take place because the political classes were still emotionally too disturbed by the events of 1919–21 to look at government proposals dispassionately, and because the ruling class in Britain, itself still suffering from the shock of war strain, was not ready to take bold enough views or able to find sufficiently imaginative leaders. By 1928 the mood of accommodation had gone, and events moved towards a fresh trial of strength.

The first response made by government was the appointment of the Muddiman Committee\(^1\) to examine the working of the reforms. The majority recommended minor amendments, but the minority, led by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, declared that dyarchy was unworkable. This enabled all parties to unite in a demand for the grant of full self-government, to be worked out in its details by a round table conference. In April 1926 Lord Irwin succeeded to the Viceroyalty. His first move to promote communal harmony failed to divert the leaders from their constitutional concern. The government then looked to the Montford provision for periodical inquiries and determined to anticipate this provision by appointing a Commission two years earlier than legally required. The Simon Commission, led by Sir John (later Viscount) Simon and including the Labour prime minister to be, Mr. Attlee, was appointed in November 1927. This act had exactly the opposite effect to the one intended. Instead of conciliating, it outraged Indian sentiment, instead of providing a threshold for co-operation, it proved the prelude to conflict. The cause was the omission of any Indian from the Commission, which seemed, in the new atmosphere of the twenties, to cast a slur on the ability of Indians in political matters, to flout the idea of a round table conference, and by emphasizing parliamentary control of Indian affairs to challenge the right of Indians to work out their own destiny. It thus proved a great rallying cry for negative national sentiment. On its arrival and during its travels in 1928–9 it was subjected to hostile demonstrations and boycotted wherever Congress influence was strong enough. Its report was a constitutional masterpiece but its presence a political disaster. The Congress reaction went further than organizing processions and displaying black flags. The Madras Congress of 1927–8 declared independence to be the goal of Indian development. An All-parties Conference during 1928 produced a scheme of self-government known as the Nehru report,\(^2\) and at the end of the year Mahatma Gandhi was welcomed back to the Congress fold. During 1929 Congress opinion hardened behind the demand for a round table conference as the prelude to the grant of dominion status. In Britain a Labour government succeeded Baldwin’s Conservative administration and this enabled Lord Irwin to make a

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\(^1\) Presided over by Sir Alexander Muddiman, the home member.

\(^2\) Its principal authors were Pt. Motilal Nehru and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru.
further effort to bridge the gulf between British and nationalist opinion. Taking his political life in his hands he persuaded the new government to agree to a declaration, in the autumn of 1929, that dominion status was the goal of British policy and that a round table conference would be called to consider the next step. This represented a major achievement, for the declaration was agreed between the major elements of both British parties, which meant that it was now generally recognized that nationalism was the dominant and not simply a major force in India. It is impossible not to regret that the responsible national leaders did not recognize that in Lord Irwin they had to deal with a statesman of unusual insight and perception as well as of great influence and that the situation promised greater results from co-operation than intransigence. But the die went the other way. After appearing to accept the new proposals Mahatma Gandhi insisted on a promise that the round table conference should draw up a scheme for full dominion status with immediate effect. On its refusal, regardless of a revival of terrorism in the Panjab, he launched a civil disobedience movement with his walk from the Sabarmati ashram to the sea at Dandi where he symbolically manufactured illicit salt.

The civil disobedience movement of 1930 differed from the non-co-operation movement in 1921 in important respects. Both were avowedly non-violent, but whereas the first was passively the second was actively revolutionary. The first hoped to bring government to a standstill by withdrawing from the administration; the second sought to paralyse the government by the mass performance of specific illegal acts. Mass arrests would arouse general sympathy and gradually make administration impossible. In choosing these acts the Mahatma showed his usual insight into the popular mind, for he began with the illicit manufacture of salt in defiance of the unpopular salt tax. Though the Muslims gave him little support1 he received a wide response from Hindu India, hypnotized once more by his combination of Hindu saint, western lawyer-politician, and poor man’s friend.2 One feature of the movement was the wide participation of women in the record of whose emancipation it proved a landmark. Another was the boycott of British goods which proved widespread and effective. A third was periodic outbreaks of violence such as the Sholapur riot and a serious rising in the Frontier Province. At this juncture the Simon Report was published and added fuel to the flames by limiting itself to proposing self-government in the provinces. Its suggestion that responsibility at the Centre should await a federation joined by the princes was thought to be tantamount to indefinite postponement. But the Viceroy persevered amid riots without, divided counsels at home, hesitations and doubt within his own circle. He succeeded in convincing the moderates that the government was not bound by the conclusions of the Simon

1 They had been alienated by the rejection of separate electorates in the Nehru Report.

2 There were about 60,000 arrests in the first six months of the movement.
Report and in inducing them to attend the round table conference. The conference itself proved to be a turning-point in Indo-British relations. For the last time during the British period the princes gave a lead by declaring their readiness to accept federation (and with it some curtailment of their powers) provided that the principle of responsibility was introduced into the Centre. In so doing the princes hoped, among other things, to reduce their dependence upon London; they did not, as was at first supposed, intend as a class to introduce any element of responsible government into their own states. But the prospect of States participation altered the Labour government's attitude to the introduction of responsibility at the Centre, and this in turn modified the Congress attitude to the government's policy. When the conference concluded on 19 January 1931, the prime minister, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, announced that 'with the legislature constituted on a federal basis', the government 'would be prepared to recognise the principle of the responsibility of the executive to the legislature'. The Congress Working Committee including Gandhi were forthwith released and Lord Irwin took the novel step of holding direct conversations with the Mahatma. They were conducted on a man-to-man basis and lasted from 17 February to 4 March. These talks marked the end of the old official olympianism. Relations were never so stiff or the authorities so aloof again. The government was now anxious to conciliate Congress and the Congress leaders for their part realized that their movement was tiring quicker than the government, that the public mood was for a settlement and that they had already gained as much as they could hope for. The talks ended with what was known as the Gandhi-Irwin truce. The main terms were the ending of the civil disobedience, the release of political prisoners except those convicted of crimes of violence, and the representation of the Congress at the second session of the round table conference. The truce was ratified by the general Congress meeting at Karachi in April, which at the same time appointed the Mahatma as its sole representative.

The fates were not kind to this large-minded attempt to heal the breach between the two peoples and to plan the future jointly. The execution of Bhagat Singh for terrorism in the Panjab while the Karachi Congress was sitting revived extremist sentiment, while the Cawnpore communal riots embittered the Muslims. They were not pacified by Gandhi's promise to agree to any demand from a united community, since they well knew that the Mahatma's group of Congress Muslims under Dr. Ansari would never agree to the wishes of the majority. Disputes broke out in the ranks of Congress itself which experienced some of the pains of the demobilization process, while a conflict began between the Sen Gupta and Subash Chandra Bose factions which permanently weakened the Congress in Bengal. In Britain the financial crisis absorbed attention, leading to the fall of the Labour government and the installation of a 'National' administration, led by Ramsay Macondald it is true, but overwhelmingly Conservative.
in composition. The clear headed Sir Samuel Hoare (later Viscount Templewood) reigned at the India Office in the place of Mr. Wedgwood Benn (later Viscount Stansgate) while the amiable but ageing and less patient Willingdon had succeeded Lord Irwin in Delhi.

In these altered circumstances the second session of the round table conference met. At the outset the government proposed to separate the question of provincial autonomy from that of responsibility at the Centre. This was withdrawn on the unanimous opposition of the Indian delegates, but it was clear that some stiffening of the British attitude had taken place. Mahatma Gandhi was not slow to recognize this. He confined himself to a few general speeches and failed to take the opportunity of his presence in London for direct negotiations with the principal British statesmen. He estranged Muslims and untouchables by claiming to represent all India. Though he praised the new Secretary of State's frankness and integrity, the old devil of suspicion raised its head again to prevent him from seeing the distance the predominant Conservative party had travelled in a few years and the fact that it had in essence accepted the work of its predecessor. On the other side there was not so much a change of intention as in the tone of approach. The language of positive achievement and conscious movement towards a goal was replaced by cautious provisos, anxious care in devising safeguards, and absorption in schedules and tables. The sense of deliberate movement was lost and the government appeared again to be applying the brakes to another vehicle rather than propelling its own. In this atmosphere the Indian parties failed to agree upon the communal allotment of seats in the legislatures, so that the British were compelled to undertake an award. The second session closed in disappointment and foreboding.

Within three weeks of Mahatma Gandhi's return to India he was once more in prison and the Congress a proscribed organization. In his absence the militant Red Shirt movement had been started by Abdul Ghaffar Khan, claiming Congress allegiance, terrorism had reappeared in Bengal and a no-rent campaign had commenced in the United Provinces. It would seem that the forces within Congress desiring a further trial of strength were stronger than those prepared to give co-operation a real trial. They were helped by a new stiffness on the government side which now appeared to think that conciliation had paid few dividends and that a firm stand would break Congress militancy. In this latter view they proved to be correct, but their action involved the penalty of a further prolongation of the besetting suspicion which seemed for a moment in 1931 to have been banished. The Mahatma could either have determined to give co-operation a further trial, in which case he would have had to discipline the unruly element within the Congress, or, siding with them, have temporized while recruiting his forces for a further campaign. He did neither, with the result that the second civil disobedience movement went off at half cock. The fact was that the country as a whole was tired of strife and
its attendant losses; it would sympathize with but no longer follow the Congress along the revolutionary path. The Congress leaders were temporarily out of touch with public opinion. The number of political prisoners rose to 34,458 in April 1932, about half the total for many months during 1930, but by July had sunk to 4,683. Thus the movement petered out and the government could claim a victory. But the country remained sullen though peaceful. There was no breakaway to a more hopeful policy as after the collapse of the non-co-operation movement; instead there was a somewhat sceptical waiting on events. Those who believed that the reforms had substance waited without enthusiasm and those who did not looked on with cynical detachment. In this mood of aloofness the country watched the slow gestation of the new system while Lord Willingdon's term ran out. Gradually it was impressed by the magnitude of the preparations and by the fact that the national government continued to go forward, despite the persistent opposition of a 'die-hard' group led by Mr. Churchill and Lord Lloyd and the revival of civil disobedience. These measures included the third session of the round table conference, the communal award of 1932, and a series of committees to settle the details of outstanding questions and a prolonged series of parliamentary inquiries and discussions. The new system became law as the Government of India Act of 1935, and Lord Linlithgow went out in the following year to inaugurate it.

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CHAPTER 5

The Genesis of Pakistan

Before 1930 the word Pakistan had not been heard of; in 1940 it was adopted by the Muslim League as its official aim; in 1947 it appeared as a new state containing more than 70 million people. Clearly such a rapid growth leading to such spectacular success must have sprung from roots deeper than purely political motives and stretching far beyond the twenties of the twentieth century. According to the 1941 census the Muslims of India then numbered some 92 millions or 24 per cent. of a total population of 389 millions. These became the '100 millions' of propaganda, which represented, however, an accurate enough total in the general propaganda figure of '400 millions'. The remaining 42 millions included all other groups such as the Sikhs, Christians, Jains, Parsis, and the primitive tribes of the forest areas. The Muslims thus constituted one in four of the total population. They were easily the largest minority in the country, and in fact the only one, except for the Sikhs in the Panjab, to be politically important. In their own eyes they were not a minority at all, but a separate 'nation', and it is this fact which may serve as a first clue to an understanding of the Pakistan movement.

The Muslims of India have always regarded themselves as separate from the rest of the people, though they have not always rejected the title of Indian. The Pakistan movement threw the cloak of Western nationalism over the Islamic conception of a separate culture and so converted a cultural and religious entity into a separatist political force. To understand how this could come about among a group of diverse racial origin, speaking many languages and geographically scattered, it is necessary to delve into the distant past. The first Muslims to enter India in force were the Arabs of Muhammad bin Kasim who conquered Sind in A.D. 712. From that time onwards Sind became gradually predominantly Muslim. The next step was the Ghaznavid conquest of the Panjab by Mahmud of Ghazni in the early eleventh century. The Panjab also, in the course of centuries became a mainly Muslim area though the Hindus (and later the Sikhs) continued to be a much more significant element in the population than in Sind. Kashmir was occupied in 1480, and also adopted Islam except for the small though significant group of Kashmiri Brahmans.

The great irruption of Islam into the main body of India followed the defeat of Prithvi Raj at Thanesar in 1192 and the capture of Delhi by Muhammad Ghori. Within twenty years the Muslim Turks had reached the Bay of Bengal and in little more than a century had
penetrated as far as Madura in the extreme south. From that time forward until 1760 they were the dominant force in India. During four of the five and a half centuries northern India was ruled by two Muslim empires; the Deccan as far as the Kistna was under Muslim control from the early fourteenth century and twice the whole sub-continent was virtually united under a single raj.

It was in these circumstances that one-quarter of the population became Muslim. That population was, however, by no means homogeneous. The first element was the immigrant, Arab, Turk, Pathan, Afghan, Persian, who in groups or tribes or in single families seeking their fortunes, settled in the country. Many of the Muslims of the old Panjab, Sind, and frontier regions belonged to tribal groups. Some such, like the Rohillas in the early eighteenth century in Rohilkund, or the Sayyids of Barha, settled farther down country, but there is no evidence of large-scale Muslim folk movements like those of the Sakas, the Kushans, or the Huns, or the early Aryan-speaking peoples themselves. In the main the Indian Muslims were of Indian origin. Many individual families throughout the period came in from Persia and central Asia, attracted by opportunities of service and honour. The ancestors of the Nizam entered in this way in the seventeenth century, as did those of the Nawab Wazirs of Oudh. Mirza Najaf Khan, the last great Mughul minister under Shah Alam, was a late case of an immigrant rising to distinction. Some families still reveal their origin by their names, like the Bokharis. The Turanian and Iranian factions were a feature of Mughul political life.

The next element among the Muslims arose from intermarriage. The Muslim rule of India east of the Sutlej was at first that of an army of occupation. Officers and men sought wives and contracted unions, and thus a population of mixed racial origin grew up all over India. Unlike the later Anglo-Indians they never dissociated themselves from the country of their domicile; religion rather than racial feeling was the force that bound them together. It is probably from this class that most of the later Muslim leadership has come. The third element of the Muslim community, and by far the largest, was the result of conversion. Some of this was forcible, but we must beware of placing too much emphasis on this undoubted practice. Some Muslim chroniclers gloriéd in it with the probable exaggeration of enthusiasm. It occurred in quantity only during campaigns before the Hindus were generally recognized to be, like Christians and Jews, 'the people of a book', and then chiefly in the early rather than the later part of the period. There were no doubt individual cases of conversion by pressure throughout this long period. After forcible conversions came conversions from interest or hope of reward. There was a steady trickle of breakaways from the upper Hindu ranks for the sake of advancement in the Muslim state as well as from conviction or both. Khan Jahan, the minister of Firoz Shah, was an example of this type. Most took Muslim

1 The Delhi Sultanate 1192–1398, the Mughul empire, 1526–1760.
names, but some, like the Muslim Puris, retained their old family names.

But the largest class of conversions were certainly voluntary and came from the lower levels of Hindu society. To this phenomenon must be attributed the mass conversion of eastern Bengal, which is now eastern Pakistan, whether we ascribe it to relief on the part of a Buddhist peasantry at deliverance from Brahman oppression or the straight conversion of a virtually animistic countryside. Such conversions were not confined to eastern Bengal, but occurred all over the country. In general they were from the lower classes, because Islam could offer to these people a hope and a status denied them in the Hindu system. But the existence of Muslim Rajputs shows that in the north-west it occurred in the upper strata of society as well. These conversions were not procured by kings or soldiers and introduce a new factor into the building up of the Muslim community. This factor is the Sufi movement. Sufi saints or pirs were present in the Panjab in the eleventh century and they soon followed the armies farther into India in the thirteenth. Many of them were men of great learning, but they were guides to the good life as well as scholars and poets who had their murids or disciples. Some like Kh. Muin-ud-din Chishti of Ajmer and Kh. Nizam-ud-din Aulia of Delhi settled near cities where their tombs became shrines and centres of devotion and proselytism. Others lived in groups in khanqahs or monasteries, the traces of which are numerous in old Muslim cities. These people were in general aloof from the courts and the orthodox ulama of the colleges; they appealed direct to the people and were the evangelists as well as the spiritual preceptors of Islam. They are often thought of as forming a bridge of understanding with the Hindu bakhti movement, with their emphasis on the inner life and the unity of all believers in the one God. Kabir, the Muslim weaver who preached the unity of religions and became the founder of a Hindu sect, is an example of this. But an even more important aspect of their work was the propagation of Islam among the Indian people. The Sufis, rather than kings, warriors, or adventurers, were responsible for the bulk of the Muslims in the sub-continent. And they as a class, for all the eclecticism of some of them, were responsible for the sense of separateness and sense of mission which tended to bind together people of the most diverse-racial and social origin into a cultural and religious unity.

We thus find in the eighteenth century a large Muslim community scattered throughout India. It possessed a large aristocracy of office and landholders, a small middle class of professional men and government servants, and a large proletariat of agriculturists and artisans. The smallness of the middle class was due to Hindu competition on the one hand and the fact that for Muslims of talent under a Muslim régime the ladder of promotion led quickly upwards to the higher appointments. The eighteenth century was a time of stress for the community. Their political dominion collapsed, and with it went their
hold on the chief offices of state. The British monopolized (from the time of Cornwallis) these offices for themselves, leaving the upper classes to jostle for subordinate posts with Hindus, or else to stand aloof in pride and poverty. Soon western education was added as another and unacceptable condition for office. Immigration from the north-west came to an end, except from among the untutored Afghans. The decline of Islam in its homeland reduced the value of such contacts as remained, thus depriving Indian Islam of the spiritual and cultural streams which had so long nourished it. Islam in India was politically depressed and culturally isolated. With the weakening of these Islamic impulses Hindu practices and social customs, like the worship of saints’ tombs and caste customs, already well established, became more widespread. It became difficult to tell whether some groups were more Muslim or Hindu in their outlook. The widespread resumption of rent-free lands and the ruin of the Bengal weaving industry further depressed the community.

It was in this condition of political eclipse and cultural depression that Indian Islam was confronted with the challenge of the West. At first bad seemed to grow worse, for while the Muslims stood aloof, the Hindus took advantage of the new western education, thus securing a lead in the new world and the administration which they never lost. The Mutiny made things worse, for in spite of its Hindu origin the Muslims were thought to have revealed their disloyalty to and hatred of the new régime. But the Muslims were too numerous and too vigorous to be absorbed or permanently reduced to insignificance. The first movements of revival came from within and may be described as those of internal renewal or purification. These were amongst the body of the people. They came a movement among the leaders in tardy response to western influences. It was the Pakistan movement which finally welded these two together into a national movement comparable to that of the Indian Congress.

The first of these movements can be traced to Shah Wali-ullah of Delhi (1703–62), described as one of the greatest theologians of Muslim India. He translated the Quran into Persian, while two of his sons added an Urdu version. He began a movement for reform which was carried on by his son Shah Abdul Aziz. In the hands of his disciple Sayyid Ahmad of Bareilly, who was influenced by Wahabi ideas from Arabia, this became the militant ‘Wahabi’ movement of the early nineteenth century, with its headquarters at Patna. India was regarded as dar-ul-harb, or a land of war, since it was under infidel rule. Sayyid Ahmad’s efforts, however, were directed against the Sikhs, as being the chief Muslim oppressors of the day. He established himself in the Swat valley where he waged a jihad or holy war until his death in battle with the Sikhs in 1831. Two parallel movements in lower India were led by Sheikh Karamat Ali of Jaunpur, another disciple of Shah Abdul

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1 So called because Sayyid Ahmad came under Wahabi influence. His movement was akin in temper but not in theology to that of the Wahabis.
Aziz, and Haji Shariat-ullah of Faridpur. The latter was involved in agrarian agitation, but on the whole the two movements were peaceful. They were actively propagandist and did much to purify and strengthen east Indian Islam. Karamat Ali’s work has been thus described:

For forty years he moved up and down the elaborate river system of eastern Bengal in a flotilla of small boats, carrying the message of Islamic regeneration and reform from the Nagas of Assam to the inhabitants of Sandip and other islands in the Bay of Bengal. His flotilla of country craft was like a travelling college. One boat was the residence of his family, another was reserved for the students and disciples accompanying him, while the third was for dars and lectures and prayers.

Mention should also be made of the Ahmadiya sect founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1838–1908) with its headquarters at Qadian in the Panjab. It gathered a numerous following in the Panjab and was notable for organization and missionary activity, both in India and abroad, including England. But its founder’s claim to prophethood and to the function of completing or adding to the Muslim revelation caused the sect to be considered heretical by the main body of Muslims. It has been notable for the distinction of some of its adherents, rather than for its influence on the development of Indian Islam as a whole.

The response of Indian Islam to the West came not from the Muslim princes who showed a curious imperviousness to Western thought while they toyed with European trinkets or adopted superficial European manners. Furniture, wines, and uniforms were the limit of their interest. The first concrete move came from Sayyid Ahmad Khan of Delhi. He was born in 1817 and took service under the British in 1837, rising to the rank of subordinate judge. He remained loyal in the Mutiny and published an influential essay on its causes. Sayyid Ahmad came of an aristocratic family of central Asian origin; his combination of oriental with western learning fitted him to be an interpreter between the conservative East and the encroaching West; his forceful character enabled him to impress his ideas on his people while his sterling integrity was proof against calumny. He visited England in 1869 and retired from service in 1876. In 1878 he became a member of the Governor-General’s Legislative Council and was knighted in 1888. He died in 1898, the acknowledged grand old man of Indian Islam. The Sayyid was convinced that the Indian Muslims must make terms with the West, both politically and culturally. He considered that the tolerance and security of the British régime entitled it to be included in the Dar-ul-Islam or region of peace. The British régime having been accepted as in the providence of God, Muslims should win British approval by active loyalty. Otherwise they would be out-distanced in the race for governmental favour by the Hindus, as had already

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1 Known as the Faraidhi movement (pronounced Faraizi).
2 S. Ikram, *Cultural Heritage of Pakistan*, p. 15.
3 e.g. Sir Zafar-ullah Khan, *Foreign Minister of Pakistan*, 1947–55.
happened in the case of education. A modern education, indeed, was the
sine qua non of the community’s progress, and the Sayyid therefore
became a champion of western knowledge, which should not be in-
consistent with the tenets of Islam. The fruit of this advocacy was the
opening of the Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh in 1875, with its
British principals and staff, its residential system, its mosque and
religious instruction, its balance of eastern and western learning. In
1920 the college became the Aligarh Muslim University. Aligarh both
enabled the talented young Muslim to compete on terms with the
Hindu for government service and in public life, and gave him a
dynamic which his community seemed to have lost.

For Sir Sayyid was not concerned with material things only. His
movement was one of general reform. It was inspired by the thought
that the Muslims of India were a separate people or nation who must
not be absorbed within Hinduism, and that the essence of Islam was
consistent with the best that the West had to offer. He was, in fact, a
Muslim modernist appealing to general principles outside the scope of
the four recognized schools of theology. He accepted the mission of
the Prophet and God’s revelation in the Quran. But he claimed that
Reason was also an attribute of God and Nature his handywork. The
Quran and Islam might therefore be interpreted on the basis of reason
to meet modern needs and problems. The achievements of the West,
so far as they rested on reason, might thus be welcomed and assim-
ilated. He laid particular stress upon science, as being the characteristic
feature of western progress. His first institution at Aligarh was a
scientific society. In pressing this point of view he was much helped
by the existence of the strong Greek tradition in Islamic thought, and
by the common Judaic background which western Christianity shared
with Islam. Thus fortified, the Sayyid conducted a campaign on two
fronts, against the isolationist conservative Muslims on the one hand
and European critics on the other. This tended to replace backward-
looking by forward-looking views and to restore the shaken confidence
of those in close contact with western thought.

These ideas attracted distinguished supporters, who came to be
known collectively as the Aligarh school. Among them may be men
tioned two men nurtured in the pre-Mutiny renaissance at the Delhi
college, Maulvi Nazir Ahmad and Maulvi Zaka-ullah, the poets Altaf
Husain, Hali, and Maulvi Shibli Numani, the scholar Khuda Baksh,
and the educationist Yusuf Ali. The work of Sayyid Amir Ali,
though in general accord, had a slant of its own. His Spirit of Islam
was the best apologetic of Islam for the non-Muslim which had ap-
peared, while his History of the Saracen was a tonic for the Muslims

1 e.g. Sir Theodore Beck, the first principal, Sir Theodore Morison, Sir Thomas
Arnold.
2 His followers came to be called Necharis, from the word ‘nature,’ as tending to
follow nature rather than revelation.
3 1849–1928, first Indian member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.
themselves. He emphasized the personality of the Prophet and so introduced what may be described as prophetic hero-worship. But though emphasizing the value of tradition, he was also a reformer, advocating women's education. His insistence on the glories of historical Islam provided a starting-point for the leaders of the Khilafat movement and a link between them and the westernized liberals.

Sayyid Ahmad's programme was admirably suited to the position of Indian Islam in the Victorian world. It made possible the assimilation of elements of a culture which then seemed irresistible; it provided for gradual political progress at a time when that seemed to be the only sort of progress possible. With the advent of the twentieth century conditions changed. Something more dynamic than reason in the religious sphere was needed, and something more radical than advisory councils as a political programme. Europe itself was changing with the development of industrialism; the old Islamic world was threatened and trying to save itself by pan-Islamic Caliphate ideas. In India itself came the first signs of the transfer of power to Indian hands, with the ultimate prospect of a Hindu government. The collapse of Turkey before the Balkan states in 1912 and then during the first World War made Europe appear to many for a time as again the enemy of Islam. It was this which gave strength to the Khilafat movement in the post-war years. The overriding need, as it seemed, to defend Islam, justified the Hindu alliance then contracted. The revival of Turkey in 1922 and her emergence as a secularist state reassured the liberals while removing the whole basis of the conservative programme. From that time on the Hindu majority, personified in the enigmatic figure of Gandhi, seemed to be the main threat to a separate Muslim existence. But there could be no return to the days of the Sayyid. Indian Islam needed a more dynamic creed and a larger vision and found it in the writings of Sir Muhammad Iqbal.¹

Iqbal wrote mainly in Persian and only produced one work in English.² His theme was the all-embracing sufficiency of Islam as expressing a dynamic spirit of struggle for spiritual freedom. Islam was not merely a valid religion to be compared favourably with others; it was the root and branch of all religious experience. It was not a fixed and precious deposit to be treasured with the zeal of the antiquarian, but a living principle of action which could give purpose and remake worlds. Europe was enmeshed in its greed for wealth and lust for power.³ It was for Islam to create true values and to assert man's mastery of nature by constant struggle. It was Nietzsche in an Islamic setting. Iqbal's teaching provided the young Muslim generation with a view

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¹ 1876–1938.
² *Six Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought*, Lahore, 1930.
³ Iqbal's opinion of the West is given in the following two couplets:
   'The glitter of modern civilisation dazzles the sight,
   But it is only a clever piecing together of false gems.'
   'The wisdom or science in which the wise ones of the West took such pride:
   Is but a warring sword in the bloody hands of greed and ambition.'
which out-moderned the moderns, but which yet seemed distinctive and Islamic. Sayyid Ahmad Khan gave Indian Islam a sense of separate existence; Iqbal a sense of separate destiny.

The precipitation of this rich solution of thought and feeling into the crystals of a political movement required an external catalyst, and this was provided by fear. Sayyid Ahmad Khan gave the community a new sense of justification and a new line of conduct; he also made possible a new sense of security by pointing the way to a reconciliation with the ruling power. But the sense of separateness from others involved an immediate reaction to any suggestion of commingling or absorption in a plural society. The British might rule, for they showed no sign of interfering with Islam; that was the basis of the Sayyid’s confidence in them. But would a hypothetical Hindu government do the same? As soon as the Congress was formed in 1885 the Sayyid took alarm. Majority Indian rule for him meant Hindu rule, and Hindu rule meant the risk of cultural absorption. He had already declined to support Amir Ali’s ‘National Muhammadan Association’ in Calcutta in 1877 as tending to subversive activity. Only a small group, particularly in Bombay, supported the Congress to become the nucleus of the later nationalist Muslims.

The Muslims in general watched the growth of Congress from a distance and stood aloof from its controversies with Lord Curzon. But having allowed it to become dominantly Hindu in character through their abstention, they took alarm at the first signs of concessions to its demands. From this sprang the deputation to Lord Minto in 1906, led by the Agha Khan, which demanded separate electorates for Muslims in any representative system which might be introduced. At the same time they did what the Sayyid had frowned upon during his life by forming the All-India Muslim League. The Morley-Minto reforms with their separate electorates for Muslim landholders, and their retention of irresponsible power by the British, satisfied them for the time so far as India was concerned. But almost immediately the Muslims took alarm at the misfortunes of Turkey and there followed the Khilafat movement. Pan-Islamic sentiment overbore the nascent local Muslim nationalism and antipathy to British Turkish policy local fear of Hindu rule. The outward expressions of this emotional upheaval were the Lucknow Pact of 1916 with the Congress which recognized separate electorates, and the alliance with Congress in Gandhi’s non-co-operation movement. The passing of this storm left the Muslims as a whole disillusioned and fearful for their future while leaving a fresh sediment of Muslims on the Congress shore. These included many westernized Muslims who took a secularist view on the lines of Ataturk as to the place of Islam in the state. The most distinguished of these was Muhammad Ali Jinnah of Bombay, who had been a member of Congress for many years and now held the balance of power in the Legislative Assembly as leader of the Independent party.1

1 This was a parliamentary group rather than a party, for it had no country-wide
Muhammad Ali Jinnah
The working of the Montford reforms tended to increase these fears. They were expressed in a rising tempo of communal riots and increasingly bitter exchanges between the party leaders. The Ali brothers swung round from the preaching of Hindu fraternalism to the championship of Muslim rights. But the community remained divided and perplexed. In 1927 the League split on the question of the Simon Commission,\textsuperscript{1} uniting in 1929 in the All-India Muslim Conference. Mr. Jinnah retired in 1931. Only in the Panjab were the Muslims active and confident under the determined leadership of Sir Fazl-i-Husain, whose icy and resolute character was reminiscent of the Irish Parnell. The constitutional discussions which began with the appointment of the Simon Commission at the end of 1927 increased Muslim fears, for it soon became clear that a further instalment of power would be given to responsible ministers, and that full self-government was now above the horizon of development. Heightened apprehension quickened the urge to unity and also the search for a practical policy. The search for unity led to the reorganization of the League\textsuperscript{2} under Mr. Jinnah in 1934, whose emergence from political retirement in this capacity was itself a sign of the times. The search for a positive programme led in two directions. The first was that of safeguards. During the constitutional discussions of the early thirties there was a renewed insistence upon communal representation, not only in the constituencies, but also in the government service. Muslims welcomed federation as giving provinces more freedom and thus tending to safeguard Muslims in their majority areas. They sought to reduce the scope of the Centre as much as possible.\textsuperscript{3} The second direction was towards autonomy in the Muslim majority areas. In 1930 Iqbal suggested the union of the Frontier Province, Baluchistan, Sind, and Kashmir as a Muslim state within a federation. This proved to be a creative idea which germinated during the early thirties to burst into vigorous life with the advent of the new reforms. The idealist Choudhri Rahmat Ali developed this conception at Cambridge, where he inspired a group of young Muslims and invented the term Pakistan in 1933.\textsuperscript{4} His ideas seemed visionary at the time, but within seven years they had been turned into a practical programme by the future Qaid-i-Azam with the new name as its slogan or banner. The ideology of Iqbal, the visions of Rahmat Ali, and the fears of Muslims were thus united by the practical genius of Jinnah to bind Muslims together as never before during the British period and lead to effect an act of political creation.

organization. But it numbered nearly 30, and when in alliance with the Congress Swaraj party, as it often was, could usually secure a government defeat.

\textsuperscript{1} The co-operating group was led by Sir Muhammad Shafi.

\textsuperscript{2} The conference executive met for the last time in 1936.

\textsuperscript{3} e.g. by allotting the 'residuary powers' of government, and as many defined powers as possible to the Provinces.

\textsuperscript{4} P for Panjab, A for Afghans (Frontier Province), K for Kashmir, S for Sind; the whole meaning 'Land of the Pure'.
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For Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan see his *Life* by G. F. I. Graham (1909) and for the ideas of his school see Syed Ameer Ali, *Spirit of Islam* (1922). For Iqbal see his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (1934) and *Secrets of the Self*, tr. R. A. Nicholson (1920). For political Islam see Azim Husain, *Fazl-i-Husain* (1946). There is as yet no authoritative biography of M. A. Jinnah, or of the Muslim League, but M. H. Saiyid, *M. A. Jinnah* (Lahore, 1945), and H. Bolitho, *Jinnah* (1954), may be consulted. The latter is a character study rather than a full biography.


RECENT PUBLICATIONS
