

the right to the salute of 11 guns were not entitled to representation, although in other respects there may be no ground of differentiation. Again, the bigger States viewed the Chamber with suspicion. An arrangement under which the influence of such a big State as Hyderabad or Kashmir was nothing more than that of a tiny State in Rajputana was felt detrimental to their interests, in as much as, by an unfair combination among themselves, the smaller States might outvote them easily in matters of vital interest to them. For this reason, Hyderabad, Mysore and Baroda stood out of the Chamber from the beginning. Subsequently, Kashmir and Travancore followed suit. From the recent discussions held in Delhi among the Ministers of State-members of the Chamber, it is evident that other States also may secede from the Chamber. Kapurthala has already given notice of secession. The people of the States have also not taken to it kindly. They view it as an organisation intended to consolidate the rights and privileges of the Princes, often at their expense. Therefore, the Chamber of Princes, as it exists to-day, is hardly liked by any party. The question is whether in a Federal Constitution the Chamber of Princes is to be continued, to function as a separate body. It must be remembered that when an All-India Federation comes into being, most of the functions, for the discharge of which the Chamber of Princes was inaugurated, would properly fall within the sphere of the Federal Government. It is, therefore, obvious that the Chamber of Princes, if it should continue in a Federal Constitution, should be radically altered.

In answer to a question put to him before the Joint Select Committee of Parliament, the Secretary of State stated that the Chamber of Princes does not come into the Federation at all, that it has no constitutional position and no legislative powers.

Secretary of
State on Chamber
of Princes.

CHAPTER XXII.

The working of the Mont-Ford Reforms.

122. The year that preceded the coming into force of the Act of 1919 was marked by disturbances such as India had not seen for many years, and its events profoundly influenced not only the atmosphere in which the new Constitution was received but also the attitude of many towards it, for long afterwards.

The reforms themselves were received with mixed feelings. On the one hand were the moderates. They accepted the principle of the announcement of 1917 as governing the conditions of Political advance, and though many of them thought that the scheme of the Mont-Ford Report did not go far

The working of
the reforms.

enough, they were prepared to do everything in their power to make the new Constitution a success and so justify a further advance. The other party, the Nationalists, denounced the reforms as wholly inadequate and unacceptable. They joined the non-co-operation movement and boycotted the first elections under the New Reforms held in 1920. The field was left open to the Moderates who were returned in prepondering numbers, both to the Central Legislature and to the Provincial Councils.

In the second elections in 1923 and the third elections in 1926, a section of the Congress, styled Swarajists, offered themselves as candidates for the Assembly and the Councils, on a pledge of "uniform, continuous and sustained obstruction with a view to making Government through the Assembly and the Councils impossible." They were successful in Bengal and the Central Provinces. They formed the majority party. They refused to accept office and administer the transferred subjects, and created deadlocks by voting out of office, Ministries formed from out of the minority party, with the result that it was not possible to get any stable Ministry, and the Governor had to take upon himself the administration of the transferred subjects. Such a result was not entirely unforeseen. Even in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report the authors observed as follows:—
 "Any attempt to establish equilibrium between the official and popular forces in Government, inevitably introduces additional complexity into the administration. For such hybrid arrangements precedents are wanting. Their working must be experimental."

Designedly, the Mont-Ford Reforms were in the nature of transitional arrangements intended to be worked for a period of 10 years. "Hybrid executives, limited responsibility, assemblies partly elected and partly nominated, division of functions, reservations, general or particular, are devices that can have no permanent abiding place. They bear on their faces their transitional character and they can be worked only if it is clearly recognised, that, that is their justification and purpose."

In some councils the reforms were worked in this spirit, and the machine of the Government worked smoothly so that some Governors were able to make the claim that the Executive Councillors and Ministers were members of a 'happy family.'

123. We have seen that even the Moderates, though they agreed to work the reforms, were of the opinion that the scheme of the reforms did not go far enough. The Government of India Act, 1919, provided for an enquiry by a statutory commission into the working of the reformed Constitution at the end of 10 years from the inauguration of the reforms. In September 1921, *i.e.*, within 8 months of their first meeting, the Legislative Assembly passed a resolution that the Government of

India should convey to the Secretary of State for India, the view of the Assembly, that the progress made by India on the path of responsible self-government warranted a re-examination and revision of the Constitution at an earlier date than 1929. The Secretary of State replied that so short an experience of the working of the reformed Constitution did not warrant the assumption that the time was ripe for further change. In 1924, a resolution was moved in the Assembly for the convening of a Round Table Conference to recommend a scheme for establishing full responsible Government in India, and the resolution was carried in spite of the opposition of the Government. The Government promised to make an enquiry into the working of the Constitution with a view to making such changes as were desirable and possible within the existing Act. The Muddiman Committee was set up, and a majority of the Committee reported that the existing Constitution was working in most Provinces and was affording valuable political experience, but that the time it had been in existence was too short to make possible an estimate of its ultimate success. They made certain detailed recommendations for improving the machinery of Government. The minority view was that dyarchy had demonstrably failed and could not succeed, and that nothing short of a fundamental change of the Constitution would secure an improvement. A debate took place on this report in September 1925, and an amendment was moved by the Swarajists that immediate steps should be taken to move His Majesty's Government to make a declaration in Parliament, embodying such fundamental changes in the Constitution of India as would make Government fully responsible, and for the holding of a Round Table Conference. The amendment was carried by the Assembly in spite of the opposition of the Government.

The evils of a temporary Constitution are thus self-evident. "Those who have to work a temporary Constitution tend inevitably to fix their minds upon the future, instead of on the present. Instead of making the most of the existing Constitution and learning to deal with practical problems under existing conditions, they constantly endeavour to anticipate the future, and to push forward the day for the next instalment of reforms. There is very little incentive to try to make the system a success. On the contrary, those who are not satisfied with the advance already made, are eager to prove that the temporary Constitution is unworkable." "Those who aimed at securing an early advance were led to use imported forms of procedure, rather as a means of showing the inadequacy of what was already conceded, than as a method for getting he best out of the existing arrangements."

The Legislative Assembly's resolution for a revision of the Constitution.

The evils of a temporary Constitution.