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Topics of the Week.

The Viceroy on Federation.

DURING his brief stay in Bombay the Viceroy made a reference in his speech at the Orient Club to the federal scheme, emphasising the urgent need of bringing the scheme into force as early as possible. He repeated on this occasion his former advice to give the scheme "a fair trial." As we said before, the scheme would lead India into a blind alley, from which no escape would be possible if, on giving it a fair trial, the public's anticipation that it would prove unworkable and unsatisfactory came true. There is thus, in our opinion, no substance in this plea. The other argument he advanced was that, in view of the present international situation, an all-India federation was desirable and in doing so exploited to the full India's antipathy to the totalitarian regime now established in more than half of Europe.

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OF all the adducible arguments in favour of federation, this has always appeared to us to be the feeblest. It would have some force if it could be contended with any show of reason that federation would give India the strength she now lacks to meet the aggression of authoritarian countries trying to expand at the expense of democratic countries. If the strength required for this task is military strength, India will not be any stronger under federation than she is at present. The States for the most part have no armies; what show armies they have are always at the disposal of the British Government, federa-

tion or no federation. The British Indian army is to remain under the British Government's control even after federation comes into existence, so that it cannot be argued that the army will have popular sentiment at its back and will thus be better able to repeal aggression when federation becomes an accomplished fact.

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IF it be said that the inauguration of federation will generate such a strong popular feeling in favour of democracy that totalitarianism can have no chance in India, the root of India's opposition to the federal scheme is that, instead of promoting democracy, it will only hamstring such democracy as we now have. Twist the facts however much you may, the introduction of autocratic States into our constitution, with no kind of guarantee that their autocracy will disappear or even diminish in future, cannot be argued as a means of keeping totalitarianism from our borders. On the contrary, a fear may legitimately be entertained that if this introduction is compulsorily achieved, condemning the aspiration of British India for democracy to frustration, India may in sheer desperation give a sympathetic ear to policies which will make way for totalitarianism. Nazi dictatorship became possible in Germany because of the failure of early German statesmen to achieve anything substantial, due mostly to the uniform negative which other countries interposed to their plans. In India, too, the entrenchment of an oligarchy, which will be the effect and is the intention of introducing the federal scheme, will create widespread discontent in the country; the discontent will perhaps be impotent for some time; and then some dictator will possibly arise, keeping the whole country under his iron rule. India's destiny, let us hope, will be different; but if so, the British Government must still take to itself full credit for bringing totalitarianism as near our doors as it can by forcing upon India a constitution, which will be dominated by autocrats from the start and which cannot even be altered except with the consent of these very autocrats.

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Jaipur : "an All-India Crisis."

THE Jaipur Government's ban on him to enter the State is going to be answered by Seth Jannalal Bajaj by offering civil resistance to the prohibitory order. Mahatma Gandhi himself has taken up the cause of the Honorary Treasurer of the Congress and has warned the Government of Jaipur State that unless it retraces its steps "an all-India crisis" will be provoked. The Jaipur order cannot of course be defended, and everything must be done to compel a reversal of this repressive

policy. But what exactly does Mahatma Gandhi mean by his threat of an all-India crisis? It can only mean, we suppose, that the people of the whole of India will make it their own cause and will supply volunteers in whatever kind of campaign may be decided upon. But we have seen it laid down by Mahatma Gandhi himself that satyagraha, to be not only practically successful but morally justifiable, must be conducted by the aggrieved parties themselves.

IF, for instance, Hyderabad State oppresses its people, the struggle must be carried on by the people in the Hyderabad State. British Indians and even the States' people from other States must not participate in it. That, we were told, would vitiate the pure doctrine of satyagraha and make the movement, if not an immoral, a non-moral one. Actually many workers from other States were turned back when they went to help the satyagraha movement in some States. If this principle be adhered to (and one would think that Mahatma Gandhi would be uncompromising in holding fast to and rigidly carrying out an ethical principle), satyagraha on an all-States or an all-India basis would never be practicable. How then is this "all-India crisis," supposing the Jaipur Government is so foolish as to precipitate it, to be met without compromising the basic principle of satyagraha?

FOR, after all, Seth Jammalal Bajaj's entry into Jaipur was banned because he is the President of the State's Praja Mandal. If the prohibitory order is a challenge, it is a challenge to Jaipur people, and following the earlier reasoning of Mahatma Gandhi, it would be the duty of Jaipur people, and of the Jaipur people alone, to take up the challenge. In Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy we thought there was no place for anything like a sympathetic satyagraha campaign as it would lower the moral tone of a satyagraha. How, then, satyagraha on an all-India plane is envisaged by the Mahatma we do not know. Whatever his reasoning now be, he is certainly not desirous of the people in British India and in the Indian States combining to terrorise the Jaipur Government, because the prestige of a high Congress official is involved.

THIS lofty principle that from a satyagraha campaign all outsiders must hold themselves rigidly aloof is, we believe, of recent date. Mahatma Gandhi did not feel disqualified from enlisting the States' people under the satyagraha banner when he launched his movement against the British Indian Government; from the Bardoli satyagraha volunteers from outside were not excluded; the satyagraha in Champaran, a purely local affair, was initiated by Mahatma Gandhi himself, although he did not belong even to the province of Bihar. The principle was, we believe, first enunciated when he, probably for reasons of expediency, did not want a satyagraha movement to flare up in the States and was anxious that at least British Indians should not be implicated in it.

HE first pledged the Congress to a policy of non-interference in the States; British Indian members of that organisation were urged not to associate themselves with any political movement in the States, much less with a movement of such an extreme character as satyagraha. There was keen discontent in the Congress with this resolu-

tion, which was therefore subsequently modified. By the modification then introduced, the ban on individual Congressmen from British India in the matter of giving help to the States' people in their personal capacity was lifted, and they were permitted to join in the political movements in the States, provided the Congress as a body was not involved therein. It was at this stage that the principle was evolved, that if satyagraha was to have any moral value, it must be carried on by the people concerned, others watching the movement with sympathy but not throwing themselves into the struggle. The relaxation permitted by the later Congress resolution in the rigorous prohibition enforced earlier was thus in effect abolished by Mahatma Gandhi's "Hands off, you outsiders" rule. This rule was dictated, according to the Mahatma, not by expediency, but by moral principle, though in the particular cases that then occurred principle happened to coincide with his view of the requirements of expediency. In the Jaipur affair, however, expediency and principle appear to point to different ways.

The Situation in Hyderabad.

MR. KASHINATHPANT VAIDYA who with two others was prosecuted for offering civil disobedience has been sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 2,000 and, in default of fine, to three months' additional rigorous imprisonment. Mr. Vaidya is now, after the late Mr. Vaman Naik, the most prominent leader of the Hyderabad people and as such he was selected by the Nizam's Government to be a member of the Constitution Committee, whose report will soon be published. There is a further circumstance connected with Mr. Vaidya's participation in satyagraha which, one might have thought, would have induced the Hyderabad Government to follow a conciliatory policy. Mr. Vaidya, before he took part in satyagraha, had declared, under inspiration from Wardha, that this would be the last act in the struggle, and that the struggle would thereafter be suspended by the State Congress.

THE suspension of satyagraha was unilateral on the part of the State Congress, and there was no corresponding obligation on the part of the State authorities to put an end to repression, though the Congress must have hoped that the trial of Mr. Vaidya and others would be dropped and that those who had been sentenced would have their sentences remitted. The State authorities, however, rewarded Mr. Vaidya for suspension of satyagraha by prosecuting him all the same and imposing upon him an inhuman sentence. Congressmen from British India alone have been released. The Congress had not stipulated, as a condition of resumption of satyagraha after a month, that the Hindu Mahasabha and Aryan League volunteers from British India be also released, and the State authorities of course have not released them. One cannot resist the reflexion, when one sees how the Congress went about its business and how non-Congress volunteers from outside were left in the lurch, that the State authorities perhaps did well, from the viewpoint of the interests of the movement, in proceeding with their policy of repression.

BECAUSE that would help, we believe, in healing the breach that the State Congress's own action had caused between the volunteers of the Congress on the one hand and of the Hindu

Mahasabha and of the Aryan League on the other. The latter two bodies have decided to continue their own satyagraha campaign. Under the directions of Mr. V. D. Savarkar, President of the Hindu Mahasabha, last Sunday was celebrated in many places as the Hyderabad day, hartal observed, and large public meetings held. In Poona itself the hartal was almost complete. Some Congressmen insisted upon keeping their shops open, but they were subjected to a campaign of picketing, and the picketing in this instance was completely peaceful unlike that which was sometimes resorted to by the Congress when it played a militant role. The Hindu Mahasabha and the Aryan League will carry on the struggle whatever Wardha may decide, and it would be very difficult even for Wardha, after the recent developments, to soft-peddle on the issue.

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The Refugees of Talcher.

THE heart-rending accounts of the refugees of Talcher, described by two such eminent men as Mr. A. V. Thakkar and Mr. N. G. Ranga, M. L. A. (Central), ought to receive the most sympathetic consideration of our countrymen. Talcher is one of the smaller States of Orissa with a population of only 70,000. Yet, so horrible is their condition, that nearly 32,000 people, or nearly half of the population of the State, have deserted the State altogether and have taken shelter in Angul, an adjoining district of British Orissa. The reasons which led these people to leave their ancestral hearth and home can be gathered from the accounts given by the refugees. When asked by Mr. Thakkar, the refugees are reported to have said:

They could no longer bear the atrocities of the State police and officers. They were prepared to starve themselves and be buried in Angul, rather than go back to the State.

Mr. Ranga tells the same story. The refugees said to him:

When their women were being insulted, harassed and even raped, their ear-rings and nose-rings forcibly snatched away, thereby tearing away their ear-lobes and nostrils, how could they tarry to think of their love for ancestral villages? When their crops were being either attached and grain taken away or spoiled, their grain in the houses, jewellery and small sums of money available were looted and their cattle and even lands confiscated, what else was there for them to hang on to?

THE conditions of these people who had suddenly to take shelter almost in a desert can well be imagined. Mr. Thakkar describes them thus:

The campers are living in small low huts, walls and roofs being made of small twigs with leaves of 'sal' and 'piasal' trees which abound in the jungles of Angul. The protection from sun and cold is very meagre, but that is the best type of hut they could improvise under the circumstances. When the leaves dry up and are blown away in the course of three or four weeks, they bring new twigs with leaves and renovate their huts.

Their water supply is very scanty, wells being deep and rock-bottomed. At present dirty water of small tanks is consumed by them, in one case from a distance of six furlongs; but the tanks will dry up in a month or two, and then they do not know where to go for water. Even at present there are a few cases of

diarrhoea and as water gets more dirty in the tanks cholera is very likely to make its appearance.

Even in the camps of over 12,000 souls (I would call them towns) there is not a single medical man to attend to them. A doctor stationed at Chandipada, eight miles from each of them, is expected to attend to their medical wants and also attend to sanitation and vaccination, in addition to his ordinary duties. He has no additional medicines supplied to him by the Medical Department for the two towns that have grown, of lately, as if by magic.

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THE incoming of such a large number of people has created a serious problem for the Orissa Government. Orissa is proverbially poor, but even so the Orissa Government has started relief work, and private agencies are also active. But all this is too meagre compared to the vast requirements of the distressed people. The Orissa Government has a provision of only two lakhs to be utilised for the public works programme, and even if it spends the whole amount in Angul, it can employ the refugees for a month at best. Clearly, the situation that has arisen is too vast to be tackled by the Orissa Government alone. It is to be hoped, therefore, that benevolent people throughout the whole of India will come to the rescue of the Orissa Government. An all-India fund ought to be raised for the Talcher refugees as the Baldwin fund is being raised in England for the oppressed Jews. It is to be hoped that as a result of such concerted efforts every refugee will be saved from starvation.

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Small States and Responsible Government.

THE Aundh State's new constitution of almost full responsible government was passed by the sitting Legislative Council of the State and was inaugurated by the Premier of the Bombay Presidency with due pomp and ceremony. On this occasion fitting tributes were paid to the Chiefsahab by several British Indian leaders, among whom was Mr. Gangadharrao Deshpande, who, in eulogising the ruler, refuted the contention of some people that in small States the establishment of responsible government was not possible. The fact that such kind of government has in fact been established affords complete rebuttal of this contention. To what extent the smallness of size imposes practical restrictions on the successful working of responsible government remains to be seen. But anyhow, even if these restrictions are found to be severe, they will operate under an autocratic as well as a democratic government; and all that it will prove is, not that the system of responsible government will not work in small States, but that small States do not deserve to exist.

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MR. DESHPANDE'S remark is very opportune because we see that Mr. Hare Krishna Mahatab, who is a member of the Congress Working Committee, has been telling the people of Orissa States that they should concentrate their attention on getting redress of their tangible grievances like *bethi*, excessive land revenue demand and so forth, but that they should not ask for responsible government. Mr. Mahatab's is a purely legal argument. He says that the States themselves are under the control of the paramount power, and the smaller States are under a detailed and meticulous control. Since they themselves are not free in their States (his argu-

ment runs), they cannot obviously give freedom to their people. This is a very fallacious argument. All that the Princes are asked to do is to part with whatever power they possess to their subjects, making themselves constitutional monarchs in the sphere of the jurisdiction left to them. When the matter is considered from this point of view, it becomes obvious that responsible government should be possible in all States. Larger States, being more free, will have larger powers to part with; smaller States, being less free, will have smaller powers to part with. The only thing that the Princes have to do, in order to concede the demand for responsible government, is to surrender their own power, whatever it is, into the hands of the people. Whether any particular State is large enough to make it a viable political unit is a separate question, which Mr. Mahatab has not in mind. If a State corresponds politically to an uneconomic holding in agriculture which we all want to get rid of, we shall have to contemplate its abolition, and Mr. Mahatab surely does not envisage this solution of the problem of smaller States. He would maintain them intact, and on an autocratic basis.

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THIS is not a mere academic question. For we understand that Mr. Mahatab is using the great influence that his position as a member of the Congress Working Committee gives him actually to discourage a movement for constitutional reform that the newly awakened political consciousness of the people in Orissa States has been attempting to bring into existence. It is one thing to put a brake when things are moving too fast; it is quite another thing to make a movement still-born by using legalistic arguments which, when examined, are found to have no substance in them. He has done a disservice to the country by damping the ardour of the people and indirectly strengthening the tenacious grip of the little Chiefs on whatever power they enjoy.

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Feudatories of Kolhapur.

IT seems almost incredible that the Kolhapur Darbar, in formulating proposals for establishing a Legislative Council, has, as stated by a correspondent in another column, not only not consulted its feudatories but kept them entirely in the dark about these proposals, although they are to apply to the feudatories as well as to Kolhapur State proper. In this matter the Darbar treats the rulers of the feudatory States on the same footing as its own subjects. Both are kept in ignorance of the nature of the proposals for a change in the system of government which are to be enforced on them after sanction is received therefor from the Government of India.

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THE real solution of the problem is that the feudatories should realise that their position is no better than that of the subjects of Kolhapur. Legally they may have quite a good case. The paramount power is pledged to a recognition of their independent existence; they have a claim to autonomy in the matter of application to them of the laws passed by the Kolhapur Darbar. But their case is not likely to be decided on its merits by the paramount power which is anxious to rope in the bigger States into the federation

by making concessions to them. It would thus be to the interest of the feudatories to understand their helplessness and to shape their future policy accordingly. If they sense their real position, they will make common cause with the people and fight both the Kolhapur Darbar and the paramount power together.

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THEY find now that they enjoy no real power in their feudatory States and that the Kolhapur Darbar will dominate them in everything. Would they not be able, however, to queer the pitch for the Kolhapur Darbar by parting with the power which they do *not* possess to their own people? Let us suppose that in the proposed constitution the Darbar provides for a bare majority of representatives elected from Kolhapur State and that it hopes to keep power in its own hands by relying on the representatives of the feudatory States who, probably it supposes, will be nominated members. If, however, the feudatories choose to give the right of election to their own subjects, the balance will at once turn in favour of the people both of Kolhapur State and the feudatory States and against the Kolhapur Darbar. If the feudatories are to be non-entities in any case, would it not be better for them to be under the control of their own people than under the control of the Kolhapur Darbar?

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SIMILARLY, if the Kolhapur Darbar infringes upon the internal autonomy of the feudatories by forcing upon them laws and policies of its own making, the feudatory States can frustrate this attempt by giving rights of self-government to their own people. The feudatories cannot succeed in their fight against the Kolhapur Darbar, when the latter has the paramount power at its back. But if they leave the fight in the hands of their people, their victory is certain. Just as the British Government as the paramount power cannot hamper the States in the latter's move towards democratic government, so the Kolhapur Darbar as the sovereign power of the feudatories cannot stand in the way of their advance in the direction of democracy. And if it tries to, the paramount power will not allow it. This is the only practicable way for the feudatories to defend themselves against usurpation of power by the Kolhapur Darbar.

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THIS no doubt presupposes capacity for self-sacrifice on the part of the feudatories. But the sacrifice that is entailed is only nominal. Anyhow they are being gradually absorbed by the Kolhapur Darbar; and it would be a no more ignoble fate for them to be absorbed by their own people instead. They will not only earn the gratitude of their own people by conceding to them rights of self-government, but they will also earn the gratitude of the people of Kolhapur State who will, with the help of the people in the feudatories, convert a constitution, however oligarchic, into a truly democratic constitution almost at one bound. There appears to us to be no other way of escape open to the feudatories from the spreading tentacles of the Kolhapur Darbar.

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THE BOMBAY TENANCY BILL.

I.

“A BILL to provide for the protection of tenants in the province of Bombay” was introduced by the Government of Bombay in the last session of the Legislative Assembly. None will dispute the immediate urgency of land reform in India where, in the absence of highly developed industry and commerce which afford natural outlets for the flow of the surplus agricultural population, the severe pressure of population on land has increased the hunger for land to such a pitch as to have almost exhausted the patience of the cultivators. The history of agrarian countries in Eastern Europe discloses the phenomenon that failure to maintain the equilibrium between density of rural population and distribution of land is the cause of the recurrence of peasant risings. Nothing could, therefore, be more welcome to the agricultural population in this province than an effort on the part of the present Government to give relief to the tiller of the soil who finds himself in a most precarious position to-day.

ONLY 4% HOLDINGS AFFECTED.

The title of the Bill suggests that the entire class of tenants in the Bombay province will have the good fortune of receiving protection and privileges under this Bill. But one who starts to examine the provisions of the Bill with the expectations kindled by its title will be sorely disappointed. Not all the tenants in the ryotwari areas of the province can claim the benefit of the Bill. Tenants of only those landlords who own 33½ or more acres of irrigated land or 100 or more acres of other land or land of any description the total annual assessment of which exceeds Rs. 150 come within the scope of the Bill. The tenants of the land held under ryotwari tenure who will be covered by the provisions of the Bill will constitute only a negligible fraction of the entire class of tenants in the province. Government themselves have admitted in the statement of objects and reasons attached to the Bill that out of 22 lakhs of ryotwari holdings in the province, the number of holders who are likely to be affected by the provisions of the Bill will be the tenants of the landlords of about 9,000 holdings only, or 4.1 per cent. There is no justification for denying the benefit of the Bill such as it is to any class of tenants. If security of tenure is desirable in respect of a tenant whose landlord owns 100 acres of land, surely it cannot cease to be so in respect of a tenant whose landlord owns, say, five acres of land. Security of tenure is one of the necessary incidents in the regulation of the relationship between the landlord and his tenant, and this relationship is wholly unaffected by the social status of the landlord, whether he is big or small. It is, therefore, arbitrary to make security of tenure depend upon the extent of land

in the possession of the landlord. Not to concede the claim of all tenants to security of tenure would be unjust and would work great hardship on the overwhelming majority of tenants of the smaller landlords. In the province of Bombay out of total holdings numbering 22,91,415, those which are below five acres are 11,28,732; those which are over 5 but up to 15 acres are 6,70,894; those over 15 and up to 25 acres are 2,48,360; those over 25 and up to 100 acres are 2,22,419. Most of the tenants tilling these holdings will be outside the pale of the benefit of this Bill. Insecurity of tenure hampers development of the productive forces by killing the incentive of the tenant farmer. The harm to national well-being which this Bill perpetuates by denying security of tenure to the vast majority of tenants is bound to be incalculable.

FAIR RENT ONLY FOR THESE HOLDINGS.

There is again not the slightest justification for excluding in the ryotwari area all the tenants except those that might be employed in cultivating only 9,000 out of a total of 22 lakhs of holdings from the benefit of clause 11 of the Bill which attempts to fix fair and reasonable rents. The only ground on which such a provision can be vindicated is that the rent which a tenant has to pay to a landlord who owns less than 100 acres of land is neither oppressive nor excessive. But such a presumption would be wholly untenable. It is an admitted fact that the only limit to the landlord's exactions is the power of the tenant to pay. The actual tiller of the soil finds his entire surplus swept away by rent which even trenches upon his bare minimum of subsistence. The landlord, whether he owns one-fifth of an acre or 100 acres, drives a hard bargain. The cut-throat competition among the landless whose number is incessantly and alarmingly increasing in a community which primarily depends on land for livelihood gives the landlord an opportunity to squeeze out of the tenant the utmost rent that he can pay. In 1849 Capt. Wingate, who was Superintendent, Revenue Survey and Assessment, Southern Maratha Country, and who had made a special study of the conditions of tenants, described a tenant as one who toils that another may rest and sows that another may reap. The Famine Commission's Report of 1901 says that the tiller of the soil has sunk to the condition of a mere serf, tilling the land and making over the produce to the owner. In good years he has nothing to expect but a bare subsistence; in bad years he falls back upon public charity. Nothing that could change the situation for the better has happened since then. On the other hand, the situation has become worse and more precarious. In face of such glaring facts to exempt landlords in ryotwari

tracts who own less than 33½ acres of irrigated land or 100 acres of other land from the responsibility of accepting only fair and reasonable rents is a grave injustice to the unfortunate tenants. If the big landlord is to be deprived of his right to squeeze his tenant, the continuance of that right to another landlord cannot be defended on the ground that he is not so big. The pangs of starvation of a tenant do not become bearable because of the fact that the landowner to whom he has to pay unreasonable rent does not own even five acres of land. If payment of fair wages to textile workers were to be enforced by legislation, no one would incorporate in it a provision to the effect that an employer who owns less than ten mills need not pay fair wages, while an employer owning twenty mills or more must. That rents to be paid by all tenants should be fair and equitable is a principle which permits of no exception. A big landlord will be, when the Bill is passed, under a twofold restriction of fixity of tenure and fair rent. If a small landlord, for some reason however indefensible, is to be under no restriction as regards fixity of tenure he should at least be prevented from exacting an excessive rent.

The exclusion of the vast majority of tenants from the scope of clause 11 of the Bill does not merely deny the benefit of fair rent to a vast majority of peasants, but it will in effect deny it even to the small fraction of peasants who are intended to be brought within the scope of the Bill. The clause describes fair rents as those that are not in excess of rents prevailing in the locality. The rents paid by tenants other than those that are protected would thus go very far to determine fair rents. The rents which prevail in the locality are bound to be exorbitant since they will be determined solely by the keen competition that exists among the land-hungry people whose number is increasing every decade. If unreasonable and unfair rents are to be a major factor in determining fair and reasonable rents for protected tenants, it is idle to expect that the rents that would be fixed under the Bill even for the protected tenants will be anything like fair and reasonable. If the determination of fair rents for protected tenants is to depend upon the purely competitive rents of unprotected tenants, since the unprotected tenants are in a vast majority, it means that even the protected tenants will receive no protection in the matter of rents. The consequence of the denial of the benefit of fair rent as well as fixity to tenure to nearly 90 per cent. of the tenants in the province would be to transform the Bill which is intended to fix fair rents for protected tenants into one which will sanctify unfair rents even for these tenants.

EXCLUSIONS UNJUSTIFIABLE.

The Bill discriminates between the tenants in the ryotwari area and the tenants in areas where

feudalism still lingers. Every tenant who holds land situated in an alienated village or a village held on khoti or talukdari tenure is entitled to be declared a protected tenant, whose tenancy cannot be terminated by the landlord and from whom unfair rents cannot be exacted. But in ryotwari areas both fixity of tenure and fair rent will accrue only to a small minority of tenants and will be denied to a vast majority. The circumstances that might justify such discrimination no longer exist. The most redeeming features of ryotwari land tenure have vanished long since. The difference between the two systems of tenure has for all practical purposes disappeared. All investigations, both official and unofficial, go to establish the fact that the conditions that prevail in the ryotwari areas do not vary materially from those that subsist in feudal areas. The evils that harass the tenant in ryotwari areas are exactly those that are rampant in feudal ones. Sir T. Hope in the course of a discussion on the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Bill in the Viceroy's Legislative Council in 1879 remarked: "Under the so-called ryotwari tenure settlement it is gradually coming to this, that the ryot is the tenant and the marwari is the proprietor. The proprietor is irresponsible and the tenant unprotected. It promises to become not a ryotwari but a Marwari settlement". This gloomy prognostication has now come true. Most of the land in the ryotwari area is concentrated in the hands of moneylenders. This inference is borne out by the report of the Maharashtra Congress Committee which shows that 72 per cent. of land is owned by 29 per cent. of landowners. A peasant proprietor is now more or less a fiction; he has been replaced by the rack-rented tenant. It is very amazing that the Bill should have been based on a distinction between the ryotwari and feudal land tenure which no longer exists. When once it is conceded that justice demands protection to all tenants in feudal areas, one cannot escape the logical conclusion that it would be unjust to deny the same protection, as the Bill does, to all but a few tenants in ryotwari areas, as their lot is not less miserable than that of their fellow-sufferers in feudal areas.

To describe a Bill which ignores nearly 90 per cent. of tenants as a measure for the protection of tenants is misleading. The Bill is arbitrary and unjust in its character since it denies relief to the vast mass of tenants without the slightest justification. It is unjust because it perpetuates injustice under which the tenants of the province are groaning. And even to the exceedingly minute fraction of tenants in ryotwari areas for whose benefit the Bill professes to establish fair rents it will in fact deny this privilege. It will thus not lighten the burden under which the vast majority of tenants in the province are being crushed for any appreciable number of cultivators.

II.

FAULTY CRITERION OF FAIR RENT.

The Bill attempts to fix reasonable rents to be paid by the protected tenants. But the principle which the Bill lays down for determining reasonable rent is exactly the one that is responsible for exorbitant rents that prevail in the province of Bombay. In determining reasonable rent the authorities are to pay due regard to the rental values of lands used for similar purposes in the locality. No one complains that the rents in the same locality vary considerably. The demand of the cultivators has never been standardisation of rents, but reduction in rents with a view to bringing them to a reasonable level. It is difficult to imagine how a comparison of rents in the locality can help to arrive at reasonable rents. The factor that will determine the rents of lands that will not be subject to the operation of the proposed legislation will be competition for land among the land-hungry cultivators. But competitive rents prevailing in these areas are to determine fair rent even for lands that will be subject to the operation of the Bill. Thus the only consequence of the clause will be stabilisation of rents at the highest level. The clause contains no principle for determining reasonable rent which can effect an appreciable reduction in the high rents that are current.

For arriving at a correct estimation of the provision in the Bill for the determination of reasonable rent it is necessary to describe in brief the abject state to which the tenants are reduced on account of exorbitant rents. Mr. H. Martin Leake, in describing the condition of cultivators, says:

The position of the tenant cultivators has, owing to the competition that has arisen for land, become precarious. Rents have risen till a major portion of the produce of the tenant is absorbed in satisfying the landlord and little margin remains for saving after the essential needs are satisfied. Frequently even these needs are not satisfied. Borrowing the grain required to sow the crop is frequent, because that which should have been saved for that purpose has been absorbed in the provision of necessaries. Even borrowing of food required to support life until the nearest harvest is frequently necessary.

Although nominally the tenant works for his own interest, his position is often worse than that of the hired labourer who works for a wage. The value of the produce that is left after paying the rent to the landlord is often less than the price of labour required to raise the crop. Both official and unofficial investigations into the condition of the tenants are unanimous in these conclusions.

The Bill omits to embody the only principle which can determine fair rent. It must be expressly provided in the Bill that in determining reasonable rent regard shall be had to the fact that the first charge on the land of the landlord will be the living wage of the tenant. Unless this principle is incorporated in the Bill it is idle to expect that it will succeed in its object of fixing reasonable rents. The Land and Agriculture Committee of Burma in its recent report on Tenancy has expressed

the opinion that a fair rent can only be regarded as that part of the crop which remains, "after the cultivator of an economic holding has met the normal costs of cultivation and maintained himself and his family in reasonable comfort as that is understood by this class of cultivator in the district in which he lives." The Committee adds: "We go further and consider that the cultivator should retain for his own use some part of the crop over and above the minimum required to maintain himself and his family in reasonable comfort." The report of the Peasant Enquiry Committee of the Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee is in entire agreement with the above view. It says:

The argument used by landowners that these contracts are freely and willingly entered into by the tenants needs to be vehemently refuted. Protests have got to be raised against this cruel exploitation of the landless based on their economic prostration. It is the uppermost duty of the State to offer protection against this ruthless working of the laws of demand and supply to those landless peasants who have inherited no ownership to instruments of production. Without contemplating any denial of the property rights, we assert that any demand of the landowners that does not leave to the tenant a minimum subsistence is positively immoral. The claims of productive labour have a higher social justice than those of functionless ownership. And the owners need to be told that investment in land like any other investment is liable to yield a loss and that profits in capitalist economy are not as secure as ownership. To place the burden of functionless ownership on the shoulder of those who have no choice but to rent or to starve is something that no society calling itself civilized ought to condone or legalize.

The election manifesto issued by the Congress promised to the people the following things:

The Congress reiterates its declaration made at Karachi that it stands for a reform of the system of land tenure and of revenue and rent and for an equitable adjustment of the burden of agricultural land giving immediate relief to the smaller peasantry by a substantial reduction of agricultural rent and revenue now paid by them and exempting uneconomic holdings from the payment of rent and revenue.

Since this Bill does not even attempt to reduce rents, the Government is open to the charge of betraying the promise made to the people. And as the Bill will only help to stabilise rents at the present high level, it is unjust.

S. V. PARULEKAR.

U. P. CRIMINAL TRIBES REPORT.

THE Criminal Tribes Committee appointed by the Government of the United Provinces in March, 1938, submitted its report some time back and the report has since been published. Apart from matters of a more or less administrative character, the terms of reference of the Committee required it to recommend (1) changes needed in the system and administration of settlements with a view to ensuring the effective reform of the settlers and their subsequent absorption in the

general community, and (ii) "the nature of organization and means required for the reformation and reclamation of criminal tribes outside settlements."

With regard to the first of these two terms of reference, the Committee recommends that the present uniform system of settlements should be abolished as it is inadequate to meet the different requirements of various kinds of registered members of the criminal tribes, ranging from the recalcitrant to the comparatively more mild. The present settlement system deals out similar treatment to all of these with the result that for the reformed settlers, in the view of the Committee, it is more strict than necessary and for the refractory settlers it is less strict than desirable. The Committee, therefore, would like to have a graded system with a reformatory at the top intended for the most refractory type followed by "industrial, labour-supplying, industrial-cum-agricultural settlements and free agricultural colonies at the bottom." "It is not necessary," the Committee says, "that every settler must go through the *gamut* of these various kinds of settlements, but it is intended that there should be progressive treatment, and eventually the settler should be left in the agricultural colony to be absorbed in the general population."

With regard to discharges to be given to the inmates of the settlements the Committee observes :

For want of arrangements outside for reformed settlers, discharges from settlements have been few indeed. . . . Our opinion is that settlements should serve as a sort of clearing house from which refractory members should emerge reformed, settle in the country-side, and eventually be merged in the general population of the area. . . . In our opinion, a stay of three years in the reformatory is necessary for the reform of an inmate, after which period his case for transfer to an industrial, a labour-supplying or an industrial-cum-agricultural or a purely agricultural settlement should be considered on the merits of his case. In the settlements the question of discharges should similarly be taken up after three years.

For the reform of the criminal tribes outside settlements the Committee recommends that "reform *panchayats* should be organised among the various criminal tribes with the village as a primary unit followed by the thana *panchayat* and the District Committee. Officials and non-officials and philanthropic societies together with elected representatives of the criminal tribes will be on the District Committee with Collector as President, Superintendent of Police as vice-President, a Deputy Collector as Secretary and a paid *panchayat* officer as Assistant Secretary." Most of the criminal tribes have already their caste *panchayats*, but naturally they are only the mainstay of their "criminal organization." These "criminal *panchayats*" are now proposed to be supplanted by "reform *panchayats*." These new *panchayats* will be consulted "in coercive as well as ameliorative measures concerning the tribe, e. g. preventive action, investigation, grants of scholarships to children,

provision of employment or land to the unemployed members of the tribe, exemption from or relaxation from restrictions, etc."

It may generally be pointed out here that both the terms of reference and consequently the recommendations of the Committee were very restricted in their scope. The Criminal Tribes Act of 1924, under the provisions of which whole communities are 'declared' by the Provincial Governments as 'criminal' and 'settlements' are established for the 'reclamation and reform', of their 'registered' members, is only an enabling piece of legislation. It only vests power in the Provincial Governments to deal with the 'criminal' tribes in a manner which is not normal in the ordinary administration of justice. The Provincial Governments, thus not being under any obligation to take action under the Criminal Tribes Act, it would have been perfectly within the rights of the U. P. Government to ask the Criminal Tribes Committee to go a little deeper into the problem and enquire whether it would be at all justifiable to take any action under the Criminal Tribes Act and whether it would not be possible to undertake some measures for the reform of the so-called 'criminal' tribes without any recourse to the extraordinary procedure of administering justice involved in the operation of the Act. Instead of doing so, they took for granted that the Criminal Tribes Act is a just and necessary instrument for dealing with the 'criminal' tribes with a view to reforming them. Undue and unnecessary restrictions were thus placed on the Committee's powers both of investigation and recommendation. It would appear, however, from the report, that even if the Committee had greater freedom in this matter, its recommendations would not have been materially different.

The recommendations of the Committee are generally of a progressive nature in so far as they advocate comparatively early consideration of individual cases for the purposes of the discharge of the inmates of the Criminal Tribes Settlements. Other recommendations of the Committee regarding the help to be given by Government to discharged settlers in the form of subsidy for housing, scholarships for children at school, establishment of agricultural colonies, grants for the purchase of tools and bullocks will also conduce to the welfare, though of an extremely small minority, of the 'criminals'. With regard to the question of land for establishing the contemplated agricultural colonies, the Committee thinks that "it may be possible to get land for this purpose from landlords in areas which are not under cultivation and which they desire to be reclaimed." We think the Committee should have gone a step further and definitely recommended the acquirement for this purpose of all land that is not at present under cultivation and that can be usefully developed. That would have been a substantial measure of relief to the members of the 'criminal' tribes most of whom are without land and would

be only too glad to have it for the purposes of cultivation. Such a recommendation would have been more in keeping with the Committee's object of approaching this problem "as a problem of social reclamation and absorption." Moreover, such a policy would be conducive to the welfare of the community as a whole; for it is absurd on the one hand to allow cultivable land to lie fallow and on the other hand to suffer the landless population to remain in abject misery without any means of subsistence and even with the added stigma of being 'criminal' and liable to be interned in 'settlements' without much hope of being freed.

We think the Committee is substantially on sound lines in analysing its problem. With refreshing candour it admits that "the criminal tribes are a legacy of unhealthy social environments and the wrong methods pursued through past centuries in dealing with them. They are not the sinners; they have been more sinned against." The Committee also points out that "the economic life of the tribe depended mainly on its success in crime" with the result that the tribes came to be welded into what the Committee calls "Crime Guilds." One would expect the Committee to follow up this bold analysis of the situation by an equally bold programme of economic amelioration intended for the members of the 'criminal' tribes. But the recommendations made by the Committee in this regard are very timid and halting. No doubt, it has suggested that employment should be procured and uncultivated land should be made available to the tribes through the good offices of the District Committees which will have the District Magistrates as their Presidents and the Deputy Collectors as their Secretaries. "The achievement of the Barwari officer, who is a Deputy Collector in the Gonda district, in finding 10,000 bighas of land for the members of the Barwar tribe," says the Committee, "gives us hope that similar achievement would be possible in other districts." It is, however, unfortunate that the Committee does not go deeper into the problem in order to estimate the available volume of employment and extent of land which can be given to the total 'criminal' population of the U. P., which consists of "46 criminal tribes and 39 mixed gangs with a total notified population of over 14 lakhs and registered population of 41,016." The optimism of the Committee can be based only on the supposition that the available volume of employment and uncultivated but cultivable land in the U. P., would be sufficient for the purposes of this large mass of the people and further that the present owners of land will be willing to have it cultivated by the 'criminal' tribes.

We admit we are not posted with facts and figures regarding these matters, but even on a *priori* grounds it can be seen that the Committee's optimism proceeds more from wishful thinking

than from a correct appreciation of the existing state of affairs. The Committee, we hope, will agree with us in holding that any appreciable relief to the 'criminal' tribes in the way of employment can be given only by the industries of the province; and it is well known that the problem of industrial unemployment is nearly as severe in the U. P. as it is in any other province of India. The recent activities of the Unemployed Workers' League at Cawnpore bear testimony to this fact. If there is little chance for ordinary unemployed workers to get employment, the chances of the 'criminal' tribes must be considerably less indeed, unless special efforts are made to procure employment for them by driving others away from it, which will only mean shifting the trouble from one place to another as, in the Committee's own words, "to the criminal stock, fresh numbers seem to have been added by the fallen members of the higher castes."

As for giving uncultivated but cultivable land to the members of the 'criminal' tribes, we have our own misgivings regarding the success of such an endeavour. In the whole of the U. P. there already exist nearly 39 lakhs of landless agricultural labourers who lead a precarious existence. Does the Committee think that the owners of uncultivated but cultivable land, who are evidently not willing to give it for cultivation to this vast mass of "uncriminal" population which is more or less conversant with the art of agriculture such as it is in the U. P., and which is not very likely to cheat the landlords in respect of rent, will cheerfully come forward with an offer of their land for the purpose of the reformation of the 'criminal' tribes? If the Committee hopes so, we must admit we do not share its optimism. As regards fallow land belonging to Government, the Committee does not say anything at all. We do not know whether this silence is due to the circumstance that the U. P. Government do not possess any such land at all or whether the Committee did not want to embarrass the Government by any such proposal. As far as the Bombay Government is concerned, we know that it has persistently refused to make fallow land, available even to the ordinary landless labourers let alone the criminal tribes.

The Committee is of course fully aware of the limitations which restricted finances place upon the endeavour of Government to reform the 'criminal' tribes. But it insists that financial provision for this purpose should be immediately increased very considerably, not only from a humanitarian but a utilitarian point of view; for it believes that if adequate measures are taken they will help to reduce crime to a large extent among what it calls "hereditary and expert criminals." While its insistence on providing sufficient money is great, it also emphasises that unless enough funds are forthcoming the Criminal Tribes Act should be administered leniently. It says: "There is little justification for the

application of the strict provisions of the Act without an equally earnest endeavour being made for their reclamation." The modifications it suggests in the existing Government notifications in this behalf are on the lines of "excluding an area in which the tribe resides, exempting families by name and cancelling notification altogether and only proclaiming the criminal families by name." The Committee's main point is that stringency in the application of the Act must go hand in hand with active measures of reform, which would of course entail a large expenditure of money.

THE FEUDATORIES AND REFORMS. (BY A CORRESPONDENT.)

THE leaderette in the *Times of India* dated 21st January on the advance made by Kolhapur in the various fields of State administration concludes with the following pregnant remarks: "For the steady development of the State, it is very essential that the Darbar should have in such spheres the cordial cooperation of the Feudatory Jahagirs which constitute so important a part of the State."

These words are apt to create a wrong impression in the public mind about the Feudatories. It may be thought the Feudatories are not extending their cooperation to the Darbar in its scheme of reforms. To remove all doubts on the point, it may be stated that none of the Feudatories are opposed to reforms. On the contrary, they are ready to follow in the footsteps of the Darbar and to associate their people with the Jahagir administration to the extent that the Darbar is prepared to go.

But since, as remarked by the *Times*, the Feudatories constitute so important a part of the State, and are entitled to exist as such, they naturally want to know how the reforms scheme would affect them and whether their rights and privileges would be safeguarded under it. It was with this object in view that most of the Feudatories have submitted their representations to the Government in the matter.

The position of the Kolhapur Feudatories is peculiar. Under the suzerainty of the Darbar, they constitute separate entities both for administrative and legislative purposes, and their relations with the suzerain State are governed by treaties and engagements with the Kolhapur Darbar and by Government orders passed from time to time. When the primary exercise of political supervision was transferred to Kolhapur in 1930, the Government of India framed certain rules which guarantee to the Feudatories their separate existence as distinct units of administration.

According to the orders of Government, the introduction of a law or legislative measure which affects the Feudatories requires the sanction of the British Government, and before it is given the Feudatories are entitled to be heard in the matter. But this usual procedure was not followed by the Darbar in respect of this all-

important scheme of reforms, and it was forwarded by the Darbar for sanction to the Government of India without consulting the Feudatories and in spite of their repeated requests to be heard in the matter. The Government orders apart, even the principles of natural justice require that those who are affected by a legislative measure have a right to be heard before it is passed into law. This is, in effect, the demand of the Kolhapur Feudatories. If the Princes want the fullest assurances regarding the preservation of their Treaty obligations before they can decide to join the federation, why should the Feudatories not claim that they should be given a hearing before the Darbar's scheme for the whole State is sanctioned by Government?

The Feudatories have been kept entirely in the dark about the scheme, though assurances were given to them that they would be consulted. From the brief outline of the scheme that has appeared in the papers, it seems the Darbar wants to get the reforms sanctioned for the whole of Kolhapur including the Feudatories and thus amalgamate the Feudatories with the Kolhapur State proper. It is feared that the scheme would eventually put an end to the separate existence of the Feudatories altogether because such legislative bodies have a tendency to expand the scope of their powers at the cost of their constituents.

The rules framed by the Government of India in 1930 also provide for the establishment of a Feudatories' Advisory Council for the introduction of laws into their territories and for the discussion and settlement of the questions affecting their interests. The establishment of this body is being delayed by the Darbar, while the scheme of an amalgamated Council is pressed forward.

It may perhaps be thought that the Feudatories have outlived their time and that, being an anachronism in these days, they should disappear from the political horizon. Perhaps it may be so but the same is the case with many so-called independent States who are not in a position to maintain the expensive machinery of a modern democratic State, such as will fit in with the smooth working of an all-India federation. If the bigger Princes and other Chiefs directly under the British Government (some of them having the same status and position as the Feudatory States) can live on account of their Treaty rights, the Feudatories claim the same consideration, on account of the Treaty obligations and guarantees which they hold from the Paramount Power, for preservation of their rights and privileges.

CURRENT COMMENT.

THE ANNUAL WAGE.

IT was reported some time ago that the General Motors Corporation of U. S. A. had a plan by which it would guarantee a certain annual wage to its workers, whether the factories worked throughout the year or for a part of the year. However, from the announcement made by

the Corporation in November last it now appears that its plan is not quite so ambitious; it does not promise complete security to the wage-earners at times when the industry goes through a slack period as well as when it is running at full speed. But it only gives some "lay-off benefits." Employees will be paid their regular wages when the factories are in operation. Should they be shut down, employees who have been with the company for at least five years will be able to borrow during this period 60 per cent. of their wages, to be repaid, without interest, from the part of their earnings above 60 per cent. when the factories are re-opened. Works whose service ranges from two to five years can secure the loan of 40 per cent. of their regular wage, under the same conditions. At the present time, about 150,000 employees are eligible for these loans, who will receive more than half their weekly wage, even when the factories are closed.

This is no doubt a much more modest plan than what one had expected from earlier reports. Its significance lies in the recognition on the part of capital of the principle that the worker must be insured an income without lapses. A wage that is sufficient when industry is working for the whole year becomes a starvation wage when industry slows down; and in the days of depression when there is periodical unemployment, means must be found by every industry, which can afford it, to assure to the worker a living wage for all the twelve months of year, and "obviously, no wage is a living wage unless it enables a worker and his family to live in decent comfort throughout the year."

GRIEVANCES OF THE RANPUR PEOPLE.

While the murder of Major Bazalgette has focussed official attention on repression, public attention is focussed on the grievances of the people of Ranpur State which has a population of 47,000 and an annual income of Rs. 70,000. Mr. Sarangdhar Das, the Secretary of the Orissa States' People's Conference, describes these grievances as follows, basing his account on the evidence tendered before the Inquiry Committee appointed by the Orissa States' People's Conference:

The people are not permitted to use double doors in their houses; a well-dressed and groomed man appearing in a public thorough-fare is immediately singled out as a haughty man; not all classes of people have the right to use a palanquin for purposes of wedding procession. However, the more important grievances, which have surely spelled the economic ruin of the peasantry, deserve more serious consideration here. *Bethi* (unpaid forced labour) is the most pernicious practice in the Orissa States. It is in evidence that the poor peasants of Ranpur are forced to work nearly five months in the year without wages; and there are 27 varieties of *Bethi*, which, in addition to religious festivals, include frequent shikar beats, construction and repair of roads and palaces, cultivation, sowing, fending and watching of lentil fields which are used as baits for wild animals to be killed in shikar, carrying luggages of officers to their homes outside the State even, and a host of other kinds of *Bethi* not prevalent twenty years ago. These witnesses alleged that they have been forced to build puca houses for the Raja's favourites even. The rigour of *Bethi* falls most heavily on the day labourers who depend on wages for their livelihood. If one is unwilling to leave his own field during cultivation or harvesting season, he is beaten and dragged for work or is fined.

The account continues:

The State exacts a marriage fee of Rs. 1/1 from the parties who marry. The permission to use a *Palki* or a *sabari* in a marriage procession is granted after payment of fees, Rs. 15 and Rs. 1 respectively. These conveyances, it may be noted, do not belong to the State, but to private owners who must be paid their hire. *Nagan* (forcible contributions) is in recent years collected at the rate of four annas per rupee of rent on four different occasions, i. e., for the ear-piercing ceremony, marriage and death of Yuvaraj and for the death of the Raja's mother. The village rent collectors present *nazrana* to the Raja on Oriya New Year's day, and collect six pies from every householder at the time of rent collection. Certain *abwabs* at the rate of four and a quarter annas per *patta* number are also collected, which, it is said, go to the rent collector and the *kanungos*.

The matter of forest restrictions is another hardship. Fifteen years ago, fuel wood could be extracted free from the forests, but now a fee of from 12 to 14 annas per cart-load has to be paid. During the Political Agent's visit, the people have to supply goats and chicken at half price and fifty to sixty milch cows for milk. But no payment is made for the milk. It is interesting to note here that the ordinary cows in the forest country yield very little milk, some time a couple of *chhataks*. These unruly animals, when driven from forest country to the town area, and tied up, take fright and the milk dries up. Hence the necessity of fifty cows to ensure a yield of two or three seers.

Monopoly of *pan* (betel leaf) was sold last year for Rs. 3,350. As a result, the retail price is twice that across the border in Khurda Khasmahal. Other monopolies that are sold in auction are salt, kerosine and coconuts. There is again, it is alleged, a tax of four and a quarter annas per loaded cart and one and a half annas per empty cart each way for the use of certain roads.

The exaction of unpaid forced labour and the various taxes and cesses would, if a proper taxation inquiry were made, probably mount up to the amount of land rent; and it is difficult to see how, under such a heavy burden the peasantry can thrive at all.

ENEMIES OF THE PEOPLE.

The Hon'ble Mr. Morarji Desai in his recent tour in Gujarat is reported to have said to the peasants: "Those who ask you not to repay the *sahukars* are your enemies—and the enemies of the country." The objectionable character of this statement made by the Revenue Minister will not be understood unless it is placed in its proper background.

It is well-known that the Government of Bombay passed last year a measure called the Small Holders' Relief Act. The Act gives temporary relief to small farmers and tenants whose holdings are not more than 18 acres. The Act provides that if small holders pay one year's interest on their debts, the execution of decrees passed against them should be temporarily stayed. It provides further that certain belongings of the small holders such as milch cattle, dwelling houses, standing crops, household utensils and the like should not be liable to attachment.

The kisan leaders, against whom the above-quoted bitter invective was uttered by the Revenue Minister, went about the countryside explaining the provisions of this temporary and restricted moratorium to the people for whose benefit it was specially meant. They also inform-

ed the peasants of the fact, which the Government themselves stressed when they passed the Moratorium Act, that the Government were thinking of a wider and permanent measure of debt relief and that the Moratorium Act was a preliminary step taken by the Government to prevent the moneylenders from forestalling the contemplated remedial action of the Government.

It, therefore, kisan leaders go about saying to the peasants that they should hold to their land and not let it pass into the possession of the moneylenders, they are merely helping the Government to make effective the temporary legislation they have already passed and the future legislation they hope to pass, by making known to the agriculturists the intentions of the Government. We suppose that when the Government passed the Moratorium Act they expected the intelligentsia to broadcast to the villagers information about their relief measures so that the cultivators would not be deprived of their land before the measures came into actual operation. It is, therefore, passing strange that the Revenue Minister himself, who should be the most anxious that such propaganda is done among the people whom the Government themselves cannot reach, and who should be grateful for assistance in this direction, regards these very volunteers as enemies of the kisans and of the country. It cannot be that Mr. Morarji really desires the moratorium declared by the Government to be a dead letter. But otherwise we do not understand how he can stigmatise those who do the Government's own work as the enemies of the country.

CLASS HATRED.

Responding to the toast of the "Metal and Mineral Industries" at the Annual Dinner of the Mining and Metallurgical Institute in Calcutta on 13th January last, Mr. J. J. Ghandy, General Manager of the Tatas, dilated upon the various factors which affect the development of the metal and mineral industries in India. He referred to labour unrest in India as a factor which threatened the well-being not only of the metal and mineral industries alone but of industries in general. Mr. Ghandy launched a vigorous tirade against the communists and their preaching of class-war in his speech. He said:

I cannot think of any important industrial centre in India which has not been affected by strikes or lock-outs, or where the gospel of class-war and class-hatred is not being preached by communists, who claim to be the "revolutionary vanguard of the toiling masses." . . . Unless really stringent precautions to discourage communism are enforced by Government and the possibility of unjustifiable strikes is eliminated, it will not be possible for India to develop her metal and mineral industries nor any other important industries for that matter.

Apart from his anxiety for the rapid development of industries in India, Mr. Ghandy's chief attack is against the doctrine of class-war. He would like to see that a feeling of mutual goodwill and co-operation exists between the two classes—the employers and the employees. But in spite of this very laudable desire on his part, he feels called upon to give a friendly hint to the employers. Thus he says:

It is also imperative that the existing employers' organizations of an all-India nature should coalesce into a closely knit organization representative of all the industries in the country, and have branches all over India so as to present a united front to labour organizations.

We fail to see how Mr. Ghandy's theory of class collaboration fits in with his trumpet call to the employers of India to organise themselves into a single formidable organization, "so as to present a united front to labour organizations." This statement itself shows that, in his own opinion and in the opinion of the employers generally, the two classes, far from being mutually complimentary, have definitely and decidedly contradictory purposes to achieve.

Class war is certainly in the mind of employers like Mr. Ghandy, whether it is in the mind of the communists or not; and good-will between the various classes, when preached by such employers, can only be with a view to abate by the use of some sonorous platitudes the force of the movement carried on by labour in its own interest and in the interest of social justice.

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