

# THE Servant of India

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Office: KIBE WADA, BUDHWAR PETH, POONA CITY.

VOL. III., No. 3.]

POONA—THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1920.

[ ANNUAL SUBSN. : RS. 6

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## TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

*We have decided to raise the annual subscription of the SERVANT OF INDIA from February 1 to Rs. 6 (free of postage). Originally, when we fixed the price at Rs. 4, which was unprecedentedly cheap, we had intended our journal to be only an eight-page one, but when the size was decided to be increased, we still left the rate of subscription at the old figure, hoping that the price of paper which was extraordinarily high at the time would go down considerably and would enable us to keep the rate as low as Rs. 4. These anticipations have, however, not been realised, and eager as we are to offer our journal at the cheapest possible rate consistently with its ability to pay its way, we are driven to raise its subscription to six rupees, which, we will take leave to point out, is the usual rate for a weekly journal of this size. We beg our subscribers to continue their patronage. Each subscriber will be separately informed when his subscription, calculated at the new rate, will expire.*

SPEAKING at the Bombay Students' Brotherhood on Friday last, His Excellency Sir George Lloyd spoke as follows of Mr. Gokhale's greatness: "Ladies and gentlemen, I doubt if any of us yet in this generation at all adequately recognise how big a man Mr. Gokhale was. I had to unveil, and it was a great pleasure to unveil, a picture of his in Poona and that made me read his life and his speeches. I think that probably most of the recognition of that principle (of social service) will in future be ascribed by the historian to Mr. Gokhale. It is the genius of his form of patriotism, the twist he gave to what was good nationalism, the judgment and the restraint which he advocated, which are, I believe, actuating you, young men, to-day to social service and to brotherhood. If you can make out of your

brotherhood here and in other great cities of India a body of men sworn to fulfil the best part of Mr. Gokhale's propaganda and work I believe you will have done more for the real nationalistic future of your country and of the Empire as a whole than anything else that you can possibly do in this generation."

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It is neither proper nor safe, while a Committee of the Indian Legislative Council is considering the matter, to make a definite pronouncement on the subject of emigration to British Guiana in the conditions proposed by the deputation from that Colony. Many considerations on the one side and on the other suggest themselves to the reflecting mind, and it is not easy to make up one's mind between them. We will set down two of these considerations, not because they are conclusive, but because they are in some danger of being forgotten. One of them arises out of the condition imposed by Mr. Gandhi and apparently accepted by the Deputation, viz. that six months after the scheme gets into working order, a delegation from India should study the system on the spot, and if their report be adverse, it should be open to India to terminate it at once. This is a tremendous risk which involves heavy financial commitments from which a small and undeveloped colony would shrink, unless the chances were overwhelmingly in favour of the success of the scheme and unless the conditions now stated to exist were genuine and capable of verification. The other consideration is the likelihood of Indian interests soon becoming predominant in the Colony, if the plan should succeed. Considering that so far emigration abroad has brought us only humiliation and problems, might not a scheme of emigration that turned out well and profitably, be a solution of the whole question? Could not the position of Indians in British Guiana be used as an unanswerable argument in other lands, where the virtues of Indians had been either denied or depicted as vices? We might conceivably do better than turn away from the offer in the bitterness of our experience elsewhere.

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MUCH chagrin is felt at the exclusion of Nationalists from the *personnel* of the committee recently appointed by the Madras Government to advise them as to the rules and regulations to be framed under the Government of India Act. We had a sort of idea that the non-Brahmans of that

presidency had struck up an alliance with the Nationalists against the common enemy—the handful of Liberals who are at once in some mysterious way contemptible as a party and potent to keep the country back in her career onward to freedom. Perhaps, however, this consummation has not been reached yet. In this case, we have two observations to make. The Madras Government might have appointed some Nationalists to the Committee; there are surely some amongst them who are not pledged to the policy of obstruction, and whose advice may be helpful. It would have been alike generous and expedient to do so; but we are not moved to sympathy either by the tears or by the envious outpourings of the Nationalist press. To denounce and oppose a measure in all its stages, to call it little and Lilliputian, to condemn it as unacceptable and a disappointment so profound that words cannot describe it, and to heap ridicule and slander on its authors and friends is not to establish a claim to be consulted as to the arrangements necessary to carrying it out. “I will execute you, but you must trust me; I will hinder you, but you must look to me for aid,” is the demand of those, with whom politics is ill-temper and Government a company of outlaws.

IT is not in the least surprising that Mr. Tilak should find himself unable to endorse the *Mahratta's* contradiction of the statement we made, that he gave his consent in England to a secret and restricted inquiry instead of pressing for an open and comprehensive investigation in connexion with the Punjab disturbances. We are not concerned to establish the truth of an assertion about Mr. Tilak which Mr. Tilak himself cannot challenge, and which every one who knows anything about the matter knows to be true in every particular; we will only add, by the way, that the Hon. Mr. Chintamani has given his testimony through the columns of the *Leader* to the correctness of what we said. We are rather concerned to show that this controversy, over which we would fain have drawn a veil, is of Mr. Tilak's own raising. He it was who accused the Moderates of being opposed to amnesty and he repeated the accusation several times. Not only is the allegation untrue, but Mr. Tilak himself knows that it is so. The whole transaction, consisting as it does of confidential talks with authorities in England, is entirely to the credit of the Moderates and to the serious discredit of Mr. Tilak and the Congress deputation. It was to the interest of Mr. Tilak in these circumstances to have held his peace on this matter and not to have driven his opponents in mere self-defence to bring the truth to light. But Mr. Tilak, presuming on the credulity of his followers, made an assertion about the Moderates which he cannot prove and thereby only exposed himself to the disclosure of facts which he cannot deny. Those who are still unacquainted with the style of controversy in which Mr. Tilak indulges should note that he is yet unwilling to retract his allegation

which he knows to be false and does not produce a tittle of evidence to prove that it is true. “Falsehood need not be met with truth,” declared Mr. Tilak at Amritsar, and Mr. Gandhi has joined issue. The controversy ought really to have commenced at a much earlier stage. Mr. Tilak must first be made to accept the position that “truth must be met with truth.”

THE *Times'* attitude on Indian and Irish questions is one of the most hopeful signs of the times. The great journal rightly declares that the fact that Sir Michael O'Dwyer did not wire his approval of firing to General Dyer, but conveyed it to General Beynon, makes little difference to the issues involved. As to the necessity of firing and its amount, no one will consider General Dyer's opinion on the question to be the final word, as Sir Michael is inclined to do, and the Hunter Committee's conclusion will soon be before the public. But, on General Dyer's own admission, he continued the firing much longer after the necessity, if there was ever any, had disappeared. The *Times*, therefore, rightly criticises Brig. General Dyer's action as indefensible, “especially because he did not stop the firing instantly when the crowd began to disperse.” It is something that even Sir Michael did not approve of the crawling order. But his complaint against the fire of criticism which is opened upon the officials who repressed the disorders is very funny. The *Times* has had to remind him that the British officials are not above criticism, and especially no one has any right to complain if he is convicted out of his own mouth.

WE accord to Lala Lajpat Rai a most hearty and respectful welcome. Nearly for the last five years he has been undeservedly torn from his country, during which period every Indian feels he would have rendered conspicuous assistance to the Government. The Government have sadly misjudged him and have done more injury to themselves than to him by exiling him to a foreign country. In the times, which are now opening out to us, of constructive nationalism there are not many like him who can be trusted to give the country a right lead, imbued as he is with the principles of true democracy.

THUS the *Indian Social Reformer*: “Mr. Kasturiranga Iyengar's attitude at the Conference (of Brahmans and non-Brahmans held in Madras) is really unintelligible. Mr. Kasturi (who is the editor of the *Hindu*) is said to have supported Dewan Bahadur Kesava Pillay's proposal to reserve 36 out of 63 seats for the non-Brahmans, but he qualified his support by the condition that ‘if all did not agree, he would withdraw it.’ If it was right and fair to reserve 36 seats, why on earth should not Mr. Kasturi urge such reservation regardless of what others thought of it?”

## PRESIDENCY BANKS AMALGAMATION.

A FURTHER step in advance towards the establishment of a State Bank in this country has just been taken by the approval the shareholders of the Presidency Banks of Bombay and Bengal have accorded, and those of the Bank of Madras are expected to accord, to the scheme of amalgamation which has been under discussion between these Banks and the Government for some months past. We must hasten to add that there are important reservations which must be borne in mind in taking the amalgamation as a step leading to the creation of a Central State Bank for India. What is contemplated to-day is only the fusing together of the three Presidency Banks into one institution with practically the same relations towards Government as exist to-day between the two, except for the fact that greater formal control will be exercised on behalf of the State over the determination of the policy of the 'Imperial Bank of India.' The working of the Presidency Banks is to-day governed by certain definite rules laid down under a special Act passed in 1876. As distinguished from other joint stock banks, these Banks stand in particularly intimate relations with Government, which keeps a certain amount of its cash balances with them free of interest and exacts certain services from them in return. A National Bank like the Bank of England must naturally be the British Government's Bank which holds public funds and disburses them in accordance with the instructions of the Treasury, manages the public debt, makes advances and gives loans to the Government and enjoys the privilege of note issue. The Presidency Banks have not been to the Government of India what the Bank of England or the Bank of France is to the British or the French Government, though at one time they were allowed to issue notes and to hold most of the surplus cash balances of the Indian Government. The treasury system of the Government in India has this distinguishing feature that owing to the vastness of the country and the enormous area over which its revenues are collected and its disbursements are made, the State has to keep its balances in its own district and sub-district treasuries scattered over the different parts of the country, and, therefore, the extent to which the Presidency Banks can assist Government is limited. Government must have sufficient liquid funds to fall back upon in case of need and it therefore had to constitute reserve treasuries, keeping only a portion of its balances at the head offices and branches of the Presidency Banks. Government regularly remunerates these Banks for the special services rendered by them, besides keeping with them certain minimum amounts of balances without charging interest therefor.

One inconvenience of this system has been the periodical stringency of the Indian money market which arises from the locking up of large Government funds in the reserve treasuries. Government has recently been placing large sums at the dis-

posal of the Presidency Banks, and through them, of the general money market. And the amalgamation of the Banks will do away with the necessity of the reserve treasuries, the Imperial Bank handling these additional funds in its ordinary operations. When the Banks are amalgamated there will be a central board of management on which Government will be represented through the Controller of Currency who will have the power of requiring that the execution of certain measures may be delayed pending the decision of the higher authorities. There will be provincial boards of management at the Presidency towns and such other centres as may be created later on, and they will correspond to the boards of directors at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras as at present. In return for the financial help that the Imperial Bank will receive from Government, it will undertake to start one hundred branches in the course of five years and will in that way take up in a larger measure the treasury work of Government at new centres and provide additional banking facilities which the country badly requires at the present moment for its economic development. The Bank will also strengthen its position by raising its capital as that becomes necessary and will have a London branch to do its business there. It is not, however, to trench upon the practical monopoly now enjoyed by the Exchange Banks which will continue to deal in sterling bills and will only rediscount these bills coming from other banks. Through its London Office, however, the Imperial Bank will transact business for its own customers.

It will be seen from the above that for the present the amalgamation scheme is intended mainly to strengthen the position of the Presidency Banks and to enable them to withstand the competition of foreign joint stock banks which is expected to be very severe. The questions as to whether and on what terms the new Bank will be allowed to manage the paper currency, to what extent it may participate in the financial work of the India Office, &c., are not going to be considered at this stage. The whole problem relating to the prospects of the development of the Bank into a State Bank of the type of the Bank of England, will be discussed later. Among the shareholders of the Bank of Bombay there was strong opposition to the scheme at their recent meeting. Leaving the interests of the shareholders as such aside, we notice that important objections have been raised against the scheme on the score that the Imperial Bank will be debarred from freely dealing in foreign exchange business and that the Indian element will be practically absent from its directorate. It is a long-standing popular grievance that in Madras and Calcutta Indians have never been elected as directors and it is apprehended that the exclusion of Indians from the control of the Imperial Bank will be a serious drawback from the point of view of the Indian public. It has been contended that the election of directors is in the hands of shareholders and that no one prevents

Indians from being elected to the directorates. This is true enough; but when we are going to have a new bank which is expected to develop into a State Bank, it will not be an improper thing to provide for Indians being elected as directors. The scheme as it stands has the powerful support of the Government of India and has, of course, received the sanction of the Secretary of State for India. But it must be carefully scrutinized and the legislature must secure important amendments therein before it is allowed to be embodied in a law. It is no use Government shutting its eyes to the fact that there is a growing feeling in the country that the interests of Indians as such must be adequately safeguarded in any financial, banking or industrial schemes that may be adopted for the economic advancement of the country. Vested interests will, of course, try to belittle this sentiment. But it is not a mere sentiment. There is a strong reason behind it. It is notorious that the part of Indians in the management and profits of Indian trade and industry is not as conspicuous as it should be. Every opportunity has, therefore, to be given to Indians to take their legitimate place in the financial economy of their own country. The Government of India cannot afford to ignore this aspect of the question of the Imperial Bank and ought to make every effort to satisfy the wishes of Indian opinion. We feel sure that the whole question will be threshed out in the Imperial Legislative Council, and that exponents of the popular view will strive to secure the necessary amendments in the scheme. It will indeed be an uphill fight, but we trust that the needful will be done.

### NATIONALIST OPPOSITION TO FEMALE EDUCATION.

THE controversy about compulsory education in Poona has put on a new phase. Last week the question was discussed in the municipality, and the local extremists had to show their hand. It must be remembered that the whole quarrel is over girls' education; as to boys' education every one is agreed that it must be made compulsory without further delay. The Liberals are afraid that if girls are now left out in the scheme for compulsory education, it will be a long day indeed before they will be included in it. It always becomes difficult to reopen a question when once it is partially settled, and the momentum of public opinion behind it is exhausted. There are, however, special reasons why the Liberals feel apprehensive on this question. The general attitude of Radicals in the Deccan to female education is one of coldness, if not hostility; there are of course exceptions, but they are so few and far between that they go only to prove the rule. In the Deccan, speaking generally, the party of social reformers is identical with the party of Moderates, the term Nationalists being almost synonymous with reactionaries in social matters. The cause of female education has always

encountered bitter opposition from extremists in the past, and the opposition often showed itself in unspeakably filthy forms. While we admit that owing to the persevering efforts of social reformers the opposition to progressive ideas has now considerably dwindled, still even now in the columns of the leading vernacular newspapers of this party one gets a taste of the vileness of language which was so characteristic of them a decade or two ago. Let one read for instance the loathsome terms employed by them towards the ladies who took part in the women's procession arranged on Thursday last for the purpose of urging upon the municipality the necessity of introducing compulsory education for girls along with boys. At any rate, the past record of the extremists and their present attitude are not such as to make one feel sure that girls' education will be an accomplished fact in a short period of time. The Liberals in the Poona municipality were thus perfectly justified in voting against the proposal for making primary education compulsory for boys alone and thus insisting upon a simultaneous application of compulsion to children of both sexes.

The excuse now trotted out for keeping back female education is that of financial stringency. No one denies that the finances of the municipality will be put to a severe test by assuming the burden of compulsory education for all children; the only question is whether, considering the vast importance of the universal diffusion of primary education, it does not behove the municipality to raise as much money as it possibly can, at the cost of some hardship to the people. It is unnecessary to quote figures, but we will only cite the opinion of an advanced Nationalist, Mr. Bhopatkar (whose attitude to this question we will gladly acknowledge is highly commendable), who holds that it is quite feasible for the citizens of Poona to raise enough funds by additional taxation for financing compulsory education for boys and girls. Mr. Bhopatkar has been in the municipality himself and is *au fait* with its financial condition. It is because he thinks that no great retrenchment in educational expenditure is necessary in view of the embarrassed finances of the municipality, that he does not want the Liberals to try the scheme suggested by an outside committee of experts and accepted by the Liberals by way of compromise. We have already described the scheme in broad outline, and it is only necessary to add that, according to it, the municipality will have to raise only Rs. 86,000 for the education of both boys and girls by way of extra taxation, while the extremist members have definitely committed themselves to additional taxation to the tune of Rs. 80,000 to carry out their scheme of compulsory education for boys alone. If the Liberals had not pressed for female education, the municipality would have already assumed an additional burden of Rs. 80,000. Under the scheme of the experts' committee, thus, without entailing any appreciable outlay of expenditure

compulsory education can be introduced for children of both sexes in nearly the same amount which the extremists on their own showing are prepared to raise by taxation. If the scheme is educationally sound, the financial difficulty absolutely disappears, and the extremists themselves have not yet challenged its soundness. The scheme was placed before them in the municipality, and not a single nationalist member condemned it on that score, but, without adducing any criticism, quietly voted against it. Everyone will admit that, if financial difficulty is the sole reason of their limiting the scope of compulsion to boys, they ought to have given the most serious consideration to a proposal which, as an interim measure, brought down the expenses so considerably, and, plausibly at least, showed that the difficulty could be entirely surmounted. But the scheme elaborated by the committee spoken of above is only one of the many alternatives proposed by the Liberals; they have suggested, for instance, that if the municipality has funds for the education of the children of only one sex girls might first be given the benefit of the compulsory act, boys being brought under its operation when the finances improve; they have also suggested that the available money should be expended upon the education of the children of both sexes among the backward and depressed classes, all advanced classes being left to take advantage of the voluntary system; further they have suggested that only the boys of the depressed classes and girls of all backward classes should be selected for compulsory education in the first instance, others being taken up later. The principle underlying all these proposals is that those among whom education would not possibly spread except by compulsion should be first brought under compulsion and those who are already taking full advantage of the existing schools should be the last to be selected for compulsory education. It is clear that these alternatives need to be considered only if compulsion cannot be applied to the education of all boys and girls simultaneously. But the extremists are not in a mood to consider any of these constructive suggestions; they only insist, on the supposed ground of finance, that girls shall not be brought under compulsion for the present.

The controversy is now raging not between the Moderates and Extremists, or Liberals and Radicals, in Indian politics, but between reactionaries and progressives, all progressive elements in Poona being ranged on the side of the Liberals. All the leaders of the backward classes to a man, every single educated woman, several Nationalists who are completely disillusioned by the social reaction which even such of their leaders as Mr. N. C. Kelkar are developing, all these are making a united demand that girls' education should in no circumstances be left behind, and the extremists, who otherwise speak so loudly of public opinion, are prepared to trample under foot the enlightened public opinion which has manifested itself in so many forms during the last two

months. Even supposing what has not by any means been established that the municipality finds it an impossible task to introduce compulsion for both boys and girls at once, does it not stand to reason that girls, so small a proportion of whom otherwise go to schools, should first be made to attend schools compulsorily? Here, however, the reactionary steps in and says that girls' education, desirable as it may be, is certainly not so useful as boys' education and thus not so urgent. Even Mr. Kelkar does not blush to advance the proposition that the social value of girls' education is not so great as that of boys. The fact is that the social value of the former is far greater than that of the latter—a fact recognised so early as 1854 in the dispatch of the Secretary of State of that year, which says that through the education of women "a far greater proportional impulse is imparted to the educational and moral tone of the people than by the education of men," and the policy is repeated in subsequent documents relating to education. Another aspect of this question must be considered: already the disparity in the education of boys and girls is so very great as to be a serious social evil; this disparity will be multiplied several times if boys are brought under compulsory education, and girls' education be postponed indefinitely as it is proposed to do.

But the extremists argue, in all seriousness, that compulsory education being a form of force, it is only chivalrous on their part to apply compulsion to the education of boys in the first instance and to refrain from applying it to girls! Those who, to their indelible shame, shouted down women-speakers at a public meeting, apparently can show their chivalry only by postponing girls' education. An extremist member gravely advanced this argument, which finds an echo in the organ of the party, the *Mahratta*. The journal says: "If a distinction must be made, for any good reasons, for the purpose of applying the Act, it must be made in favour of girls and against boys. The boys, that is to say, deserved to be brought under compulsion sooner than girls." A discrimination *in favour of girls* and against boys in the matter of compulsory education means to the *Mahratta* the application of compulsion to boys' education and non-application to girls' education! But another issue is raised: it is contended that girls' education deserves a larger grant-in-aid from the provincial treasury, and unless that is received it would be suicidal for Poona to make education compulsory for girls without a special contribution from Government. All are agreed that a liberal grant must be made towards female education, but the best way to obtain it, as Mr. Bhopatkar, himself a Nationalist, said the other day, is to prove our earnestness by introducing compulsion at great self-sacrifice and then to approach Government for a more generous grant. Our appeals, then, the Government cannot treat with contempt. But the extremists argue, as one member argued the other day at the meeting of the municipality, that even if local bodies are

in a position to introduce compulsory education, they must wait till a larger measure of help from the State funds is forthcoming. "It would be folly," says the *Mahratta*, "for any municipality to rush into a scheme of compulsory education of girls before attempts are exhausted for making Government pay special contribution." This means that the provisions of the Act must be suspended in the case of girls till Government gives larger grants. Bandra, Surat and other municipalities then have done harm to the cause of female education by offering to apply compulsion to girls within their areas, and, to carry the argument to its logical conclusion, girls' education on a voluntary basis must also be suspended, for that requires a larger grant from the Government no less than compulsory education. Again, does not boys' education also deserve encouragement in a similar way? It then becomes, according to the reasoning of the *Mahratta*, a sacred duty of all patriots to close down all existing schools, whether for boys or girls, in order to bring pressure upon Government to give generous grants to education out of provincial funds. This is merely an attempt to shift upon Government the blame for the people's failure to carry out the Act. What proportion of educational expenditure the State should bear is a different question and must be fought independently, but to cry halt to all educational progress till Government consents to bear three-fourths of the expenditure is sheer madness. The truth of the matter is that the extremists of the Deccan feel no enthusiasm for girls' education and to raise any side-issues of the nature described above is to draw a red herring across the track. No one will be deceived by it.

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

"INDIA needs more State expenditure: India cannot stand increase in the burden of taxation"—this sums up the most trying difficulty that Indian politicians will have to face under the new régime. Even if Indian ministers are given the power to introduce reforms, will they have the wherewithal to carry them through?—that is the question which reflecting persons are asking themselves in connexion with the constitutional advance embodied in the Reform Act. The reader of Mr. Ramsay Macdonald's book will derive many constructive suggestions which will be of no little help in the solution of this difficult problem. Mr. Macdonald examines with some amount of particularity the question of India's drain, and the conclusion he arrives at may be stated thus: "If the Empire would readjust the burdens which it imposes upon Indian finance, and if that were done and nothing more, the Indian Government could inaugurate great reforms which would increase India's wealth, and could meanwhile wait, on pretty much the existing basis of taxation, for the augmented yield of revenue to the State which

would result from that increase." In the first place, a large part of the military expenditure which now it is India's portion to bear must be borne by the Empire. "A large part of the army in India—certainly one-half—is an Imperial army which we require for other than purely Indian purposes, and its cost, therefore, should be met from Imperial and not Indian funds. When we stationed troops in other parts of the Empire, we did not charge them upon the colonies, but in India we have the influence of the dead hand. When the Company ruled, it hired troops from Great Britain, and not only maintained them when in India, but paid the cost of the transport. When the Company surrendered to the Crown, the habit of lending troops was kept up, as a fiction convenient to the treasury of Great Britain." Thus India is treated as an independent State and not like other colonies who claim the privileges of Empire. This is most unjust. Mr. Macdonald recognises that India must bear her share of defence, but the share, he maintains, must be proportioned to her means and the form of it also must be of her choosing. India's contribution would perhaps be made, as Mr. Macdonald says, in the shape of an Indian-recruited army. For India to pay for the Imperial army stationed there without having a voice in the determination of policy can no longer be tolerated, and "if the existing system of military defence is to last, the whole cost of the British army stationed in India should be borne by the Imperial exchequer."

There are certain other items which Mr. Macdonald thinks ought to be put upon the British treasury. He thinks it is unfair that India should pay the exchange compensation allowances to European officers. "Certainly the officer ought not to suffer, but the fact that exchange considerations affect his real salary is not an Indian affair at all but an Imperial one, and these extra emoluments should be found by the British treasury." Another reform a self-governing India can make which will go far to reduce expenditure is that the standard of pay of the services must be brought down. How exorbitant the present standard is will be apparent from the following figures: "The pay of a civilian member of the Viceroy's council is £5,360 per annum, whilst that of the Secretary of State for India is £5,000; a member of a Governors' Council gets £4,265, the Minister at the head of one of the minor departments at home gets £2,000; the average pay of a man holding a superior executive post is £2,000, a principal clerk to the Treasury rises to £1,200; a professor in the Indian Educational service rises to £800 with allowances extra, his work (it varies very much) is done at home for anything between £200 to £500; the Chief Factory Inspector in Bombay gets £1,200, with allowances, the highest-paid Deputy Chief Inspector at the Home Office rises to £900; and so on." Indians holding superior posts now draw the same salary as Europeans and will never consent to draw less as it will imply an inferiority of status. But when the services are Indian

ised—Mr. Ramsay Macdonald is all for Indianising even the I. C. S. very rapidly—and the non-Indian element dwindles to an insignificant figure, it must be possible for Indians to reduce the salaries all round and to make additional allowances for Europeans, who will then be exceptions in the services. There will be no inferiority of station then attaching to the inferiority of salary. It is thus a reform which is possible only after a very large introduction of Indians into the higher services. Nearly one-half of the salaries up to £1,000 a year, it is calculated, is exported to England, because of the recruitment being made mostly in England. This, Mr. Macdonald says, is too high a proportion, but it may be put down nearer to one-fourth. Another dead charge which will be considerably reduced, if not wiped out, when the public services are Indianised is that of £3,500,000 to £4,000,000 each year by way of civil and military pensions.

It is really a very hopeful prospect which Mr. Ramsay Macdonald holds out to the Indian reformer, who is weighed down with the thought that while a policy of expansion must be carried out in every field of public activity at tremendous cost to the State, the resources are not susceptible of proportional expansion. He says: "A more liberal employment of Indians in the public service, a more generous treatment of India by the Imperial treasury, a greater use of Indians for military purposes, and an international settlement of armament questions will reduce it (India's drain) so far as Government charges are concerned. In private business (where perhaps half of the excess of exports over imports can be treated, according to Mr. Macdonald, as drain), the establishment of Indian banks and the supply of Indian capital will also reduce it. For this last, two things are essential—industrial co-operation and a readjustment of taxation so that the rich may pay more and the share of the cultivator in his product be increased. The problem of hoarding should be faced, especially by guaranteed savings banks and a direct propaganda, and a well-considered policy of encouragement of native industry on sound economic lines should be launched."

Here we turn to a very interesting part of Mr. Macdonald's book wherein he emphasises the need for introducing a system of taxation for the rich, and he holds self-government in India will succeed or fail as Indian reformers will show or fail to show the courage to tax the rich. For, says he, "revenue cannot be raised in any other way, and Indian financiers, wherever their interests lie, will be driven to it. For, though I have written of saving in certain directions, the unsatisfied needs of India—on education alone for instance—will prevent budgets under self-government being less in amount than they are now." The income tax, for instance, must yield a much larger revenue than it does at present, for "Indian revenues have always been taken far too much from the poor and the rich have got off far too lightly." Mr. Macdonald

fears that the tariffs will be manipulated in India largely in the interests of the capitalist class, and he hopes that the common people will make their influence felt as against that of the richer classes. The one certain effect of protection, he says, will be "to increase the pace by which India is to become a great manufacturing nation, and it ought not to be granted without concurrent legislation protecting the wage-earners both in their factory and in their housing conditions. Whoever has visited the working-class districts of Bombay, with their squalid overcrowding, their filthy dens of disease, their insanitary puddles and stinks, will pause before welcoming or aiding any rapid strengthening of the economic influences which maintain them, until, at any rate, a public opinion and body of legislation have been created to protect the people whose labours will be necessary for the new factories. Social and labour legislation is so backward in India that any policy of rapid economic development can only enrich a few at the cost of the very lives of the masses. India ought to prepare itself by dealing with the human products of the factory system before the Government abandons itself to a policy whose sole object is to extend factories as though they were a sufficient end in themselves." There is no doubt that Mr. Macdonald points to a real danger in this passage.

Mr. Macdonald's views on the land tax are unorthodox, but they are such that Indian politicians ought to pay particular heed to them. A permanent settlement of the land tax was a demand which figured among the resolutions of the Congress for several years, but it is a demand the justification of which has entirely disappeared with the enactment of the reforms. When the people had no part or lot in the spending of the monies raised by Government in the shape of taxes, it was their interest to keep the taxes at the lowest possible level. Now, however, Indians can largely control financial dispositions, their interest is not to have as little taxation as possible, but to have enough resources to finance all the many schemes of expansion which need to be taken in hand. It is certainly not fair that the unearned increment from land should go to a section of the community; it is best that it is available to the State for the purpose of applying it to carry out some of the schemes entailing a large outlay. Fortunately, advanced socialistic theories which have cost some other countries bitter struggles hold the field in India; it would be suicidal to hark back to theories which other nations are discarding. The principles of land revenue assessment are to be codified, and any alteration in the assessment is to be made by the legislature. Popular control over this source of revenue will be thus established, and therefore our concern must hereafter be so to adjust it that it will just represent a fair rent and no more, but also no less. Mr. Macdonald says that the evil of the present system is not that the rent is periodically revised,

but that it is too heavy in amount. He says: "I defend it in principle, but I think it has been raised too often oppressively, and that is where the Nationalist attack cannot be rebutted. The error lies here. In theory, the tax is a rent; in practice, a rent should be fixed on an open market by competition between competitors of a decent standard of living and in relation to the amount, above that standard, the land competed for will yield; in other words, it should be assessed with that standard at its first charge." Because the rent is a rack rent now, the remedy is not to fix its amount for all time and to deny to the State what is its due and what the country cannot afford to lose in view of the tremendous expenditure it will have to incur for extended education and so on. The following words of Mr. Macdonald may seem hard, but, to my thinking, they represent no more than the truth. "If, as regards the land revenue, self-government were to follow the lines of opposition in Nationalism, India would be put more completely than ever under the hand of the exploiter, and the Indian cultivator would be turned more rapidly than ever into a landless man driven into the plague-infested chawls of Bombay and Calcutta and compelled to smell the ranks of a proletariat whose industrial conditions cannot be matched for evil amongst the most miserable wage-earners in any quarter of the globe."

A CRITIC.

### THE VILLAGE PANCHAYETS BILL.

ABSORBED as we are in the larger problems of national development, most of us seem to be neglecting the most important Village Panchayets Bill now before the Select Committee of the Bombay Legislative Council. This is not justified from any point of view. The progress of India along the path which is expected to lead to self-government depends essentially upon the success we attain in infusing into our masses the spirit of democracy. We have, therefore, to concentrate our attention upon the means of rousing these masses to a sense of their potentialities as the constituents of the coming polity which shall govern India. Nothing would be more important than village panchayets for this purpose. Mass education in its ordinary sense is no doubt necessary. But what could be a better training of the masses for this purpose than throwing open to them elective institutions which they would themselves have to work and in which they could be called on to deal with problems which would concern their daily life and would, therefore, be easy for them to understand? The great problem of making the coming electorates *living* is to make the elector realise the true import of his vote. In the field of provincial government, this would certainly be a difficult task. But if the villager be given a vote which he can use to solve questions affecting his daily life or questions, the bearings of which on the lives of his neighbours

he can clearly comprehend, he will very quickly learn to appreciate his vote properly. This would constitute the best training that could be given him in the higher sphere of provincial administration. To those, who look at the training of the elector as the basis of our progress to the great goal of our political life, the Village Panchayets Bill now before the Bombay legislature must be of the greatest interest and importance.

The Bill as introduced by the Government should, therefore, be considered very carefully by those who wish to make it an instrument for training the masses to democratic life. Two conditions must be satisfied by the Bill in order to merit full approval from this point of view. The system of elections followed in the constitution of the panchayets must be such as to secure the proper training of our masses. That is the first condition. The second condition would be that the functions to be attached to the panchayets thus created should be of sufficient importance to arouse interest in the village populations. What should be our verdict on the Bill, judged by these two tests?

Section 3 of the Bill provides for the creation of panchayets in certain selected villages. The procedure laid down is that either the Collector or the District Board should apply to the Commissioner for the declaration of any local area to be a village for the purposes of the Act. The initiative must thus be taken by either of these two functionaries. What does this imply? To my mind, this implies that our villages as a rule are not entitled to the panchayet system and if any of them are to have the benefit of that system, they shall have on them the onus of proving their own fitness to the satisfaction of the Collector or the District Board. What is the justification of this attitude of suspicion and distrust? If the large majority of our villagers are deemed unfit for such institutions of limited powers as the panchayets, why call upon a pretty large section of these very villagers to vote on the wider problems of provincial government? We ought not to forget that henceforward the whole system of administration in the country is to be fundamentally changed. Every village has got to be brought into the vortex of political controversy. And the panchayets are to be the training-ground of our villagers in the art of popular government. Is it wise in the face of this that we should hesitate and falter in bestowing on our villagers the right of participating in the conduct of modest panchayets? I should, therefore, prefer to give panchayets to all villages with schools in them or with a certain minimum of population, at the same time providing that, in cases of special circumstances such as extreme factiousness or the like, the Commissioner may exclude any village from the operation of the Act. Such exclusion should of course be on the recommendation of the District Board or the collector. The Bill lays down the unnatural procedure of condemning every village as unfit for



the panchayet system and calling upon villages which think otherwise to satisfy the old or the new bureaucrats at the District headquarters. Besides being unnatural, this will practically close the doors of democratic training against the majority of our villages. The next point which strikes me in this connection is that even within the limits of the few fortunate villages that will have the panchayets by the choice of some outside authority, the training will be neither effective nor very far-reaching. Section 7 lays down that the election will be in meetings of all adult males in the village, to be presided over by the District Deputy or Assistant Collector. This has two very great disadvantages. Held in open meetings, the elections will easily be influenced by the magnates of the villages, the sowcar or the kulkarni or the ringleaders of factions. Voting by ballot provides some sort of escape from this evil, and there is no reason why this should not be availed of in our villages. I say this in spite of the prevailing illiteracy in our villages. For, it is not impossible, though it is undoubtedly difficult, that an illiterate person should record his vote by affixing his approval to the particular symbol of his candidate. The presence of one who is a very high official would often prove to the villager a great hindrance to the free use of the vote. I would agree to his presiding over the first elections; but the Act must lay down that at the second elections, the proceedings should be conducted through the expiring panchayet itself.

The inclusion of the village Patil in the panchayet as its *ex officio* member is obviously a step which could be challenged on the ground that it is against the spirit of democracy. But his presence on the panchayet would be useful in many ways. He would be the most responsible man on the board, responsible of course to the district officers. Though ultimately the whole panchayet must be responsible to the village itself, it would be only wise to insist that in the initial stages there should be at least one man in the panchayet who could be accountable to the District Deputy or Assistant Collector. Then the great moral influence of the village headman's presence in the panchayet may in the majority of cases prove to be a source of strength and stability to that body. He will certainly be there as an element of hereditary influence, perhaps opposed to the traditions of a pure democracy. But there is still no reason why he should not serve a useful purpose in a democracy just as the King of England does in the constitution of his country. With him, I should suggest, there should be another *ex officio* member, namely, the senior Mahar watandar of the village. If two *ex officio* members are considered too many, it may be necessary to ask the so-called untouchable community in the village to elect one separate member of the panchayet. In spite of the enfranchisement of the whole male population of the village, no Mahar would ordinarily be elected to the panchayet in the ordinary course. Some special

arrangement, I think, must be made to secure the representation of this class in the panchayet. Being invested with duties appertaining to village sanitation, &c., there is every reason why the representation of the Maharwada should be particularly sought.

Even more important than the composition of the panchayet is the question regarding the duties to be assigned to that body. In this respect, the Bill appears to me to be fundamentally defective. The object of the panchayet as conceived by the Bill is to provide "for the requirements of such areas in respect of water-supply, sanitation and other works of public utility." I do not wish to minimise the importance and value of this class of service to the village community. But the point is that this by itself will not be a sufficiently strong stimulus to the development of public life in the villages. Unless something affecting the villagers in vital matters is transferred to the control of the panchayet, it will not be a vigorous institution in most of our villages. Village sanitation, water supply, supervision of the village school and similar duties will rouse very little interest among the population of a majority of our villages. Power to deal with small criminal cases and civil suits would invest the panchayet with an importance which will at once be realised by the whole village. The duty of supervising the keeping up of the Record of Rights, drawing of *punchanamas* through the Patil and similar executive functions which are at present left to the Patil and the Kulkarni may be got performed through these panchayets. I do not understand why anybody should be afraid of assigning these more important administrative functions to the panchayets. I have seen sub-judges disposing of small cause cases coming up to them from unknown villages; and I feel convinced that the village panchayet, with all its defects, will be able to dispense better justice in such cases than the Courts are able to do. The saving of costs which the Courts entail would be a more than adequate compensation for any inconvenience which disposal of such cases by the panchayet may be supposed to cause. The panch. would be infinitely more qualified to appreciate the evidence of the villagers than any sub-judges. I do not forget even for a moment the existence of dominant classes in our villages who may, if they could, misuse the civil and criminal jurisdiction conferred on them. But does anyone believe that absolute justice is given in any human Court? Does anyone think that the dominant faction in a village is less able to deceive or influence a Taluka Magistrate than it would in the case of a panchayet? Fabrication of false evidence would be far more difficult in a Panchayet Court than in that of a Magistrate. In ordinary cases I, therefore, expect much better justice through the former than through the latter, justice which would be not only more just but less ruinous to the villager by being less dilatory and less costly.

7. The following is the suggested alternative composition of the Legislative Assembly.

	General.	Muslims.	Sikhs.	Landowners	Europeans.	Indian Com- merce.	Total.
Madras	10	3	...	1	1	1	16
Bombay	7	4	...	1	2	2	16
Bengal	5	7	...	1	3	1	17
U. P.	10	5	...	1	1	...	17
Punjab	3	6	2	1	...	...	12
Bihar	...	3	...	1	...	...	10
C. P.	3	1	...	1	...	...	5
Assam	1	1	...	...	1	...	3
Burma	2	...	...	...	1	...	3
Benares Hindu University.	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
	<u>48</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>100</u>

COUNCIL OF STATE.

8. With regard to the Council of State, my Committee urge, for the same reasons as have been urged in the case of the Assembly that six seats (4 general, and 2 Moslem) should be allotted to these provinces.

METHOD OF ELECTION.

9. The Committee, however, beg to differ from the Government as to the method of election. They think that the election of the members for the Council of State should be indirect and they suggest that non-official members of the Provincial Legislative Council should form the electorate. My Committee do not find that there is anything in the Report of the Joint Committee against the view that they urge. A second or revising chamber does not stand on the same footing as the popular house. What is wanted in the case of the former is an intelligent and responsible-minded body of men who will perform the task of revision in a competent manner. No electorate that can be suggested for direct election to the Council of State, regard being had to the necessary limitation of members can, in the opinion of my Committee, be devised in the provinces so as to fulfil the two requirements that, as far as possible, it may be truly representative and include a large number of competent persons. The electorate proposed by the Government of India will only give representation to the wealthiest section of the community diluted to a very small extent by men belonging to the upper class. On the other hand, the non-official members of the Provincial Legislative Council will be persons who represent some millions of people, and it may also be reasonably expected that they will be about the most competent body of men that could be got together. The Committee notice that it is proposed that the European representative in the Council of State should be elected by the European Chambers of Commerce. For the same reason that has led the Government of India to propose this instead of a direct electorate in the case of Europeans, my Committee suggest that the non-official members of the Provincial Legislative Council should be the electorate to return the Indian members. The Moslem seats can be filled either by the introduction of proportional representation or by the constitution of the Moslem members of the Provincial Council as a separate electorate. Then, only the non-Moslem and non-European members of the Council will constitute the general electorate.

10. The Committee are of opinion that candidates for the Council of State should be those who are thirty-five years of age or more and pay revenue or rent of Rs. 5,000 a year, or pay income tax on an income of Rs. 5,000 a year, or pay rent, or revenue and income tax together, on an aggregate income of Rs. 5,000 a year, or have at any time been members of the Indian Legislative Council or any of the Provincial Legislative Councils.

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A. B. LATTHE.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### DECLARATION OF BRITISH POLICY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—I am not so presumptuous as to think that any writing of mine in the Press has had any share in the moulding of British policy towards India. But as I see that 'student of history' is carrying on vigorous researches into the origin and growth of the demand for a declaration of British policy with regard to India, I may be permitted to point out, as a mere statement of fact, that in an article headed "The future Policy of the Government and the People" which I contributed to the 65th No. (May 1912) of the *Modern Review*, I wrote as follows :—

"The first thing that the Government must do is to make a clear and solemn declaration under the authority of the British Parliament, pledging themselves to the grant of self-government to India within a definite period of twenty or twenty-five years. No Indian has ever asked for the immediate introduction of a full-fledged system of self-government. Every reasonable man admits that some period must be allowed to elapse in making the necessary preparations before the system is introduced. But we do maintain and insist that the Government owe it to the Indian people to make an immediate declaration in all solemnity that, within some definite period, not extending beyond twenty-five years, self-government will be given to India and that the interval will be spent in taking steps that may be necessary towards that end. Such a declaration will evoke the greatest enthusiasm for British rule among all classes of Indian subjects and forge the bonds of permanent union and friendship between England and India."

I may add that I wrote the same thing in an article under the heading 'India and the Royal Visit' which I contributed to the *Mahratta* in October 1911, but as I have not got a copy of the issue in which it was published, I cannot quote the exact words.

Your correspondent, Mr. Mukerji, is, I believe, quite right in saying that the first responsible and authoritative demand for a declaration of policy towards India was made by the late Mr. Gokhale in his paper on 'East and West.' Without being egoistical, I may state that I had not read Mr. Gokhale's paper when I wrote the article in the *Mahratta*. I read it subsequently and was glad to find that my own view had been anticipated, and expressed with much greater ability and persuasiveness than I could command, by Mr. Gokhale—Yours, etc.

R. G. PRADHAN.

Nasik,

February 14th.

## SELECTION.

### LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY AND COUNCIL OF STATE.

U. P. LIBERAL ASSOCIATION'S VIEWS.

THE following letter has been addressed by the Hon. Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru, president of the U. P. Liberal Association to the Secretary, Government of India, Reforms Department

and to the officer on special duty (Reforms), Secretariat, Lucknow :—

The Committee of the United Provinces Liberal Association, Allahabad, have considered the notification issued by the Government of India regarding the constitution of the Indian Legislative Assembly and the Council of State and submit the following representation on the subject.

#### INDIAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

2. With regard to the Indian Legislative Assembly, the Committee are of opinion that the number of seats allotted, to the United Provinces, viz. sixteen (16), is not adequate. These provinces have a population larger than any other province in India and contribute the largest amount of revenue to the Imperial Government, with the only exception of Madras. Nor are these provinces in any way less important than Bengal. In all fairness, therefore, the number of seats for the United Provinces should be seventeen (17)—the number that is proposed for Bengal.

#### MOSLEM REPRESENTATION.

3. It appears that there has been a miscalculation as to Moslem seats. According to the Lucknow compact one-third of the Indian elected members should be Mahomedans, elected by separate Mahomedan electorates in the several provinces, in the proportion as nearly as may be in which they are represented in the Provincial Legislative Councils. Hence the total number of Moslem members should be 30 and not 29, while the number for these provinces, whether their total seats be 16 or 17, should be five and not six, being 30 per cent. of the total number of Indian elected members. The manner in which the distribution of seats will, in the opinion of the Committee, be best made, is shown in the tabular statement that will be found below.

4. The Committee urge that the total number of members allotted to these provinces should be 17 distributed as below:—  
General, 10, one member for each division.  
Moslems, 5, one member for two divisions.  
Landholders, 1.  
Europeans, 1.

#### QUALIFICATION OF ELECTORS.

5. My Committee are in complete agreement with the view that the election to the Legislative Assembly should be direct, and they would suggest the following electorate, which on an average will probably give about 250,000 voters in the whole province and about 25,000 voters on an average for each division, in the general electorate :—

- (a) All landholders paying a revenue of Rs. 100 or more every year.
- (b) All tenants paying a rent of Rs. 200 or more every year.
- (c) All persons assessed to income tax.
- (d) All persons assessed to an annual municipal tax of Rs. 20 or more.
- (e) All persons in rural areas of corresponding status as those under (d).

The same qualifications should be fixed in the case of Moslems and Europeans. As to landholders, the Committee think that the present electorate of persons paying a revenue of Rs. 10,000 and more every year be maintained, as in their opinion it will serve no useful purpose to lower the qualification, as other landholders will take part in the general electorate.

#### BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY.

6. The Committee would further represent that as the Benares Hindu University is an all-India institution, one seat in the Legislative Assembly should be given to that University and its electorate may be the members of the Court and the Senate. Other Universities in British India have been accorded representation in the provincial councils and if the Hindu University be not given representation in the Assembly, it will be in the invidious position of being the only university that is left out altogether. This, my Committee submit, ought not to be. There is the greater reason in the suggestion as the 'Benares Hindu University' will be an all-India subject.

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