

THERE is no Indian nation and there is no Indian people. Both are figments of our imagination. The European abroad encounters a similar misconception. Here in India, for instance, I am referred to as a European as if that expression described the country of my origin, whereas in Europe the term is purely general. For neither Europe nor India is a national entity. They are both peninsular subcontinents of the great Eurasian mother continent. One must keep this fact in mind in order to avoid false conceptions of the present situation in India.

One must learn to remember, in the first place, that Europe resembles India. The two are of equal size and contain about the same number of inhabitants. They are also very similar in respect to the number and variety of nations, races, peoples, religions, and languages that make them up, though India is composed of a rather more brilliant mixture than Europe.

If one travels from the southern extremity of the Deccan to the foothills of the Himalayas one encounters people of every color, from the deepest black to the palest yellow, people of all religions, cultures, and civilizations. This journey is alone enough to make one understand that there is no such thing as 'India' in the usual sense of the word. This 'India' as a single conception is a British creation, and even the idea of it would not exist if it were not for the fact that English is spoken throughout this entire subcontinent. Because English law, English money, English police, and English speech all exist throughout India the fiction has arisen that India can be regarded as a geographic unit. If an Indian from Madras meets an Indian from Calcutta he must speak English to make himself understood. If it were not for the English language the Indian Nationalists would have no way of exchanging ideas.

Although one cannot compare India with any European country, there is a parallel between India and Pan-Europe. The only difference is that whereas Pan-Europe is a remote ideal, Pan-India is already a reality. But Pan-India does not resemble the Pan-Europe that Count Coudenhove-Kalergi is striving for. It is more like the Roman Empire or the way Europe would have been in the thirteenth century if the Mongol invasion had not been repulsed and if Europe had been turned into a province of the Mongolian empire. Pan-India needs strong foreign control to hold its quarrelsome national factions together just as the Italians, Gauls, Greeks, and Africans of the Roman Empire had to be kept in subjection by the Roman legions. And, just as the Roman Empire disintegrated when the Romans grew weary of ruling, so will India disintegrate when the British reach the same state of mind.

Not only will religious warfare threaten India if the English leave the country, but national wars are certain to break out between all the different nations and races. Furthermore, the religious differences will be sharpened by national differences and the outbreaks will be all the more bloody for that reason. The English troops stationed along the constantly agitated northwestern frontier are strong enough to prevent trouble in that quarter, though only two years ago some mountain tribes of Afghans attacked Peshawar and were repulsed by British flying squadrons. Such matters do not appear in the newspapers. We hear nothing about them in Europe and perhaps the news does not even reach Calcutta or Bombay, and, because such things are not

generally known, demands for the withdrawal of the English continue to circulate.

I MUST admit that I personally have no great opinion of the aggressive power of modern Mohammedans, but in traveling through India I gradually became inoculated with the doctrine that the remote mountains between Baluchistan and the Pamirs may contain the germs of bloodshed. The Afghans, which is the name that all these mountain tribes are called by, are born warriors who do nothing but fight and rob, whereas the Hindus have not done any fighting for the past one hundred and fifty years. Those elements in India that are used to bearing arms and delight in doing so would almost all of them welcome an attack from Afghanistan and would at once join forces with the invaders. For the Mohammedans beyond the Indian frontier are much more like the Indian Moslems than the Hindus are. The one chance that the Indian Mohammedans enjoy of prevailing against the Hindu majority would be to summon their fellow believers beyond the frontier to execute an attack. Furthermore, the Indian Mohammedans have by no means forgotten the time when they were the rulers of the country and the Hindus were their slaves.

Behind Afghanistan stands the Soviet Union, which has strong ties with a number of Mohammedan nations, Turkestan, the Uzbek Republic, Bokhara, and Azerbaijan. Perhaps it would be to the interest of the Soviets to identify themselves with Mohammedan aspirations in India.

But the Khyber Pass leading from Afghanistan to India is not the only path that invaders have taken; they have also entered the country by way of the Himalayas. Perhaps the Mongols will again turn their attention to India, for no one knows what may come out of China. In any case, a new and stronger China may just as well expand toward the south as toward the north. Of course, a nationally united India would easily be able to ward off all foreign attacks, but this point has not yet been reached. It does not take any great prophet to foretell that an independent India would fall to pieces very soon indeed and would presently become the scene of civil war and would fall victim to dictators and foreign invaders. Anyone who has doubts on this score need only look at China. The Chinese are a united people, but there are profound differences between the southern and the northern Chinese and they can no more understand each other than northern and southern Indians can. And although China possessed in its written language, in its culture, and its ethics the means to keep itself together and to bind its various members into a single whole, the country fell apart when the old Manchu imperial dynasty collapsed. China's fate awaits India.