

British nation has supported its Viceroys, Governors and their Agents better than any other nation have supported theirs, or we should not be in India now.

But of late the discretion and responsibility of the Government of India have been most seriously diminished. Secretaries of State, partly of their own initiative, and partly because active bands of faddists exert a disproportionately great influence upon them, while the more sensible members of the House of Commons, on account of their silence, exercise a disproportionately small influence, have interfered more and more in even the details of Indian administration. The system is no longer one of selecting the best available men, and then supporting them, on the assumption that in the unusual conditions under which we govern India, they will rule it better than anyone can from England. The system is now becoming one of directing the Government from England on lines which an ignorant British electorate is most likely to approve. The result is a general weakening all down the line. No one feels responsibility. And the British elector, who has been held up to the Englishman in India as the man who ultimately controls his actions, and who should, therefore, have the responsibility, simply shrugs his shoulders and asks what India has to do with him.

And while British administrators in India thus have less and less confidence placed in them, they on their part have little cause to be placing increasing confidence in their controllers and rulers. Those who control Indian affairs from London have, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, never been in India. They are as a rule personally unacquainted with Indian conditions. And the Cabinet is not composed of men with a wide and long experience of Imperial affairs; of Indian and Colonial, as well as English, questions; and of European and Asiatic diplomacy. It may occasionally include an ex-Viceroy of India, but it never includes a Colonial statesman, or an ex-Colonial Governor, or an ex-Ambassador, much less an Anglo-Indian administrator. It is almost exclusively composed of men with purely English Parliamentary experience, and a Minister is