

# THE Servant of India

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## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
TOPICS OF THE WEEK ... ..	1
ARTICLES :—	
Currency Committee's Report ... ..	3
Hereditary Religious Rights ... ..	4
SPECIAL ARTICLES :—	
The Democratisation of Education. By An Educa- tionalist ... ..	5
Mr. Macdonald on the Governance of India. By A Critic ... ..	7
The Housing of the Poor in the City of Madras. By V. Venkatasubbsiya ... ..	9

## TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

THE news of the end of the Bombay strike was received with satisfaction, not only in that city but outside. It was one of the most serious and widespread strikes which had occurred in Bombay and at one time gave cause for grave anxiety. That the demands of the operatives were not unreasonable has been universally admitted, and the work done to bring the strike to an end by organizations like the Labour Settlement Committee and the Social Service League deserves commendation. The intervention of His Excellency the Governor also played no small part in bringing about an agreement between mill-owners and workmen, and the thanks of the public are due to Sir George Lloyd. The strikers have suffered considerably owing to unemployment, for over a month and have won concessions from employers only after a prolonged struggle. The experience of the strike period has thrown valuable light upon the industrial conditions of Bombay, and it is to be hoped that it will not be wasted on the parties concerned. Some permanent machinery must be erected by means of which it may be possible in the future to avoid calamities like the recent strike and to achieve by negotiation and conciliation what actual cessation of work by operatives is designed to secure. Organization among the workmen and education as to their rights, duties and responsibilities is the most urgent need, and steps must be taken to bring about improvement in this direction.

THE Viceroy opened his Legislative Council on the 30th January last with a speech, on the fullness and friendly tone of which he may be congratulated. It dealt at length with all subjects of current interest. Lord Chelmsford is a ruler of excellent intentions and untiring industry. He

has had, however, a most trying time and his principal advisers have not always been the wisest. Some of his official acts may merit disapprobation; but his honesty of purpose, personal courtesy and a desire to do the right are beyond praise. A prominent feature of the debate that followed on the Hon'ble Mr. Sinha's resolution was the testimony borne by several speakers to the conspicuous and willing part played by the Viceroy in bringing about the reforms now embodied in the Government of India Act of 1919. The letter of the Government of India dated 5th March to the Secretary of State and certain of the subsequent letters on the same subject have been interpreted by some sections of the public as an attempt on the part of the Viceroy himself to retrace some of the steps which, along with Mr. Montagu, he had previously taken in the direction of liberal reform. It must, therefore, have been particularly gratifying to His Excellency to hear Mr. Surendranath Banerjea make handsome acknowledgment of the obligation under which India lay to him.

ANOTHER pleasing incident in the proceedings was the reciprocation by Messrs. Crum and Paton of the good-will and comradeship which Mr. Banerjea, with equal tact and generosity, offered to the European community in the working of the Reform Act. Sir William Marris promised co-operation of the Indian Civil Service. How we wish this friendship all round in the Council could be regarded as reflecting the mutual attitude of the various classes in the country! Pandit Malaviya was not in Delhi at all. If he were, the loyalty and magnanimity of his nature would, without a doubt, have led him to support Mr. Sinha's resolution. But why were Messrs. Khaparde and Patel, who attended the meeting, silent during the discussion and conspicuous by their absence at the time of voting? Mr. Sinha had sought to eliminate every occasion of doubt or controversy by omitting reference to the Reform Act, to the eminent persons who deserved thanks for it and to the projected visit of the Prince of Wales. He was openly held to blame for these omissions by Mr. Banerjea. He would have felt rewarded, however, if the advanced Nationalists had been conciliated by his scrupulously confining the resolution to his Gracious Majesty's proclamation. We await with interest the explanation of this incident that will doubtless be forthcoming in the Nationalist Press.

THE Viceroy stated in his opening speech that the question of the non-Brahman representation in Madras and Bombay was nearing solution. The portents however are anything but favourable for Madras. We understand that three attempts were made to arrive at an agreement, but without success. The non-Brahmans are still passing resolutions demanding representation through separate communal electorates, although, as we pointed out recently, the intention of the Joint Committee's recommendation is clearly to the contrary. A reference was made to Col. Ormsby-Gore, who also interprets the recommendation to mean what everyone except the Madras non-Brahmans means by it. In Bombay the mixed electorates are universally accepted by the non-Brahmans (though the Brahman Nationalists still demur), but the Bombay Government have not yet moved in the matter, probably owing to the strikes in Bombay.

IT is being freely asserted in Madras that the editor of the *Hindu* was among those who tried to help the Governor of Madras to the presidency of the legislative council. The assertion is now repeated in the columns of the *Janmabhumi*, a paper with a strong Nationalist bias, and must therefore be taken as authoritative. An attempt is made to explain away the support which the proposal received from many Nationalist stalwarts on the ground that, being inconsistent with the provisions of the Act, it is one of mere academic interest. That the proposal is opposed to the legislation now passed does not justify the support accorded to it by Nationalist frequenters of the Government House, but on the contrary renders it all the more inexplicable and unwarrantable. The *Janmabhumi* rightly asks: "If the subject is only academic, 'why was the proposition allowed to be carried, in fact as the first proposition of the day at the informal gathering, instead of being nipped in the bud as out of order and therefore not worthy of consideration? Or is the untenability in law discovered after the support was extended at the meeting?" It would be more charitable in the present case to assume, as the *Janmabhumi* suggests, that the discovery was made after the whole thing had been finished, for otherwise the Nationalists' support would prove as disingenuous as it is irrational. Anyway, it does little credit to their grasp of fundamentals and their sturdy patriotism that they should surrender the one feature in the reforms which more than any other guarantees the vigorous growth of the legislatures and makes popular control effective.

ANOTHER instance of the short-sighted view of the Nationalists is to be found in the ready acceptance by their delegates in England of the offer of a secret and restricted inquiry into the disturbances of April last, instead of pressing steadfastly for the open and full investigation into the whole affair which eventually took place. It was an egregious blunder on the part of Mr. Tilak and

others to have weakly yielded on the one point on which firmness was most required, and one should not refer to this regrettable episode but for the fact that Mr. Tilak, having nearly lost to the Indians the remedy for their dreadful sufferings, himself goes about assiduously misrepresenting the attitude of the Moderate leaders. On the platform and in the newspaper press he tries to make out that the Moderates were opposed to amnesty. Mr. Tilak knows best that it is a gross perversion of facts and a base calumny to put this false complexion upon their resolute stand for a public and exhaustive inquiry, especially when the event has shown that the Moderates were wholly right and the Nationalists wholly wrong in the insistence by the former and the surrender by the latter of an open and comprehensive inquiry. If Mr. Tilak had had his own way in this matter, not only would the excesses of General Dyer, for instance, have been wrapped in secrecy for all time, and no redress would have been available, but even the supposed necessity for the introduction of martial law would not have been inquired into. Everyone with any sense of the relative importance of the questions involved will at once perceive that it would have been criminal to give up the open inquiry for the sake of the limited amnesty which alone was then in question. To have an inquiry conducted in open daylight into the misdeeds of the officials was in itself a remedy too potent and a precedent too valuable to be bartered away for a restricted measure of gaol delivery, particularly when it was highly probable that a general amnesty for the whole of India would be declared upon the passage of the Reform Bill. The Moderates have no cause to blush for the part they took in this affair, in obtaining either inquiry or amnesty, but it is an altogether dirty trick which Mr. Tilak is now playing upon them.

WELL might Mr. Gandhi exclaim in horror: to Mr. Tilak everything is fair in politics. If Mr. Tilak's policy merely were—*सर्वं प्रति साध्यं*, craft for the crafty, it would not have been so serious a matter, though it would be worlds apart from Mr. Gandhi's policy. But the trouble is that *साध्यं* is practised upon men who are the soul of honour—e. g. Ranade, Agarkar, Gokhale, in the past. Verily, no patriot is absolved from the obligation of being first a gentleman, at least towards those who are themselves every inch gentlemen.

IT was stated in reply to a question by Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru that the report of Lord Hunter's Committee was expected to be received towards the end February or early in March, and that the Imperial Council would have a chance to discuss the Committee's conclusions after the publication of the report. When shall that be? The Viceroy has ruled that no resolutions will be taken up during the March session. Yet, we trust that ample opportunity will be accorded to the Council to deal with the report.

## CURRENCY COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

THE long-awaited report of the Indian Currency Committee is at last out. The main point which had been referred to it for consideration was the measures that were necessary for stabilizing the sterling exchange and the rate at which it was to be fixed. The position of the Committee was by no means enviable. It had to deal with an exchange situation that was changing from day to day with small prospect of an early improvement. Foreign exchanges all the world over were in a sorry plight. The price of silver was steadily mounting up as the Committee went on discussing the problems with which it was entrusted, and the urgency of a solution of the Indian difficulty was every day growing greater. Under these circumstances it had to take into calculation internal and extraneous factors of a most complicated nature and to work on unsatisfactory materials. Few in India ever thought that the Committee's recommendations would be such as to meet with popular approval. Its field of inquiry had been restricted by its terms of reference to the devising of means to make the gold exchange standard of India stable, and everybody who knew the views of the only Indian member of the Committee, Mr. Dadiba Dalal, knew that he would not be able to see eye to eye with his colleagues and would have to write a minute of dissent embodying recommendations entirely different from those of the majority report. Public apprehensions have been entirely justified, and it is no wonder if the report of the Committee has failed to give satisfaction in India.

The advantages of a stable exchange are appreciated and admitted by all, and it is decidedly preferable that the stability should be based upon the automatic working of the forces of international exchange rather than on state management. The Committee has recommended the fixing of the value of the rupee at 24d. in gold on the principle that the rate at which exchange is to be stabilised should be as near as possible to the prevalent rate. Going back to the old rate of 16d. per rupee would, the committee thought, involve serious disturbance in existing trade conditions and was deprecated on other important grounds. A low rate of exchange was calculated to keep Indian prices at a very high level, a result which would prove dangerous in the unsettled and anxious social and political circumstances of India. A high rate, on the other hand, would stimulate imports and discourage exports, thus tending to lower prices, a consummation devoutly wished for by all people. In reasoning in this manner the Committee has not given due weight to the important consideration of the detrimental effect of a high exchange upon Indian producers and manufacturers and makes a big assumption—which cannot be accepted without important reservation—that prices in the outside world will be maintained at a high level and the losses of India will not be serious. It makes much of the saving

which Government will effect on the remittance of its home charges and makes light of the depreciation of our huge gold holdings in London which must be brought back at a high rate of exchange. Having made up its mind in favour of a two shillings (gold) exchange, in opposition to the opinion of Mr. Dalal who wanted to restore the rupee to its old value of 16d., the Committee considered the means whereby the ratio of Rs.10 to the gold contents of the sovereign was to be maintained. It rejected all suggestions with regard to the tampering with the present rupee as calculated to shake public confidence. It would not countenance the proposal to reduce the silver content of the rupee or to coin a new rupee of a higher denomination or to have a rupee of nickel, and strongly recommended that the present rupee should be continued, absolutely unchanged in weight and fineness. The Committee further set its face against the suggestion that the exchange might be maintained by allowing the currency notes to become inconvertible when a sufficient supply of rupees could not be provided owing to the scarcity or high price of silver.

Assuming that the present rupee was not to be tampered with, that the convertibility of the note issue was to be completely safeguarded and that the exchange was to be stabilized at 24d. measured in pure gold, the Committee had to suggest ways and means to keep the sterling value of the rupee at that fixed rate. The Committee proposes that the import and export of gold to and from India should be absolutely free and hopes that the increased supply of the yellow metal will reduce the demand for rupees. It also expects that the price of silver will not permanently remain at a higher level than is necessary to make the rupee a token coin. The imports of silver are also to be freed from control and the duty on them is to be taken off. Council drafts on India and reverse councils on London are to be sold by Government as at present, according to the necessities and convenience of Government, and the obligation to pay Rs.15 for each sovereign presented is to stand no longer. The rupee is to be linked up to gold and not to the sovereign as at present, because the latter has lost its normal value and the rates of the drafts on India and on London will vary in accordance with the sterling cost of shipping gold in either direction. The stable relation between the rupee and gold is to be at the rate of Rs.10 to one sovereign, that is, one rupee for 11.3 grains of fine gold, both for external exchange and internal circulation. To-day, the sovereign is divorced from the market value of gold and there is a divergence between its face and bullion values. The relation between the rupee and the sovereign stated above will not, therefore, hold good for some time and the rate of exchange will consequently fluctuate. But when the sovereign recovers its normal value, it is expected that the parity with the rupee will become stable. To maintain the stability of exchange without impairing the convertibility of notes, the

Currency Committee recommends that in case the price of silver rises above the parity of 2s. (gold) for a brief period, the emergency should be faced with the help of every available means in the power of Government, which may reduce the sale of council drafts, abstain from the purchase of silver and use gold to meet demands for metallic currency.

The recommendations of the Committee with regard to the free import of the precious metals and the establishment of a gold mint in India for the coinage of sovereigns are eminently satisfactory, but we are afraid the effectiveness of the measures they propose for the maintenance of the exchange is not free from doubt. Government has already given partial effect to some of the recommendations. The control over the imports of gold is not yet taken off and Government will continue to acquire it at the rate of Rs.10 for each sovereign. Rupees will no longer be issued to the public in exchange for sovereigns, and sovereigns and half-sovereigns will not be received at the mints under the old notifications of 1897 and 1906 respectively. The prohibition against the use of gold and silver coin otherwise than as currency or dealing therein at premium is cancelled, though the prohibition on the export of silver will still remain. Government will be prepared, when occasion requires, to sell drafts on London at rates to be based on the sterling equivalent of the price of 11.3 grains of fine gold as measured by the prevailing sterling dollar exchange, less a deduction representing the charge of remitting gold. It is apprehended that Government has assumed too much responsibility in undertaking to sell drafts on London at the above rate and that the disturbance in the exchange market will be enormous. Government has embarked upon a most difficult experiment, and the horizon is far from clear. The currencies and exchanges of the world are in a hopelessly unsettled state, the course of silver prices is uncertain, and the working of international trade is far from being smooth. It is under these circumstances that Government will attempt to keep the rupee a token coin with its gold value fixed at 24d. Gold is, of course, going to supplement silver currency, and other measures are proposed to be taken to protect the rupee. The Committee has likewise made important recommendations in connection with the Paper Currency Reserve and the provision of banking facilities so as to encourage a more economic use of the precious metals among the people. The examination of these and other points in the Committee's report must, for the present, be deferred.

#### HEREDITARY RELIGIOUS RIGHTS.

THESE are days of change in all directions. The western nations have traversed already almost the whole of the road from status to contract. In our country this road has been more rough, longer and far more difficult. But progress there has been along it to some extent. In the wider times of the political vote now opening before us the pace is bound to be far more rapid. India cannot be still; is

it not then the duty of statesmanship to make that journey more tolerable, to provide betimes for the future needs, to see that the obstacles in the path are removed before the car of progress dashes against them and runs the risk of being overturned?

In this transition period many ticklish problems are always arising for solution. Some of these are concerned with purely secular matters. Thus the question of the hereditary rights of the watandar kulkarnis has been agitating our councils for many years. In ancient days when administration was not anything like a perfect machine, it was considered desirable to invest some families with the hereditary right of working as the village revenue officers and receive in return some pecuniary advantages. This course was practically useful when men did not leave their villages to seek their fortunes elsewhere, but confined themselves all their lives to their village and their ancestral occupations. In these days, however, when travelling is so easy, when many professions and careers are open to talent, everybody with some ability gravitates to important centres and leaves the ancestral village, often for good and always during his active life. It is only the fool of the family that remains at home. The routine work of the administration of the village, which has also enormously increased in view of the various kinds of statistics now required by a progressive government, is thus not as efficiently done as by an expert paid agency. The kulkarni must therefore disappear, though this disappearance should be brought about in as painless a manner as possible. From the point of view of the wider interests of the people, the recent policy of Government in buying out the kulkarni's right is obviously sound and is fairly considerate to the sentiments of the people. The persons immediately concerned are bound to complain as they do in other countries when their prescriptive rights are invaded in the larger public interest, but one can only be sorry for them and proceed one's own way.

In our country, however, where religion enters so largely in our daily concerns there are hereditary rights which are more or less religious in character. The village priests have been enjoying the privilege of officiating at the various religious ceremonies that are common in every family in the village and pocketing the money presents that are customary. Even in this case the best brains in these priestly families no longer follow the ancestral profession; many of them go away and the fool of the family is left to officiate if he can at these ceremonies. When he cannot, he considers that this hereditary right of his is something that can be sold, and the sale or hire of these *vrittis* is quite a common feature of the villages, just as the sale of the right of nomination to a benefice was quite common in England till recently and is not yet entirely extinct. The progress of education and the birth of individual consciousness among the backward classes have, however, made this right to officiate a galling oppression on many of

them. They say that they should be free to call in whichever priest they like to their homes; the hereditary priest says that they may do it if they like, but that the customary offerings should all the same come to him as of old. There have been many cases before the law courts which have dealt with this question and we understand that the High Court has now ruled that these customary religious rights should not be enforceable in law; and that whatever may have been their origin, such enforcement is opposed to public policy. The priests have now lost their claim, but it is still occasionally used for the purpose of harassing the ignorant people who are afraid of having recourse to law and shrink from necessary trouble and expense. In such a case we think that a standing order may be given to the lower courts not to admit such cases or, if admitted, to dismiss them summarily. We shall then see an end of such indirect forms of harassment.

Such religious or semi-religious privileges are however not enjoyed only by the Brahman community, though in the two instances above mentioned that community is mainly concerned. In a case recently decided by the Bombay High Court one barber sued another for officiating at some semi-religious ceremony in some family in a village in which the plaintiff alleged that he had the right of being the only person entitled to be called at such functions and to get the customary fees for the services. The High Court upheld the contention of the plaintiff. The learned judge, Mr. Justice Shah, says in his judgment: "In view of the finding that the plaintiffs are entitled to officiate on ceremonial occasions by custom, I do not see any sufficient grounds to refuse to recognise their right. It is a customary right which is not in any sense opposed to public policy, and it is not suggested in the argument that it is opposed to public policy. It is not unreasonable; and a barber is one of the recognised village community. It may be that his services are not religious in the sense that a village joshi's services are. But the services of a barber may be essential on ceremonial occasions and may form a part of the religious ceremonies taken as a whole." We wonder how the question of public policy was not raised in this case. In our opinion it is the essence of the matter. Obviously the question cannot be allowed to stand in this state. We think that such rights should now disappear in the limbo of history and one of the questions which the new councils will have to tackle is this one of religious or semi-religious and customary rights. In these days of individualism such rights are essentially out of date.

#### THE DEMOCRATISATION OF EDUCATION.

THE most notable tendency in the field of education in the west at present is that education is being nationalised; that is to say, an attempt is being made to provide equal educational opportunities for all, without distinction of the social grade, and to enable every child to unfold the best

that is in him or her. With all the sweeping reforms introduced by Mr. Fisher's Education Act, especially those with regard to continued education, the Labour party still loudly complains that the secondary education does not penetrate as low into the social strata as might be desired. Eight weeks a year of secondary education in the continuation schools, which is all that the Act provides for, is not enough equipment for an average citizen. The Labour party will not be satisfied with anything less than a complete overthrow of social barriers in the matter of education. No one ought to be debarred, by reason of his poverty or his place in the social scale, from acquiring the best kind of education to which he may be fitted by his natural gifts. This doctrine is now animating England and other western countries; while it may yet be a dream in most countries, it is being actualised in a certain measure in Germany. That country may perhaps seem to many to be the last to which one may look for the most vigorous growth of the democratic sentiment; but as Meyrick Booth\* explains: in Germany, "in a cultural, if not always in a political sense, the prevailing note is thoroughly democratic. The idea of a small class enjoying advantages denied to the broad mass of the people is quite alien to the modern German outlook. The nation is permeated deeply by the conception of a general diffusion of all the goods of civilisation—material and mental—throughout the entire community."

While the war was yet being waged, these socialistic ideas were actually applied in certain places in Germany by way of experiment. A demand was made during the course of the war that from the age of 6 to 14 or 15, all children, to whichever class in society they belonged, should pass through the same school (*Einheitsschule* or "united school"), the object being to test in that period the capacity of each child to receive education of higher grades. It was thus desired that those who were fitted by their natural talent should proceed to secondary and higher education, whatever their economic condition might be, while those who were well off financially, but whose intellectual calibre was not up to the mark should be weeded out at the start. This is a direct attempt to abolish all differences of wealth and social position so far as education is concerned. The object of the movement is not only to provide education of a superior type for all the children of the poorer classes who are fit for it, but also to deny the higher kind of education to the rich, though financially they are in a position to afford it. This idea has not remained quite in the dream-land. Some small beginning was made during the war in rearranging the educational machinery according to the underlying principle of this movement. In Strasburg (Alsace) only those children who were certified as having attained the required standard in elementary schools were admitted to the municipal secondary schools, all others being

\* "Social Reconstruction in Germany." (Uwain.) 1919.

refused entrance. Where necessary, students were admitted free of tuition charge and even their parents were helped with a grant. We are told that soon after the new system commenced, the percentage of working-class children in the secondary schools rose from 5 to 20. "In Prussia, too, a regulation was introduced in 1917 to ensure that the conditions of entrance into the higher schools should be so modified that it would be possible for children of the poorer classes to be passed on." Apart from these isolated experiments, it is understood that the Government has decided to carry through the "united school" plan.

There is another movement afoot in Germany for *Volkshochschulen* (people's colleges). It is proposed that such institutions should be established in beautiful scenery, remote from town life, to which those who are too poor to afford university instruction will resort for a short period of four or six months for the prosecution of purely academical and non-utilitarian studies. Even a brief spell of such a university training in congenial surroundings and in the midst of cultured people leaves a more permanent impress upon the mind of the working-classes than continued schooling is likely to do. Special care is taken that the instruction that will be imparted in these institutions will be such as will not add to their weekly earnings or even greatly increase their stock of knowledge, but as will "draw out their personality and open up new outlooks." Nor is this instruction intended to help the scholars to grow out of their social class; it is rather intended to enable them to discharge the duties which now rest upon them with a new sense of responsibility, or "do what is usual in an unusual spirit." It is the arousing of a new vision that is aimed at in these colleges. This movement has struck root in Württemberg and Thüringia. "In the country round about Stuttgart, a number of half-day winter-colleges have been started during the last two years. These are for young agricultural workers and others in the country who have a good deal of free time in the winter. ... A residential college on these lines was started at Liebenzell (20 miles west of Stuttgart) last winter. Evening classes, too, have been set going in various small towns and villages. The movement is also energetic in Thüringia; and it is hoped to establish shortly a residential college in some part of the province." There is also another movement set on foot in Germany in favour of throwing open all state and municipal institutions of an educational description to all classes, e. g. concerts, theatres, galleries, etc. It is proposed as a practical step that there ought to be people's theatres, open free of charge, where the best that is known in the drama will be at the disposal of all, and where young artists and musicians can come into contact with the public—these buildings to be churches of dramatic and musical art, rather than theatres in the present-day sense; and so

forth. The aim of this movement is "the building up of a unified culture for a whole people." "The mental heritage of the nation and of humanity must be made available to all, without question of rank or wealth." It is said that careful consideration is now being given in Baden to the first practical steps for achieving this end. This will show that a very strong current has set in for the democratisation of education in Germany.

AN EDUCATIONALIST.

### MR. MACDONALD ON THE GOVERNANCE OF INDIA.

It is not easy to conceive of a book on Indian administration written before the Montagu-Chelmsford proposals of reform were formulated which the recent legislation on the government of India will not render out of date. Even Mr. Ramsay Macdonald's "Government of India"\* suffers not a little by the far-reaching changes introduced into the governance of India; however, it still retains an amount of interest and freshness which would hardly have been possible in the case of any writer, of however broad an outlook, whose knowledge of Indian conditions was less intimate than that of Mr. Macdonald. The present volume is to be specially welcomed at the present moment in so far as it helps the reader to appreciate to the full the great value of the reforms now introduced. He will find that the constitutional changes effected by the Act are generally on a level with and in some cases even transcend the proposals embodied in the book, and when one remembers that the proposals emanate from a Labour leader, though not of the left wing, one will appreciate at its true worth the advance that the Act makes on the present state of things. Besides, the question of reform is approached in this volume from a different standpoint from the one assumed by the authors of the Act. This fact and the historical setting in which every constructive proposal is placed add greatly to the utility of the book.

#### THE HOME ADMINISTRATION.

The proposals made in the pages of the volume under notice that the Secretary of State's salary should be paid from British revenues, that an Indian Under-Secretary of State should be appointed, and that a Parliamentary Committee on Indian affairs should be appointed each session from members of Parliament, have been carried out. Mr. Macdonald urges the abolition of the India Council, and in this regard his opinion agrees with Indian opinion. A greater number of Indian members on the Council would not, in his opinion, help us much. "It is a cumbersome machine," he says, "of check and counter-check if it has any use at all. It destroys real Parliamentary interest without giving Indian control or expert political advice. It prevents such a reorganisation of the India Office into proper relationship with Indian Government on the one hand, and British represen-

\* The Swarthmore Press. (1919.) 10/6 net.

tative institutions on the other. It is not government or advice by the expert, but by the official. It is an adjunct to bureaucracy, not to Indian opinion. It is a civil service imposed as a check upon a legislature, and it becomes more and more anomalous as representative institutions in India are established and broadened." The Joint Committee, it will be remembered, has recommended the introduction of the portfolio system into the work of the India Office. This proposal is made, Mr. Macdonald says, by those who wish to strengthen the authority of the Council against both the Secretary and Parliament and therefore strikes at both Parliamentary control and self-government and should thus in his opinion be opposed.

#### THE EXECUTIVE.

The Viceroy now combines in himself three separate functions. He represents the Crown in India; that is his proper function, but he is also the representation of the Home Government and the supreme head of the administration. Mr. Macdonald suggests that the Viceroy should be divested of the two latter functions and that he should be merely the representative of the Crown to be kept in touch with the home administration and the administration in India as the Crown is kept in touch with the Cabinet and Parliament. This is not a new idea, but it is one for which the Congress did not press. In the matter of the composition of the executive council, Mr. Macdonald supports the popular demand that the council, instead of being a section of the Indian civil service as it now is, ought to become a branch of the legislature, its members being drawn wholly from the Legislative Council. He does not recommend this, however, as an immediate practical step, but one to be reached by gradual stages. The original proposal in the M.-C. Report in this behalf, that Indian members should be two, seems to him inadequate. The Indian membership is, however, now raised to three, Indians and Europeans being nearly half and half. Mr. Macdonald also takes exception to the method of appointment. "The first thing is," he observes, "to limit the civil service appointments to what they now are, terminate the rights of new recruits to regard these offices as belonging to the civil service, and establish as a constitutional practice the appointment by the Crown of members who have had legislative experience." May not one hope, however, that, by the time the new recruits become eligible for elevation to the executive council, responsibility will have been completed in the provinces and will be well on its way towards completion in the central Government?

The next question is that of the relations between the legislature and the executive. Mr. Ramsay Macdonald thinks that the best plan in the existing circumstances in India would be to put the executive in a position mid-way between the British and the American. That is to say, it should be appointed by the Viceroy or the Governors, as the case may be, "on the understanding

that it includes some of the legislative leaders, and then watch the development of events." The dual form of government incorporated in the Act he disapproves as clumsy and inexpedient, but we are not sure that Mr. Macdonald's plan differs in any essential respect from the one put forward by the members of the civil service. For there is nothing to show that he favours the alternative Congress plan of the entire and immediate subordination of the executive to the legislature. If that is out of the question, partial responsibility which the Act introduces in the provincial Governments is preferable to the mere provision that a certain proportion of the executive be taken from the legislature.

Which powers should be devolved upon the provinces the author does not discuss in detail, but he lays particular stress upon some amount of financial independence being bestowed upon the local Governments. "The imperial legislature must protect itself," he says, "by securing first claims upon such income as the land tax, customs duties, and so on; it must also retain powers to co-ordinate provincial finance in such a way that poor provinces may not be hampered by their poverty. But these safeguards laid down, the responsibility of providing a financial budget can be safely left, and ought properly to be left, to the provincial legislatures, though I think a very useful end would be served if all the provincial budgets were made the subject of discussion at an all-India financial conference held each year before the budgets are presented to the legislatures for consideration." Mr. Macdonald also suggests that the imperial legislature should have the power of suspending provincial legislation referred to it by the Governor or Viceroy in Council. But, in his opinion, no direct election is possible for the imperial legislature in the present circumstances, and he therefore thinks that the bulk of its members should be elected by the provincial legislatures, with, at first, a limited number of members nominated to represent all-India interests.

#### THE MODE OF REPRESENTATION.

On the system of representation to be adopted in the provinces his remarks are noteworthy, specially because they differ radically from the opinions expressed by the Labour members in Parliament and because they show a deeper insight into the Indian conditions. "At the moment," he says, "and under existing conditions 'popular representation' in India would not indicate Indian opinion, but would give rise to practices which would subvert that opinion and fill a field now barren and waste with tares and weeds, but certainly not with wheat." He therefore proposes that territorial representation should not be the only mode adopted, but that the modes of election should be varied, and even a certain amount of nomination provided for. He urges that some educational test—much lower than the B. A.—should be laid down, and he also favours communal representa-

tion. He says: "I have changed my mind on this point, because on careful consideration I see that certain communities that ought to be represented will not be represented except by special provision, that the representation of these communities will raise their status, and that it will bring them into that national co-operation in the councils which is bound to issue not in division, but in unity of interest and spirit." This will be generally granted, but the problem for consideration at the moment is whether separate communal electorates should be set up, or a certain proportion of seats be guaranteed for such communities as are likely to suffer in the competition, and into this question he does not enter. Mr. Macdonald also adds: "As an alternative to this a scheme of Proportional Representation might be adopted, because this system of election is peculiarly adapted to such countries of diverse minorities and communities as India, but this presupposes a large composite register. It is preferable, however, to any other scheme, if it could be worked, but failing it, it is impossible to erect a body of valid objections to community representation."

#### PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS.

Mr. Ramsay Macdonald attaches very great importance to the provincial Governorships being filled by competent and broad-minded statesmen. Too often the Governorships "have been regarded as glorified jobs for rich and vain followers, or as consolation prizes for respectable but disappointed men, or as occupation for men otherwise idle at home. This type of man fulfils none of the requirements of an Indian Governor. These Governorships offer to men desirous of facing some of the most interestingly difficult problems of imperial politics opportunities of usefulness and satisfaction which no other political appointments afford. We must at once revise our view of Indian Governorships and regard them as posts of great importance and dignity." Mr. Macdonald does not want the I. C. S. to be excluded from these posts, but he wants them to be filled in as large a number as possible by men sent out from home. "The practice of appointing members of the civil service," he says, "to the political wardships of provinces should be stopped. They ought not to be debarred, but India has everything to gain by direct infusion of home influences into her government, men with fresh minds and eyes, men who have not been moulded in civil service administration, men whose abilities are of a different order from those developed by magistracies, collectorships and secretaryships. The one kind of ability ought not to be set over against the other kind. India needs both, and she should be free to use them. But if a civilian is appointed he should at once resign his position in the service and not be eligible for further employment as a civilian."

#### THE POSITION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE.

But no chapter in the book is of more interest and carries greater authority than the one which treats of the Indian civil service. It is one of the

attributes of a self-governing nation that its administrators should be drawn from its own people, and along with constitutional reforms Indians have also demanded that the administration should be Indianised. As between the two things, the former ought to have a priority. It is certainly more important that the duly constituted representatives of India should have the power of directing policy than that men of their race should execute the policy determined upon by the foreign bureaucracy. Mr. Macdonald puts the point very clearly. If the liberation of the Indian genius be our ideal, he says, "it is best to let India gain power first of all in legislatures and gradually supply her own administrators. For the legislature is the will, the administration is the handmaiden of the will. The administrator is the expert who, taking his instructions from the will, works out details and application efficiently. The faculty to administer well comes after that of forming opinion and expressing it. So that in the interests of self-government in India, the country would be well advised to keep its legislative powers ahead of its administrative authority, for it is more important for it that efficient Europeans should supervise the edicts of an Indian public opinion than that Indian administrators should carry out British instructions. That thought, I believe, should guide India in determining the general features of the reform it is now to demand." Even so he recognises that a large step in advance must now be taken for Indianising the civil service. The proportion of the Indian element in the I. C. S. will be increased from 25 to 33 per cent., if the recommendations in the Joint Report are carried out, but such arbitrary proportions, Mr. Macdonald holds, will no longer meet the needs of the situation. He therefore pleads for simultaneous examinations. The passage in the book bearing on this subject, though long, deserves to be quoted in full:

"I was a member," he says, "of a Commission which inquired into the public services and made certain recommendations on the subject, but the new conditions created by the war made the report obsolete before it was published. Our conception of the functions of the service must now be altered. I then thought of the possibilities of twenty years from 1914. The twenty years have gone and twenty have been added to them. The Indian civil service must conform far more to the conditions and status of the home service, and must no longer be recruited for the higher posts of the executive. In the circumstances it is far better to institute simultaneous examinations in India and Great Britain than pursue the scheme of electing proportions here and there, for the reduced attractions of the Indian service to Britain may be expected to reduce the quality of the men recruited here. On this subject, the discussion and proposals in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report are altogether perfunctory and inadequate. If that Report becomes the basis of legislation, the contention of the Indian civil service that its status will be revolu-



tionised is unquestionably true. That service will no longer rule India, and the posts from which it now does the ruling will be taken from it or will lose their prestige. It may be consulted, but it will not decide. It will act not of its own will, but through that of bodies elected in India; and as this is not the time for confused systems and undefined authority, with whatever regret and misgiving we may contemplate the change, the change is inevitable. The seat of authority in India is being removed from the civil service to the legislature, and we must build up the system of government accordingly. Wisdom compels us to see not very far off the end of the civil service as we have known it, and that being so, it also compels us to begin without delay to create a new service which will carry us through the transition stage from a British to an Indian administration. To Indianise the civil service has become necessary."

#### THE NATIVE STATES.

The Native States Mr. Ramsay Macdonald sees through rose-coloured spectacles. The educational progress achieved in some states, and the separation of judicial and executive functions and the social legislation attempted therein have blinded him to the all too patent vices of personal rule observable in almost every state. It is not true to say that in Mysore, enlightend as its administration unquestionably is, experiments in self-government have outstripped those in British India. Every state without exception lags far behind British India in the matter of constitutional reform; the experiments that are made in some states are far more rudimentary than in the British territory, while in some not even a beginning has been made. It is too sanguine a view to take that none of the rulers are opposed to political progress and that none will resist a good British example in this respect. Therefore, one cannot but entertain some misgiving about the proposal made by him that, if possible, more such states should be created and that a greater autonomy be conferred upon the existing states. To the latter proposal no objection can be made if it can be guaranteed that the rulers in their turn will transmit the powers of self-government which they will receive at the hands of the British Government to their subjects. Mr. Macdonald makes mention of this condition; he says, "subject to their administration responding in a general way to the changes that must be made in Indian administration, the existing states should have more powers of self-government." It is because serious doubts are felt as to the fulfilment of this proviso that one cannot give a ready consent to any proposal for increasing the powers of the rulers except when one is satisfied that an honest and vigorous attempt will be made to establish popular government in their states. Frankly, we are more concerned with safeguarding the interests of the subjects of the native states than of their rulers, and we certainly do not wish to see more autocracies established in India under the aegis of British rule.

A CRITIC.

#### THE HOUSING OF THE POOR IN THE CITY OF MADRAS.

SOME time ago a member of the Madras Co-operative Leather Goods Factory, of which I have the honour to be President, pressed me to go to his house in order to get an idea of the conditions in which he and some others lived. The house is 52 feet by 42 feet with an open space in the centre, which occupies about a third of the area. There is a small latrine which is generally not used by the male inmates. No less than nine families are herded together in this house, making a total of forty-eight souls, of whom eighteen are children under ten years of age. When I visited the house two women had been recently confined and three more were expecting to be delivered soon, all in that house. Each family has only one room of the average dimensions of 8 feet by 6 feet, which in some cases is also the kitchen. In fair weather the men sleep in the open space. There is a *kootam* or verandah which is shared by four families in common. The member of the Co-operative Factory who took me there has a room 8 feet by 6 feet, which is half full of things including a chair and a table, and a narrow space 8' x 4' inclosed on three sides, which is used as kitchen. His old mother and eldest child sleep there, while he, his wife and two children sleep in the room which is half-filled with things, and, what is worse, it has no window at all. For this accommodation he pays a monthly rent of Rs. 3. You will not be surprised to learn that he is absent from work for about ten days in the month on an average owing to fever, boils or some other illness.

All the nine families living in this house are *chamars*, i.e. of the leather worker caste. They have lived for many years in the neighbourhood and their place of work also is there. About the beginning of this year the Government acquired some houses occupied by these men for building houses for Sub-Inspectors of Police and dishoused twenty-one families. Some, like the member of the Co-operative Factory mentioned above, were the owners of the houses in which they lived, while others were tenants. Before these families were dishoused, the house now occupied by the nine families was fetching a rent of only Rs. 15. Seeing his opportunity, the landlord put it up at once to Rs. 25 and the former tenants vacated the house. The nine families combined and took up the house for the rent demanded. It should be remembered that, being members of the depressed classes, it is not all houses that are available for occupation by them, and, in their social conditions, they cannot be co-tenants of other castes. It appears that the other dishoused families have not yet been able to find permanent accommodation.

A few days ago I made a rough survey of thirty houses in Perambore occupied by shoemakers. These and the nine families mentioned above have always sufficient employment and their wages on an average are Re. 1 a day. Out of these

thirty houses fourteen were huts, all but two of which had only one room, a small verandah in each case being used as the kitchen. Of the other sixteen houses eight had brick walls and good roofing. The remainder had mud walls with low roofs of common tiles. These latter and the huts were without any windows in almost all cases. The average outer dimension of the tiled houses was 24 feet by 16 feet. I could get full information in the case of only fourteen houses out of sixteen. These had thirty rooms, accommodating twenty families consisting of 104 persons. The density per room was three and a half persons, the entire area in the houses including street verandahs available per head was about 50 square feet and each family had on an average one and a half rooms. The fourteen huts had fifteen families in sixteen rooms, i.e. only one family had two rooms, the rest having only one. The average outer dimension of a hut was 15 feet by 12 feet, about a third or fourth of which was generally the kitchen-verandah. The average density per room was three and three-fourths persons and the area available per head including the verandah about 42 square feet. Except in one case no rent was paid, the houses being occupied mostly by owners and sometimes by their relatives. I should say that these thirty houses were not picked ones but were all the houses on either side of a street, which was neither the best nor the worst in the locality, but typical. I may add that the locality is peopled entirely by skilled leather workers, mostly shoemakers, whose economic condition is much better than that of the average Madras wage-earner and whose women, like those of the middle and upper classes, do no work except house-keeping.

A slum-investigating sub-committee appointed by the social service bodies of this city have reported on a small compact *paracheri*, called the *Motu cheri* the conditions of which may be taken to be more or less typical. There were twenty-eight huts on about one-third of an acre including lanes. Twenty-five of them were occupied by twenty-six families consisting of 126 persons. They all had only one room, but somewhat less than half of them had a small verandah in addition. The average area occupied by each house is 112 sq. ft. (or about 10 feet by 11 feet), the average for an individual 22 sq. ft.

The English standard for overcrowding is more than two persons per room, excluding the kitchen, bath-room, etc. The housing conditions in England have been improved to such an extent that only 1.6 of the population live in one-room dwellings and only 6.6 in two-room dwellings. The corresponding figures for Scotland are very high, being 11.1 and 39.5. About one-third of the houses in the City of Madras are valued at an annual rental of Rs. 14 and less and exempted from municipal taxes. Most of them may be taken to be one-room dwellings. Though statistical figures are not available, it is matter of common observation that most of the tax-paying houses are occupied by families

which generally do not take more than one or two rooms in addition to the kitchen. The majority of the educated middle class, and the entire classes of shop-keepers and artisans can afford to have only that much accommodation. I should therefore think that about 80 per cent. of the population of this City live in one or two-roomed dwellings and that nearly 50 per cent. live in one-room dwellings. Applying the standard of two persons for a room, only 8.9 of the population in England and Wales were living in 1901 in a state of overcrowding. The highest percentage of urban overcrowding was 34.5, that of London being 16.0—considerably more than the average but not among the worst. We have observed that in the thirty houses of working class people mentioned above, the average density per room was not less than 3½ persons, and except in the case of three families living in small huts every family was living in a state of over-crowding. Of the three cases one was a lonely widow and two were childless couples. I venture to think that, judged by the English standard, about 75 per cent. of the population of this City are living in an overcrowded condition. In Austria, the urban population of which is living in a highly overcrowded condition—at least it was so before the war—the minimum accommodation prescribed is about 46 sq. ft. per head in sleeping rooms. The leather-workers already mentioned, who are not the poorest among the working classes, could barely get that minimum area, not in the sleeping rooms but in the entire house—kitchen, verandah and even walls included.

I will take leave to quote below some statistics which not only reveal the state of things in this City, but also show that it is growing worse year after year. The death-rate for England and Wales in 1913, the year before the war, was 13.7. During the five years 1913-17 the average death-rate for—

Madras Presidency was	...	23.3
The whole of India	...	30.4
Calcutta	...	26.1
Bombay	...	30.8
Madras	...	39.5

Analysed according to communities we find the following average for the four years 1914-17:—

Europeans	...	17.3
Anglo-Indians	...	26.2
Indian Christians	...	31.0
All Hindus	...	39.3
Brahmans	...	27.3
Pariahs	...	41.9
Muhammadans	...	46.3

The average infantile mortality during 1914-17 for the City was 290 per 1,000 live-births, and, by communities, it was among

Anglo-Indians	...	158.5
Indian Christians	...	210.0
All Hindus	...	288.3
Brahmans	...	230.9
Pariahs	...	303.0
Muhammadans	...	313.0

[The rate for Brahmans and Pariahs is for 1914-16, later figures not being available.]

Again, the mortality from respiratory diseases including phthisis rose steadily during the ten years 1908-1917 from 3 to 8.4 per 1,000 inhabitants. In 1918, the year of influenza, it was as high as 13.5. The mortality from phthisis in 1911 was 4, but it steadily rose to 1.9 in 1917 and 2.8 in 1918, which however was an exceptional year owing to influenza. In 1908 the death-rate in England and Wales from this cause was 1.1 being 1.3 among males and .9 among females. [*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. 27.] In 1917 in the worst ward of Madras the rate from phthisis among women was 5.0 and among men 3.7, and in 1918 in the same ward the corresponding figures were 6.2 and 4.4. In London counties in 1908 the death-rate from all forms of tuberculosis was 1.8 per 1,000 inhabitants.

Statistics relating to patients treated in the Government, municipal and aided hospitals throw a lurid light on the conditions of Madras as compared with those of Bombay and Calcutta. During the three years 1915-17 the average number of patients treated was as follows:—

	In-patients.	Out-patients.
Bombay ...	20,000	1,86,000
Calcutta ...	28,000	3,47,000
Madras ...	28,000	3,49,000

I have only to request the reader to bear in mind that the population of Madras is about half of that of Bombay or Calcutta.

I will now quote one more set of sad statistics, those relating to the prevalence of phthisis and other forms of tuberculosis among the out-patients mentioned above.

	Bombay		Calcutta		Madras	
	Phthisis	Other forms	Phthisis	Other forms	Phthisis	Other forms
1915	674	868	1023	535	574	241
1916	746	739	1622	471	1380	586
1917	597	729	1397	519	2339	1176

In Bombay there has been a decrease, but in Madras the increase in two years is more than four-fold! I do hope some one will explain these extraordinary figures—and explain them away, if possible.

(To be continued.)

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