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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
TOPICS OF THE WEEK	109
ARTICLES :—	
The Situation in Kaira	112
An Appeal. By An Indian	113
SPECIAL ARTICLES :—	
The Cotton Situation. By Hon'ble Lalubhai	115
Samaldas
A Case for an Amendment of the Indian Railways Act. By Bhagvanji Anupchand, B. A., LL. B.	116
A LETTER FROM LONDON	117
LETTERS FROM THE PROVINCES :—	
Central Provinces	118
Bombay	118
CORRESPONDENCE :—	
A Conscience Clause. By Prof. K. M. Khadge, M. A.	118

TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

THE German offensive has not been completely checked as yet. During the week the struggle was mainly for Bailleul and the chief positions depending upon Bailleul. All other activities were subservient to this chief objective. With the assistance of three fresh divisions the Germans have been able to capture the towns of Bailleul, Neuve Eglise and Wytchaete, which represents net result of his endeavour. On all other sectors the enemy has been quiescent and the Allies on the offensive. The latest messages give the welcome news that everywhere else the position of the Allies has considerably improved. The enemy of course is being enormously reinforced, but the Allies too are quite ready and prepared to meet the next onslaught and there seems to be no possibility of the enemy gaining any decisive victory. The U. S. War Secretary in his weekly review says he expects a more powerful thrust elsewhere, if the offensive towards the Channel is not successful.

THE prospects of a satisfactory solution of the Irish problem do not seem to be very bright. The latest news is that the Irish leaders at the conference held in Dublin decided to prepare a statement against conscription for presentation to the

world and requested the Lord Mayor of Dublin to proceed to Washington to present it to President Wilson. We, of course, cannot blame the Irish Nationalists for their uncompromising attitude when we bear in mind the salient fact that the Irish question has been carelessly and unsympathetically handled by successive generations of British statesmen. The result is deep-rooted and intense distrust of British policy. Moreover, Reuter informs us that the Home Rule Bill is such a moderate measure that even the Ulsterites will not hesitate to accept it. If there is any truth in this statement we apprehend a more serious development of the already complicated situation in Ireland. We hope, however, the Government at Home will adopt a more liberal attitude and try their best to ease the tension. The obduracy of the Ulster irremediabiles ought not to be allowed to stand in the way of doing justice to the rest of Ireland. In that case, we are quite confident the Irish Nationalists will loyally support the idea of conscription and give up the hostile attitude they have taken up at present. The leaders of the Labour Party, true to their principles, have asked the Prime Minister to adopt the majority report of the Irish Convention and to grant Home Rule before applying conscription.

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THE Co-operative movement is essentially a democratic movement, whose main object is to instil into the minds of the people the inestimable moral and material advantages of concerted action and to inspire them with self-respect. The movement is still in its infancy in this country, and is, therefore, largely under official control. In the Central Provinces an effort has been made to take it out of the leading strings of officials by appointing the Hon'ble R. B. N. K. Kelkar as governor of the co-operative federation, who shares with the Registrar the responsibility of guiding the provincial movement. This experiment is a success. There is no reason, therefore, why Bombay should lag behind. A desire in that direction is manifest now in this presidency and the Bombay Co-operative Conference is its first fruit. The organisers of the conference deserve to be heartily congratulated on this move. The appointment of a committee to frame rules and also to make arrangements for the holding of the next conference is an unmistakable sign of their firm determination to take steps which would guarantee its continuance. We are sure, they will be able

to secure the whole-hearted co-operation and full and active support of the educated classes of this presidency in this laudable endeavour.

THE Co-operative Conference in one of the resolutions, urged upon the Government of Bombay the necessity of rendering greater pecuniary assistance to the Debt Redemption Committee for defraying the supervision charges. The work of the Committee bristles with difficulties as it has to deal with a shifting population. It is of a pioneer nature, and as the President of the Conference pointed out in his opening address, Bombay may well pride itself on taking the lead in this kind of activity. The subvention of Rs. 500 p. a. given at present is very meagre. The Government contribution, be it remembered, is for meeting the expenses of general management only. The money required for financing the societies is procured from private sources, as it ought to be. The claim of the Debt Redemption Committee, therefore, to a more liberal treatment is just and legitimate, and in no way offends against the co-operative principle. We hope that the Government of Bombay will consider it sympathetically.

THE Cabinet's explanation in the matter of the interdict on home rule league deputation is unconvincing in substance and exasperating in tone. They call the deputation "uncalled for" and "lacking in any sufficient justification," and the "uncompromising propaganda contemplated by the deputation" "in favour of home rule of their own," when the Secretary of State is in India, is to their thinking "improper," and likely to impair fatally the generous intentions of His Majesty's Government. The appropriateness of the occasion chosen by the home rule league may be open to objection and the utility of their propaganda may be questioned, but in these matters the home rule league, as every one else, ought to have a free hand to determine what their conduct shall be; any interference from authorities is to be strongly deprecated. So much need be said in defence of popular rights, for the Cabinet have urged in defence of their prohibition reasons other than the critical war situation, which however appears to be the principal reason for the embargo. In view of the military situation, there is a general disposition to submit to the order and not to make an agitation over it, and this is as it should be.

IT would appear that Lala Lajpat Rai cabled to the Home Secretary, Sir George Cave, on December 23 last year, indignantly repudiating the charge levelled against him that he was subsidised by Germans and adding that his opposition to the German connexion was repeatedly and publicly stated in the American press. A similar cablegram was sent also to the *Daily News*, but it never reached the office of that journal. It was stated in the House of Commons in answer to a question by Mr. King that neither the Cable Censor nor the

Press Bureau had received it nor was it stopped by the Home Secretary. Mr. King pursued the matter and asked whether the Home Secretary was now satisfied that Mr. Lajpat Rai had always opposed German propaganda, to which a negative reply was returned.

EVEN more than the progress actually achieved, the steadiness with which the State authorities keep in view the distance to be traversed, indicates the progressiveness of Mysore. In the matter of expansion of education, for instance, the State records that the percentage of literary has advanced from 4.95 in the past two years to 5.30 in 1916-17 and that the total number under instruction has increased from 1,75,293 to 2,13,352. But this is no matter for self-laudation to the Mysore Government; for the report says: "There is, however, still only one school for 2.5 villages and every 659 of the population. *No efforts should be spared till every village of any importance is provided with a school of its own.*" The co-operation of the non-official public again has received thankful recognition in the report. "The increase of more than one thousand grant-in-aid schools (7,362 in the year under review as against 6,353 in the previous year) reflects the eagerness of the people in all parts of the State to provide funds for the development of primary education." The percentage of population under instruction to total population rose from 3.6 to 4.3, and Government have directed that suitable efforts should be made to raise the percentage of the rural population receiving instruction to *at least 15 in the near future.* They have further instructed that special attention should be paid to the education of adults so that literacy may be doubled throughout the State within the next three years. The number of rural libraries and reading rooms increased from 975 to 1246 last year, and is expected to show much larger increase in the future on account of the liberal rules sanctioned for the formation of such institutions.

THE *Times*, in its educational supplement, emphasises the vast lee-way India has to make in education and urges upon the Government the need for making a definite financial programme towards the end. "If 15 per cent. accepted as the percentage of population," that paper says, "about one boy in every three was in school attendance; but in the case of girls only about 7 per cent. were receiving instruction. British India, with a population nearly seven times larger than that of England and Wales, has somewhat less children under instruction than this country. And there is this important distinction: only 11 per cent. of Indian pupils in the lower primary stage go to the upper primary stage... Their two or three years of school life, frequently marked by irregular and fitful attendance, is of little practical value." It has been calculated that about 80 per cent. of all

the village school children become completely illiterate within ten years of leaving school.

✓ SO long as expansion of education depends more or less upon "occasional and irregular doles" from the Government of India, which in their turn are dependent more on educational needs than on the exigencies of general finance, progress cannot but be fitful. The Director of Public Instruction for the Punjab has remarked that the question of financing primary education has never received the attention it deserves. Systematic extension is impracticable without the assurance of a continuously expanding provision of funds from one quarter or another. Local resources are unequal to the task, and no definite liability has been assumed in the case of provincial revenues—owing, of course, to the centralisation of financial authority. The *Times* thus advocates a decentralisation of finance, giving the provincial Governments real opportunities of initiative in their educational administration, so that progress in education could be placed on a sure basis.

THE Natal Government propose to abolish tuition fees from primary schools intended for European children, thus limiting free primary education to Europeans, but they intend to finance this measure chiefly out of funds raised from Indians and natives. One of the measures proposed with this end in view is a five shillings tax per wheel for carts and wagons, which will fall heavily on Indian and native agriculturists. To the injustice of providing free education to those inhabitants who are well able to pay for it, while denying it to those who need it, is now to be added the greater iniquity of making the poor man pay for the necessities of the rich. This policy of robbing Peter to pay Paul has naturally moved the resident Indians to fervid protest, and arrangements are being made in all big centres to obtain signatures to a monster petition, praying for the provision of free education to their children, along with European children.

ALTHOUGH the bar to the commissioned ranks in the army has been removed, Indians continue to be shut out from the Officers' Training Corps of the various educational institutions in the United Kingdom. Their ineligibility has resulted from a regulation issued by the Army Council in 1908, which limits admission to the O. T. C. to "British subjects of pure European descent." It will be remembered that a deputation of representatives of Indian students waited upon the Under-Secretary of State for India on July 29, 1915, with a memorial praying for a removal of the disqualification. It was thought then that the chief difficulty in the way was a fear that the admission and training of young Indians in these corps would lead up to a claim for their eventual admission into the higher commissioned ranks. But since the larger question has been solved—so far

at least as the theoretical principle is concerned, however unsatisfactory its practical application may be—the continued closing of the O. T. C. becomes, as remarked by the *Times*, illogical as well as unwise. It is believed that both the universities and the Indian authorities, favour the removal of the present restriction, but opposition arises from the conservatism of the War Office.

✓ EVERYTHING is best in the best of all possible worlds in India under British administration—such is Sir Andrew Fraser's judgment (*vide the Nineteenth Century*). It is but natural therefore that he should deplore that the "grave" matter of constitutional reforms has been pressed forward while the war is on, and his only hope is that although Mr. Montagu has rushed too hastily into the inquiry the solution will not be unduly rushed. He reminds British statesmen that if Government is committed to a development of free institutions, even an advance towards self-government must yield to the obligation, laid upon the British Government in the providence of God, "to maintain a righteous and peaceful administration," and obviously it is not possible to make an approach towards home rule without sacrificing the ends of "a righteous and peaceful administration."

THE March number of the *Nineteenth Century* contains a fulminating article by Lord Sydenham on the 'Peril of Socialism.' His Lordship says that socialism with its class war, denial of freedom, destruction of the inducements to individual effort, and communistic principles, which has always led to wholesale corruption and immorality, is the greatest enemy of democracy. In the Report on Reconstruction, prepared for submission to the Labour Conference, Lord Sydenham, strangely enough, discovers the theories propounded by the Germans and the Fabian doctrinaires. To evade industrial difficulties, his Lordship would fain revive the Republic of Plato in which 'artisans and merchants' are excluded. We assure his Lordship that Plato was neither an anti-Labourite nor a reactionary Imperialist. In the midst of these vapourings of the ex-satrap, who wants 'to train the bureaucracy on more scientific lines,' it is gratifying to find that he admits that the British soldiers and their gallant comrades from the Dominions and India saved the old country at a time of mortal peril and have drawn closer the bonds of the Empire.

A LABOUR journal has it that the party leaders expect that the General Election will come immediately after the new Register is compiled; and it is announced that the Register will be completed by October, this year. Between the hay and corn harvest, therefore, Labour Party means to put its whole machinery in order, and be ready to take the field with all its forces mobilised.

THE SITUATION IN KAIRA.

WE still hope that authorities of Bombay will not allow the situation in Kaira to develop any undesirable features. An occasional act of tenderness towards their subjects, even though it might appear in excess of the needs, is no sign of incompetence or weakness in a Government. Where a grievance is keenly and widely felt, it will not do for the Government to be guided solely and exclusively by their own notions of the rights and wrongs of the case. One of the great qualities of Queen Elizabeth was that she knew when to yield to the wishes of her subjects. History does not record that she lost in prestige or influence by reason of that quality. The British Government in India has not hitherto shown much of this quality, but it is an indispensable attribute in a Government which has to rule subjects of a different race.

The matter in dispute is one in which it is notoriously unsafe to be cocksure. Estimates even of standing crops are liable to vary widely among experts. Where the more important crop had been harvested before the controversy began, the estimate of neither party is entitled to claim scientific certitude. Enquiry by a committee, as impartial as the case would allow, could alone yield the least unsatisfactory result, and both parties would find it possible to accept it. Land revenue matters are excluded from the jurisdiction of the law courts. This circumstance, instead of weakening, should greatly quicken the sense of responsibility of the executive. It is a commonplace that a conscientious judge feels the load on his conscience more in cases where there is no appeal than in cases where there is an appeal from his award. The history of land revenue administration in the Bombay Presidency, no less than in the rest of India, abounds in episodes of injustice and callous severity. Though they are now happily of the past, their memory is quite fresh and the moral effects on the general character of the peasantry will continue for many years yet.

If a contented and stout-hearted peasantry is one of the strong bulwarks of a country, the Government must relax its pedantic and rigorous adherence to the letter of the land revenue regulations and avoid the appearance of affronting the self-respect of the ryots and treating their feelings as of no account. To the nation-builder in India a radical alteration of the mutual attitude of the collectors and payers of land revenue is a most difficult and a most important problem. Mr. Gandhi is one of the few who realize its magnitude and urgency. To him it is an intolerable humiliation that the accounts and estimates of the *talatis* should be preferred to the sworn statements of the ryots, some of whom are men of social consequence. And like the ideal passive resister to whom the only injury is injury to the soul and who scorns to calculate his chances of success where he sees his duty clear, he has counselled a no rent campaign to the agriculturists in Kaira district.

This is the case for the tenants of Kaira at its strongest. They do not allege that there is famine or acute distress in the area, or that they will be put to extraordinary hardship in paying the Government due. Of course there would be a certain amount of hardship even in ordinary seasons, for which it would not be fair to hold Government accountable. Our information is that a considerable part of the revenue has already come in, and according to one estimate it is as much as 80 per cent. It is therefore a clear case of a struggle for a principle for its own sake. Mr. Gandhi says as much in this sentence, taken from his letter to the press on the subject: "The movement is intended to assert the right of the people to be effectively heard in matters concerning themselves."

The question now arises, Do the present occasion and the attendant circumstances justify resort to passive resistance? Mr. Gandhi has once said, one of the weaknesses of the Indian character, speaking in a general sense, is the inability to say 'no' clearly when 'no' is meant. We feel sure that he will not consider us wanting in respect for him, if we answer the above question by a 'no.' Our difference on this question is the result of our difference on the general character of passive resistance. We regard it as a legitimate weapon in certain conditions only. To him it is the normal rule of life in all cases of conflict or difficulty. It is like the rule of truthfulness for example: in fact, in a sense he would identify it with *satya*. He may qualify its application in practice, especially in preaching it to others. But his own view, and it cannot but affect his advice to others, is contained in this characteristic utterance: "It is a force that may be used by individuals as well as by communities. It may be used as well in political as in domestic affairs. Its universal applicability is a demonstration of its permanence and invincibility. It can be used alike by men, women and children." Elsewhere he speaks of it as the noblest and best education, which should be taught to children even before the alphabet. Obviously he would see in the affairs of the world around him a hundredfold more appropriate occasions for the exercise of this cardinal principle than those who would not resort to it unless there was an extraordinary injustice, a monstrous violation of individual or public morals, against which other remedies had failed.

In the Kaira affair there is admittedly no acute suffering, if we eliminate the plague as we should. What has been denied is the delay of a year in payment of land tax, for it should not be forgotten that remissions are not in question, but only suspensions and half suspensions. Such real sufferings and hardships as there may be in the case are in great part those caused by the no rent campaign started by Mr. Gandhi and the coercive processes which have followed. In a real and vital sense the hardships are self-inflicted, though Government has its share of responsibility. In

South Africa there were grave and monstrous original hardships before passive resistance created secondary hardships. In Champaran again, the original hardships far far outweighed those that might have been caused by a resort to passive resistance, if it were found necessary. Here many of the hardships are secondary, the root cause being but a denial by Government of the suspensions and half suspensions to which the rules would entitle the tenants, supposing their valuation of the crops to be accurate. Mr. Gandhi, we know, will not deny or even minimise his responsibility for the consequences of the course adopted at his instance. He is prepared, and even glad, to pay with his body the penalty that the law may exact. That is granted. But for passive resistance to be vindicated, it is necessary that the wrong-doer should be condemned by those who witness the cruel sufferings of his victims and in course of time become himself ashamed of his tyranny. That is why Mr. Gandhi appeals to the press and the public for sympathy and support. The press and the public, who can be trusted to have first-hand knowledge of the conditions in Kaira, can hardly be said to have given support to this campaign in an adequate measure. The ordinary man who takes interest in public affairs is evidently *not* convinced that there is such suffering as to justify the cry of "no rent" and that too much is not being made of an ordinary incident of land revenue administration—a too rigorous application of rules following upon a cavalier disregard of earnest representations made to Government. This is a grievance without doubt, and must be redressed. The principle of arbitration again, which Mr. Gandhi seeks to establish by his campaign in Kaira, must command the assent of all, but the ordinary methods of constitutional agitation should answer, especially with liberal reforms in administrative machinery in sight. The danger of passive resistance becoming more and more common is not unreal. On petty occasions, and without sufficient provocation, men less able than Mr. Gandhi to exercise moral checks on followers may employ it against the administration to the great detriment of the public welfare.

The very grave war situation, with which we are faced, renders the carrying on of a passive resistance movement at this juncture particularly inexpedient; and we make an earnest appeal to Mr. Gandhi, to whom considerations of chivalry appeal as to no other, to suspend his movement as he did in South Africa when the situation there was complicated by labour strikes. He can take up, if he likes, his fight for the principle involved in the present struggle at a more opportune time, and will have rendered the authorities great help, which they sorely need at present. But it must also be confessed that Mr. Pratt's mishandling of the situation has already aggravated matters, and when it is remembered that only a paltry sum of 3 to 4 lakhs of rupees is in question, the Government's insistence on the carrying out of

the rules, regardless of the feelings of the ryots, is utterly unjustifiable. The granting by Government of the suspensions asked for would be an act of striking magnanimity, which will draw people's hearts to Government, and there was never more need for it than now. This extremely unfortunate affair must be ended at once.

AN APPEAL.

(BY AN INDIAN.)

WE wish with all earnestness to ask our countrymen to think seriously and to think immediately as to what reply India is to make to the very grave appeal made by the Prime Minister in this hour of the Empire's crisis. The Viceroy has called a conference of representatives of all shades of opinion to consult with them as to how the full resources of India, both in men and material, can be placed at the disposal of the Empire at this grave hour. The fact of this conference is itself so unusual that it would not be unreasonable to conclude that information is at the disposal of Government which is not yet public property, which perhaps from reasons of State cannot be made public. But we wish to appeal both to Government and to the leaders of the people not to indulge in the game of recrimination and expatiate on the might-have-beens, and to mention a few considerations which are obvious indeed but are none the less of the most vital importance.

First as regards Government. It is no use shutting our eyes to the fact that Indians have been feeling the galling weight of racial subordination, that they feel that their rulers have not reposed full confidence in them, that they suspect that all their rulers have not an equally keen desire to raise them to a position of equality with themselves, that they fear that some classes of Englishmen are afraid that their material interests will suffer if Indians are allowed a considerable say in the management of their own affairs, and that occasionally attempts have been made to whittle down solemn promises to unmeaning platitudes or shelve them as "impossible charters." This is not the time to argue about the reasonableness or unreasonableness of these feelings, suspicions, fears. But the fact being so, our rulers have to make a specially earnest effort to change this state of things. It is for them to take steps which will appeal to the imagination of the people. A bill for the better government of India will perhaps take some time and energy to hatch. But an announcement of the future policy in outline is possible, and it should be bold in conception and should inspire people with confidence that the principle of liberty, for which the Empire is waging this war and has staked its all, shall be the governing principle of Indian administration, and that the doctrine of self-determination to which the Premier has given expression shall be made applicable to Indians. In some other directions also some steps may be indicated. If the

War Cabinet has stopped the Home Rule League deputation from proceeding to England, so should it also put an absolute stop to the agitation of Lord Sydenham and his friends in England and Mr. Welby and his Anglo-Indian co-adjustors in India. Again they should immediately start a college or two for the military training of Indian youths so as to make them fit for receiving commissions. The people are already discounting the worth of the promise on this subject, given last year. Thirdly, what is perhaps still harder, Indians should be treated on a footing of equality in the matter of appointments. No war should in practice be allowed to come in the way of this absolute equality, and perhaps an immediate announcement of the acceptance of simultaneous examinations and the Indianisation of all the services at as rapid a pace as possible will conciliate the educated classes, who are after all the real leaders of the people. Fourthly, a liberal extension of the policy of advisory committees in the matter of internments, and of amnesty for political offenders of a comparatively less heinous kind, will give a practical example of the confidence which will be repaid a hundredfold by cheerful willingness to bear burdens. Finally, the innate sense of a race *hauteur* and the rudeness towards Indians which is its consequence should be consciously avoided by the European element of the community, and any example of such callous disregard towards the feelings of Indians should be visited with appropriate penalties amounting in some cases even to externment out of India, for one can have no conception of the bad blood this creates among the educated, and not least among the Indian servants of Government themselves. We are not speaking here of mere outward demeanour on the part of Europeans but an inward change of heart, and this is essential, whatever practical measures Government may take.

But we appeal to our own countrymen to lay aside the current questions for the moment in spite of the many shortcomings, both real and imaginary, of our rulers, in view of the grave crisis in the history of our country and Empire. For we must look at the broad facts of the case and see whether in spite of these shortcomings we can afford to do without the British connection. There is nobody living at present in India who has any personal recollection of our immediate past with its wars, confusion and pillage. In the world, as it is at present being constituted, there will remain no place for small or weak nationalities. India cannot stand alone; it must form a part of a larger organisation powerful enough to make any adversary quail before attacking it. It is no mere rhetoric to say that India's connection with England has been divinely ordained. With our momentary irritation at several wrongs, there is an unconscious tendency to shut our eyes to inconceivably bigger dangers which are not so near. But let us not forget that at this moment, those dangers are not now so distant as they formerly

appeared. The *débâcle* of Russia is a new fact in the world situation. The progress of Germany towards the east, which was so long stopped by the mighty Russian bear, has now become considerably easier. It will of course take some time before she can consolidate her gains, and that is the fortunate element in the situation. On the western front, England, France and America are gallantly fighting the long-hatched schemes of our foes, who have had a god-send in the shape of the Russian revolution. But the diplomatic skill of our foes is not less than their skill in arms. They have been able to hoodwink Bulgaria and Turkey to be their satellites and practically their subjects. India has always been vulnerable on her frontier and the recent developments in the art of war have brought it nearer still. We cannot now sleep quietly in our beds, perhaps enjoying the wickedly delightful sensation of feeling that the white races who have been bossing the show for the last thousand years are now busy destroying each other. We must be up and doing and be ready in good time to defend the sacred soil of our country. Our three hundred millions will not be of the least use unless they have the requisite training. Look at China's helplessness with all her four hundred millions. We cannot look quietly to a change of masters. Much as we may complain of the British, it is not too much to say that the Germans will be ten times worse and the Turks a thousand times so. The exploitation by the Germans will be so thorough that our little complaints against British exploitation would be regarded as mere trifles, and one cannot forget the recent exploits of the Germans in Belgium, Poland and France. Even though it be contended that the accounts of the doings of Germany in these parts came from tainted sources, the same cannot be said of the records of their doings in Africa or of the exploits of the Waldersee expedition in China at the time of the Boxer trouble. If the Germans have the Turks as their allies wanton cruelty and lust would be added to thorough exploitation. The fate of the Armenians cannot have been forgotten by us. With German conquerors in place of the British, we shall have to say goodbye to all ordered progress, to all ideas of freedom that we have learnt to cherish. Are we going to risk our future, while fighting for comparative trifles? Everything we hold dear will be *streng verboten* under German rule, and the honour of our women or the security of our life and property will not be worth an hour's purchase under Turkish or Pathan sway.

These may be gloomy thoughts of an overheated imagination. But this war has taught us that facts have often a way of outdoing imagination. And when our rulers themselves talk of the sacredness of the Indian soil, is it far wrong for us to guess that there is at least some remote possibility of attempts to violate it? We ought therefore to weigh our actions carefully and take thought of the morrow. We are glad that Government has seen fit to ask for our help though we should be

doubly glad if they had done so four years ago, when the present situation would not have arisen at all. Let us meet Government in the fullest possible measure, and shrink from no sacrifices or duties. Let us call a truce in our internal affairs and bend our minds to the single purpose of defending our home, whose defence alone can at all make Home Rule possible. Let us cease to talk of resistance, passive or active. On the whole, British democracy has not done badly by India, a conquered country as it has been. We depend upon their help in our attempts to reach a glorious future. We shall have possibly to agitate for it later on. But when far bigger issues are in the balance, it is positively suicidal to merge ourselves in comparative trifles. It must be confessed that the cessation of the normal political activity becomes difficult when the reactionaries openly talk of a reversal of the State Secretary's pronouncement of last year. A definite declaration of policy and an indication to abide by it are therefore needed to make this possible. For India's help to be adequate, such bold measures are necessary. Then there will be the desired concentration on war to the full extent. Our one thought now must be how bring it about, Let all the able-bodied amongst us learn to shoulder a gun or help in a munition work, if called upon. In Bengal some of our leaders have started a campaign in favour of conscription; shall the Mahratta and the Rajput, the Sikh and the Jat fall back?

THE COTTON SITUATION.

I am neither a 'bull' nor a 'bear'; but as one interested in public welfare, I have given some thought to the question as to whether it is necessary to take any steps, and if so, what steps, to check the abnormal rise in the price of cotton. Before we come to any decision on the matter, we must satisfy ourselves that this is due not to legitimate causes such as shortage of crops, very heavy demands, or the inability of railways to bring in cotton from the mofussil, but that it has been forced up by heavy speculation of bullish character. If it is proven that high prices are not due to natural causes, the second point which we must thoroughly sift is the after-effects of the settlement rates being fixed only in accordance with the present bullish tendency on the financial position not only of cotton trade but other trades dependent on it. And here I would like to make my position quite clear. Although I have friends who are bears as well as bulls, I have no sympathy with any of their transactions. I have a kind of moral antipathy to this class of business, and if I had the power to do so, I would stop all speculation of whatever character. We must, however, recognise that there is a speculative trait in human nature which, while it is fully developed in some, is latent in others and sprouts forth at opportune moments. That being so, no Government can take legal steps to stop all speculation so long as human nature remains

what it is. Most of us remember the measures that were adopted to stop the bookies working at the Bombay and Poona races. This measure was opposed on the ground that Government had no right to stop one kind of gambling so long as they took no action against other kinds of gambling. It was also said that as a result of this measure the attendance at the races would fall off, thus reducing the income of the Club and indirectly affecting the support that the Club gave to racing. This, it was alleged, was likely to affect horse-breeding in this country as good horses were not likely to be brought to this country from outside, if they had no chances of winning heavy stakes. These prophecies have not proved true, but one of the results of the measure has been to increase gambling amongst ordinary people by making it possible for even men of small means to try their luck at the totalizator. This is a practical instance of the effect of a legal measure adopted to stop gambling and shows that men with speculative instincts can manage to give full play to these instincts in spite of any legal measures that may be adopted to check these instincts.

As regards cotton speculation in future, it has been said both by business men and by writers on this subject that such speculation is necessary to help the spinner to get his cotton at the required time at a fair price, and also to help the brokers to pass on or share the risks if any failure in cotton crop occurs. There is no doubt that this must be the genesis of speculation in future, and if such dealings have been confined to *bona fide* spinners and *bona fide* brokers and producers, there would not be the heavy fluctuations that we see now and then in the cotton market and consequently very little harm would be done to the financial position. Unfortunately, people who are neither spinners nor brokers rush in with the idea of making money without any idea of taking or giving delivery of cotton and try unnecessarily either to inflate or to depress the market. One can understand poor men or middle class men trying to become rich by easy means, but one cannot understand why men rolling in wealth should take to speculation of this character. If these men are hard hit, when they find themselves on the wrong side, we can have no sympathy with them and they must pay out the losses in the spirit in which they have made their moneys. It is because the abnormal prices of cotton are likely to affect the smaller dealers and not only the bigger people and also because the indirect effect of the present situation on the financial position is likely to be very depressing, that it is imperative to consider the best means of meeting the situation.

Any measure that we recommend must, while easing the situation, not lead to any losses to the producers, for our chief concern must be to let the producers earn all their legitimate profits out of their produce. We all know that most of the cultivators have not the holding power to keep the cotton in stock till now as they have to find money

to pay the moneylender or to pay the instalments due to the Government or to maintain themselves. The vast majority of the agriculturists are, therefore, not likely to be affected one way or the other by the settlement rates fixed low or high. Some of the Indian States where the Bhag Batai system of land tenure still exists might have held on cotton till now without selling it, and they would be affected if low prices are fixed on the settlement day. But their interests need not be taken into calculation, where the larger interests of trade in British India are concerned. The consumers of cloth would if anything benefit by the lowering of the cotton prices because theoretically at least prices of cloth go up and down in response to the prices of cotton. The spinners so long as they will be able to sell the produce on the basis of the price of cotton would not mind whether they have to pay a higher or a lower price for ready cotton, though naturally they prefer low price as their profits would then be secure. The only important factor that thus remains to be considered is whether the situation that will arise, if the settlement price is fixed very high, is likely to have such a disturbing effect on the money market as to create a financial crisis. And if it is proved that it is so, public interest demands that Government should adopt means that will ease the situation. I use the word 'Government' advisedly for, so far as my information goes, neither the Cotton Trade Association nor the Cotton Exchange nor any body has the right to fix a maximum price for the period. What they can do, as they have done in the past, is to say that they would not recognise a higher price than a maximum for a few days, as they did in November, 1916. As it will thus be necessary to approach Government for this purpose, it is essential to make out really a strong case, such as would satisfy the Government about the necessity of taking action under the Defence of India Act.

LALUBHAI SAMALDAS.

A CASE FOR AN AMENDMENT OF THE INDIAN RAILWAYS ACT.

In the beginning I invite attention to section 55 (1) of the Indian Railways Act and to condition No. 6 printed on the back of Railway receipts and approved by the Governor-General in council by Circular No 9, Railways dated 14th May 1895. The hardship in connection with these provisions arises as follows:—

Suppose a merchant wishes to order goods from a different province. He first ascertains the price of the commodity, the cost of carriage and other incidental expenses and if he finds that he will be able to sell it at a profit in his native land, he makes purchases and gets the goods consigned by Railway. While he inquires about the cost of carriage and when he consigns the goods, he is told that the goods will be carried from that place to his native place for say, 8 annas a maund. Some one or two months after the goods have been delivered to him at destination, the Railway raises an undercharge and says that the freight for the commodity is 12 annas a maund and that the rate of 8 annas was quoted by an error. During this period the merchant might have already sold the goods, and

now he is called on to pay an undercharge at the rate of 4 annas a maund. Under section 55 (1) he has to pay it on demand, and if he does not pay, the Railway is authorized to detain any other goods belonging to him that might be in or might come into its possession.

In such cases, if the correct rate were quoted in the beginning, perhaps the merchant might not have purchased the goods at all. He is induced to purchase the goods and get them consigned on the representation that the rate was only 8 annas a maund. As a matter of justice, equity and good conscience, the Railway should be held bound by the representation made by it and it should not be allowed to recalculate the rates. Such is the case in England; *Vide* 31 Bombay I. L. R. 534 at 541 where the learned Judge refers to *Winkfield vs. Pockington* where it was held that

"If before sending goods by a carrier, the sender applies at his wharf to know at what price certain goods will be carried, and he is told by a clerk who is doing the business there 2s. 6d. per cwt, and on the faith of this he sends the goods, the carrier cannot charge more, although it be proved that the carrier had previously ordered his clerks to charge all goods according to a printed book of rates in which 3s. 6d. per cwt. was set down for the goods of the sort in question."

The following remarks made by Lord Tenterden in that case are also quoted there:—

"If a person goes to the office of a carrier, and asks what a thing will be done for and he is told by a clerk or servant, who is transacting the business there, that it will be done for a certain sum, the master can charge no more." But in this country, the Railway says it is not bound by any such representation as it has made a distinct agreement that the rate is liable to be re-calculated. Condition No. 6 printed on the back of the Railway Receipt reads as follows:—

"That the Railway administration (company) have the right of re-measurement, reweighment, and recalculation of charges at the place of destination, and of collecting, before the goods are delivered, any amount that may have been omitted or undercharged."

Thus the Railway has a right to re-calculate the rate at destination and in numerous cases the Railway exercises this right some months after the goods have been delivered to the consignee at destination. Although condition No. 6 quoted above distinctly states that the Railway administration have the right of collecting any amount that may have been omitted or undercharged before the goods are delivered, the undercharge is recovered subsequently under the authority conferred on the Railways by section 55 (1), which is also printed on the Railway receipt as condition No. 7.

Thus suddenly the merchant is called on and compelled to pay an additional charge of 4 annas a maund whereas he sold the goods at a profit of about 2 annas a maund. What was a profitable transaction thus suddenly turns out to be a transaction of loss and the poor merchant is rendered helpless.

There is no reason why the Railway should not be held bound by the representation originally made by it. It might be argued that the goods clerks might commit errors, and the Railway might be put to a loss. But why should the Railways not engage competent clerks? If they do not want to pay proper salaries and do not engage competent men, they must suffer for the mistakes of their clerks. But unfortunately the Railways are allowed to engage incompetent clerks, and the public are made to suffer for their errors:

Remedy suggested. (A) The following explanation may be added to section 55. "Rate, terminal or other charge referred to in this section (or in clause 1 of the section) means rate, terminal or other charge quoted on the receipt at the time of booking of the consignment." Or (B) condition 6 on the back of the receipt may be dropped.

Another instance of public hardship is afforded by the wording of section 77 of the Act. As the section reads, a

claim to a refund of an overcharge has to be preferred in writing to the Railway administration within six months from the date of the delivery of the animals or goods for carriage by Railway, i. e., within 6 months from the date of consignment; in cases mentioned above, suppose the Railway demands an undercharge (what the merchant would term an overcharge) five months after the date of the consignment. The merchant should pay it and also notify his claim to a refund of the same within one month only. Suppose the Railway demands an undercharge after six months. The merchant will be compelled to pay under section 55 (1) and will be rendered entirely helpless in the matter of recovering it as he cannot notify his claim to a refund of the same within six months from the date of the consignment. The later the Railway demands an undercharge, the more it encroaches upon the time allowed to the public for notifying their claim to the refund. Is it fair or equitable that one party should be allowed to cut off designedly or on account of its indolence the time allowed to the other party to take an obligatory action for seeking redress?

It is submitted that six clear months should be allowed to the public for notifying their claims in each case. It is therefore suggested that the words "accrual of the cause of action" be substituted for the words "the delivery of the animals or goods for carriage by Railway," occurring at the end of the section.

A third instance of public hardship which requires to be redressed is to be found in the Risk Note Form B which has been approved by the Governor-General in Council under section 72 (2) (b) of the Act. Prior to 1907, the scope of this form was very wide, and the consignors signing the same agreed to hold the Railways harmless and free from all responsibility for any loss, destruction or deterioration of or damage to the consignment from any cause whatever. The Railways were accordingly held not liable in any case, not even where the goods had been stolen or criminally misappropriated by their own servants. This was evidently unfair and Government had to revise the form in 1907. The new form also holds the Railways liable only for the loss of a complete consignment or of one or more complete packages forming part of a consignment due either to the wilful neglect of the Railway administration or to theft by or to the wilful neglect of its servants, transport agents, or carriers employed by them." If a Railway servant therefore breaks open a package booked under this Risk Note and removes goods therefrom, the Railway is not liable as there is no loss of a complete package. If all the goods are removed from a package and only the covering is offered to the consignee the Railway is not liable as there is no loss of a complete package. I would also quote a case which I actually came across during my practice about two years ago. A Charan of Vanthali (a station on the Jamnagar Railway) booked from Bhankoda (a station on Rajputana Malva Railway between Viramgam and Mesana) to Vanthal 42 calves. The calves were put into 3 waggons, 14 in each. Two of them were made of wood and the third was a Z type iron waggon. At Wadhwan Junction all the 14 calves in the iron waggon were found scorched to death on account of the hot April sun. A suit having been filed by the Charan for compensation for the value of the 14 calves, it was held that the Railway was not responsible as there was no loss of any complete animal, for although the calves were dead, carcasses remained! In order to make the Railway liable, therefore, it was necessary that the carcasses should also have flown away into the air!

This is evidently unfair, and the Railways should be held responsible for partial loss, destruction or deterioration where the same are due to the causes mentioned in the risk note. The burden of proving that the loss, destruction or deterioration is due to some cause other than wilful neglect of the Railway administration or theft by wilful neglect of its

servants, &c., should be placed on the Railway administration as the goods have all along been in their possession and they are specially in possession of all information concerning the circumstances of the loss &c., whereas the consignor or consignee is not expected to have any such information. The decision in I. L. R. 41 Calcutta page 576 to the contrary is evidently bad in law, as it is opposed to section 106 of the Indian Evidence Act No. I of 1872.

Remedy suggested. (1) The words "loss, destruction or deterioration" should be substituted for the words "the loss of a complete consignment or of one or more complete packages forming part of a consignment" occurring in the risk note Form B after the word "except."

BHAGWANJI ANUPCHAND.

A LETTER FROM LONDON.

THE STATUS OF A DOMINION.

Two interesting events have taken place this week. The first was an indication of the gradual change of attitude in this country towards the question of the status of India in the Empire. At Manchester, last Saturday, the Chamber of Commerce, through the Imperial Air Fleet Committee, presented the Government of India with an aeroplane, called the "Manchester," just as other large cities have presented aeroplanes to the various self-governing Dominions. Great Britain is gradually becoming familiarised with the idea that India is ceasing to be a dependency, and is claiming recognition as one of the sister nations of the Empire. In other words, the whole character of the Empire is subtly changing under the impact of influences set free by the war. Mr. Lionel Curtis very wisely used the expression "British Commonwealth" to describe the new politico-ethical conception of the confederation of states that will make up the British Empire of the future. Imperialism is being more and more unfashionable and discredited, especially since the Russian revolution—the first one, I mean—and the entry of America into the fray on the side of the Allies. I very much doubt whether it can ever be resuscitated, and the activities of Germany since the Russian collapse have disgusted still further the mass of people with aims that resemble more those of the Middle Ages, though they are clothed in modern garb. But I shall speak more of this aspect of the situation later. To return to Manchester.

MANCHESTER'S GIFT TO INDIA.

Owing to the unavoidable absence, through illness, of Lord Islington, Sahebzada Aftab Ahmad Khan and Sir Prabhshanker Pattani, the Indian representatives on the Secretary of State's Council, accepted the Chamber's gift on behalf of the Government of India. Both of them thus made their first public appearance in this country. Although they have been here only a short time, they have already made their mark at the India Office, by their assiduity and their knowledge of the situation from an Indian point of view. Unfortunately, Sir Prabhshanker's health since his arrival here has not been very good, and the inclemency of the weather has not tended to improve it. In his speech accepting the aeroplane, Mr. Aftab pointed out that to treat India as an equal partner in the Empire was "the right and straight path to India's heart." And he laid emphasis upon the fact that, great as India's services have been during the war, they are not comparable with what she could do to serve the Empire if only given the opportunity of expressing herself through "the successful application and realisation of that liberal, large-minded, and far-sighted policy which had recently been announced by the Government," and "in making India and her people really and effectively equal partners in the greatness and the glory of the Empire." Sir Prabhshanker significantly added that "the strength of an Empire was not so much in its vastness as in the closer understanding between its component parts." Both speeches were warmly well-

THE LATE SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN.

The second event was of a much more melancholy character. On Tuesday afternoon, at Caxton Hall, Westminster, a memorial meeting was held to give public expression to the sense of loss that had been sustained by the death of Sir William Wedderburn. Sir Herbert Roberts, Bart., M. P., an old friend both of Sir William and of India, presided, and made touching reference to the personality of the great-souled man that was being mourned far and wide. Lord Islington, who had hoped to be present, was at the last moment prevented from attending, but sent a very warmly sympathetic letter, in which he dwelt principally upon "the high qualities of Sir William's truly fine nature." "Had he lived a little longer," prophesied Lord Islington, "he might have seen brought to fruition some of the aims and measures he had for so long a time advocated." Sir William's sage and temperate counsel was specially emphasised, and Lord Islington felt that "his name will be revered and remembered above all for his peculiarly intimate personal sympathy for India and all its peoples, which was an innate part of his nature about which there could be no question or doubt in the mind of anyone who was brought in contact with him." Lord Islington concluded with the hope that "the more men that arise in England of the stamp of Sir William Wedderburn, possessing the honest, large-minded qualities with which he was so generously endowed, the more sure will be the eventual success of the evolution by which India will take its place as a responsible member of the Empire." Among those who paid eloquent tribute to the memory of one with whom they had worked closely for many years were Mr. Eugene Wason, M. P., Dr. G. B. Clark, late M. P. for Caithness, and Lord Weardale. Mr. Aftab appropriately pointed out the significance of the fact that Sir William would be mourned by more people in a distant land than in his own country. Upon the conclusion of the proceedings, a short meeting was held to pass a resolution of sympathy with the relatives of the late Mrs. Caine, mother-in-law of Sir Herbert Roberts, who acknowledged the act of courtesy on behalf of the family.

THE TCHINOVNIK CAMPAIGN.

The Tchinovnik campaign is being carried on here with great activity. The press organization of the Indo-British Association, that amalgam of what is most reactionary in Britain and most contemptible in India, is a very energetic one. But the Association has ample funds and many able people with considerable leisure to carry on the work. These people are for ever warning middle-class audiences that the Indian Bolsheviks will certainly wreck the Empire if allowed to occupy themselves in a responsible manner with the affairs of their own country. It is useless, of course, to urge that these "Bolsheviks" are nurtured on the heretical doctrines of Burke, Mill, Morley, Hume, and Wedderburn—a revolutionary group, in all conscience—and that they know and care nothing of Leninism. The latest red herring is that India should not be allowed to control her own affairs until the situation in Russia is definitely cleared up, because, owing to the free run that Germany is endeavouring to secure through Roumania, the Ukraine, and the Turkish territories, she will be in a position to threaten the safety of India through Persia and Afghanistan. It never occurs to these sage counsellors that a contented and well-organized India is the best safeguard against foreign invasion or economic penetration.

London, March 9.

LETTERS FROM THE PROVINCES.

CENTRAL PROVINCES.

THE LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT BILL.

I have already in my last letter given you some idea about the controversy provoked by the withdrawal of the

Local Self-Government Bill. Hon. Sir Bipin Krishna Bose has since addressed a circular letter to all the chairmen of the District Councils, asking them to pass resolutions recommending the reconsideration of the Bill, especially as the withdrawal of the measure seems to have been decided upon on a misapprehension by Government of the nature of the opposition offered in Council by hon. members. It is difficult to say as yet how far the District Councils concerned will respond to the call.

THE DELHI CONFERENCE.

Invitations to attend the ensuing Delhi Conference have been received by some prominent men in this Province. Dr. Munje is amongst those who have been so invited.

BOMBAY.

CITY CO-OPERATORS' CONFERENCE.

A CONFERENCE of the representatives of the Co-operative Societies in the City of Bombay was held on Friday, 19th inst. and on Saturday, 20th inst. in the Vanita Vishram Hall, Girgaum. So far Conferences of co-operators of the whole Presidency and of Divisions and Districts have been periodically held, but the co-operators in Bombay City who are fairly numerous never before met in a separate Conference. One special feature which distinguished this conference from other conferences previously held was that this was entirely initiated and managed by non-officials independently of the Department of Co-operation while all conferences held previously were for the most part officially managed. Although the present was a non-official conference, the Registrar and his assistant expressed their sympathy towards the movement and were good enough to make suggestions for making it a success.

Rao Bahadur Talmaki, in his opening speech as Chairman of the Conference Committee, explained the necessity of a separate conference to consider questions which exclusively belong to Bombay. The Hon. Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas, whose interest in the co-operative movement is well-known, delivered a well-thought out address in which he pointed out the necessity of freeing the co-operative movement from its official shackles. It is a strange irony of fate that this movement which is essentially democratic should be made to appear as a protegee of bureaucrats. But it must be frankly admitted that the whole blame for the present state of things cannot be laid at the door of officials. A good part of it is due to the general apathy of the public towards the movement.

One good point characteristic of all co-operative conferences in this Presidency is that they are not intended to be mere demonstrations, as most of the other conferences are, but they afford a good deal of scope for deliberation and discussion. In all eighteen papers written by persons interested in co-operation were submitted to the conference, six sub-committees were formed to discuss these papers and the reports of the sub-committees were placed before the conference in the form of resolutions on the next day of the session. The first resolution appointed a committee to make arrangement for the conference next year and to make efforts to see that the resolutions are given effect to. The second resolution made a recommendation to the mill-owners to start co-operative credit societies for their factory workers in co-operation with the Social Service League, Bombay. The third resolution expresses a hope that Government would more liberally help the Debt Redemption committee, the fourth resolution recommended the formation of a small Industries Association on co-operative lines. Resolutions were also passed welcoming the starting of Consumer's Association, a city Co-operative Bank, co-operative stores, and a Co-operative Credit Society for peons in public offices. The other resolutions dealt with the questions such as co-operative insurance, co-operative clubs and co-operative sanitarium. The speeches made on these resolutions were short but pointed and informing. On the whole the conference did a very useful work and passed off very successfully, and the credit is due to Rao Bahadur Talmaki, and Messrs. V. L. Mehta, Shantirai Mehta and S. A. Brelvi.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A CONSCIENCE CLAUSE.

SIR,—The Government of India have published (the *Gazette of India*, March 30) in response to a request made in the Imperial Legislative Council, an abstract of the opinions received from local Governments on the question of the introduction of a conscience clause in educational codes. It is not clear why they should have published a summary of the opinions, and not the opinions themselves. The summary again

is so imperfect that the Government of Bombay questions its accuracy, so far as their own opinion is concerned, and consequently the Bombay Government's view has had to be excised from the published summary.

Is not the absence of conscience clause inconsistent with the policy of strict religious neutrality of Government? That is the first question that suggests itself to anyone. The Punjab, Bihar and Orissa and Assam Governments have answered it in a decided affirmative. Assam indeed maintains that neither aid nor recognition can be consistently afforded to any institution which Government would be debarred by their principle of strict religious neutrality from maintaining as a State institution. The U. P. and C. P. Governments however interpret religious neutrality to mean non-interference with the religious instruction imparted in aided schools and on that ground defend the absence of the conscience clause. The Madras Government's opinion is not recorded on this vital matter.

On the question, whether a conscience clause ought not to be insisted upon at least in places where none but a missionary school exists, as recommended by the Hunter Commission, local Governments have given answers which are not entirely relevant. Thus the Punjab Government say that no difficulties have arisen in respect of single school areas in the Punjab. The Burma Government say that in Burma the difficulties which occur in such areas frequently yield to the exercise of a certain amount of tact. The U. P. and C. P. Governments say that there are practically no areas where a Christian mission holds the monopoly of education. Neither of these answers is pertinent to the issue under consideration, which is whether right policy does not demand that, where there is only a Christian school in the field, parents who do not care for Christian teaching should be allowed to withdraw their children from the periods of the Bible lesson. On this question again the Madras Government's opinion is not recorded. The Assam Government have declared themselves in favour of the conscience clause. In Bihar and Orissa the principle is applied in primary schools in the so-called single school areas, with the consent of the missionaries, and it is well-known that some prominent missionaries in that province also favour the extension of that principle to middle schools.

It is sometimes contended that the religious instruction given in mission institutions is not of a definitely religious character, but it partakes largely of the system of moral instruction based on the Bible. It will be remembered that when the Hon'ble Mirza Sami-ullah Beg raised the question of a conscience clause in the U. P. legislative council in the form of a resolution on November 13, 1916, the member in charge said on behalf of the U. P. Government on this point:—"It is true that missions aim at spreading a knowledge of Christianity; but it is not the case that their teaching is of a directly proselytising character or that they aim directly at making converts. Broadly speaking, it might perhaps best be described as *moral instruction on a Biblical basis*." In view of what the spokesman of one of the local Governments said then, it is somewhat surprising to find it recorded that the answers of all the provinces except Bengal, which furnished no information, to this part of the questionnaire was that the instruction was *more or less definitely religious*. Indeed those who have been following this controversy for the last two years know that the description given by the member of the U. P. Government of the religious instruction imparted in Christian schools was hotly contested by some of the missionaries themselves, who apparently thought it a slur on their methods that the religious character of the schools maintained by them should have been thrown into the shade, and that they should be supposed to be working for religion under cover of philanthropy. Again, there is no question about the compulsory attendance of pupils at this aggressive religious instruction; for it is recorded that in Madras, the U. P., Punjab, Bihar and Orissa, the N. W. F. Province, Delhi, and the C. P. attendance is compulsory in all Protestant schools. And here it should be remembered that even many of the missionaries who resist the introduction of the conscience clause in the educational code insist that attendance at religious instruction given in their schools should be voluntary, and that no one should be forced to attend the Bible lesson against his wish. They only claim to restrict their schools to those who are not averse from receiving religious instruction; and they admit the necessity of a conscience clause in single school areas. Thus the Rev. W. E. S. Holland, Principal of St. Paul's Cathedral College, Calcutta: "The point for which I wish to plead is that whatever be our method, our Christian propaganda shall be really free at every point—that it shall never rely on compulsion as a weapon. To offer a student the choice between Christian education or no education is *virtual compulsion*. We are here to preach Christ to those who will listen and receive; not to an audience collected by compulsion."

How would the introduction of the conscience clause react on the missions? Would it lead to a whole-sale closing down of their institutions? The Madras, Burma, and the C. P. Governments do not think that many missions would stop their general education work as a result of a conscience clause. Other Governments think that the missions would be induced to relinquish grants-in-aid from Government and would perhaps concentrate their efforts on a smaller number of institutions, etc.

The Government of India did not ask the local Governments whether they thought it necessary to introduce the conscience clause in India on the analogy that it was in force in England, for it is contended by many that the conditions being entirely different in the two countries the same considerations did not apply. On this, however, the Rev. Holland has expressed himself thus:

"With regard to the analogy of the conscience clause legislation in England, I must confess myself not very much impressed by the arguments of those who maintain that there is no parallel. They appear to me to savour somewhat of special pleading. The circumstances may be rather different, but the principle is the same; and it is the principle that is at issue. One difference is, of course, that in England education is compulsory; but some thing very like compulsion exists in India, whenever the choice is between Christian education and no education at all. I believe that *in all honesty the two cases stand or fall together*."

On the general question all provincial Governments, except Assam and the C. P., deprecate the proposal being accepted, at the present time at any rate. It is clear that even for such a small reform, so obviously demanded by equity and traditions of religious neutrality of the Government, an agitation has to be set on foot at an opportune time.—Yours etc.

K. M. KHADYE.

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