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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

India of April 23 makes comments on certain matters contained in the draft manual of business proposed for the provincial legislatures by the Government of India. We cannot imagine any valid reason for supplying copies of the manual only in England and not supplying them in this country. The Government have taken steps to consult non-official opinion both in the provinces and at the centre in framing rules, and although Bengal seems to have a grievance in the matter, other provinces have little to complain of, so far as opportunities for giving counsel are concerned. We are not unmindful of the criticism levelled against the one-sided composition of the committee appointed to advise the Government of India. This criticism is just and we have ourselves endorsed it, but on the whole, considering the time at the disposal of the Government, it must be acknowledged that they have taken effective measures to consult non-officials, and we have heard no complaints of any attempt on the part of the Government at whittling away the Act, whatever honest differences of opinion may have arisen at the informal meetings of the advisory bodies. But the fact is there that lively apprehensions are felt that such will be the result, and the Government only lend support to this suspicion by withholding from the general public in this country information which they make available in England.

ONE of the proposed rules included in the manual is as follows :

The member asking leave (to make a motion for the adjournment) must hand to the President a written statement of the matter proposed to be discussed, and must annex thereto the consent of the Governor to his motion.

It seems inconceivable that such a preposterous rule should pass the scrutiny of Parliament, but that the Government of India should propose it, is itself exceedingly strange. The Joint Committee,

in recommending that the Governor should not preside over the sittings of the council said: they "attribute the greatest importance to this question of the presidency of the legislative council. It will in their opinion, conduce to the successful working of the new councils if they are imbued from the commencement with the spirit and conventions of parliamentary procedure as developed in the Imperial Parliament." One would have thought the Governor would be excluded altogether from the whole business of regulating the proceedings of the council. It is nothing less than an outrage upon parliamentary usage to require the consent of the Governor to a motion for an adjournment of the house. Such a motion "on a definite matter of urgent public importance" is a most valued privilege of the house, which cannot be enjoyed on the sufferance of the bureaucracy. Even now the Governor's consent is not necessary to such a motion; hereafter the Governor should have no concern with the matter. Our contemporary also criticises rules as to the power proposed to be retained by the Governor in disallowing the putting of questions and the moving of resolutions. This too must remain outside the scope of the interference by the executive. But it is not worth while to pursue the matter till we have the final draft of the rules as it has emerged from consultations with the informal advisory committee.

* * *

IN what precise manner General Dyer has been dealt with we do not know. That he has been asked to go is certain; that he will be deprived of his commission there seems little doubt. A compassionate pension is spoken of in his case; such an idea must be stoutly resisted. India's treasury must not bear an anna's burden on his account. He is still unconscious of any wrong-doing on his part. He bragged in England that all Englishmen approved of the massacre as he bragged in India that all thoughtful Indians supported him. The statement is as untrue of the one class as of the other. The *Times of India*, which certainly represents the better mind of Europeans in this country, expresses deep disgust at this episode. Unfortunately, however, that paper is almost as solitary among English-edited papers voicing their "sense of irremovable shame" as the *Indian Mirror* is the only one amongst Indian-edited papers to approve of General Dyer's action. We have not the least

doubt, however, that the *Times of India* expresses the true feeling of the European community, although its comment stands in such sharp contrast with that appearing almost in every other Anglo-Indian paper.

AN illustration of the manner in which extremist politicians belittle the merits of the Government of India Act is afforded by the interpretation which Mr. Bepin Chandra Pal puts upon a sentence in paragraph 4 of the Joint Select Committee's Report. Answering criticisms made against the system of dyarchy, the Committee say :

Its critics forget that the pronouncement (of the 20th August, 1917) spoke of a substantial step in the direction of the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government and not of the partial introduction of responsible government ; and it is this distinction which justifies the method by which the Bill imposes responsibility, both on ministers to the legislative council and on the members of the legislative council to their constituents, for the results of that part of the administration which is transferred to their charge.

It is clear that in this passage the Committee practically adopted the contention of those who argued that the terms of the pronouncement made dyarchy inevitable : that responsible government must be introduced from the outset and that its sphere must be widened by successive stages.

WHETHER this contention is valid or not is a different matter. But a passage which purports to justify a method of government imposing responsibility ought not to be construed, as Mr. Pal does, to mean that there is no sort of responsibility provided for anywhere in the Act, even as regards transferred departments. He says :

This ought to dissipate all notions that the Montagu Act gives the legislatures in the provinces any manner of real control in regard to the so-called transferred subjects. The difference between the reserved and transferred departments is simply this, namely, that while in regard to the reserved departments the Governor's authority is equally shared by his executive councillors, and he cannot, except under very exceptional circumstances, override the decision of the majority of his executive council; in regard to the so-called transferred departments, he shares his authority neither with his executive council nor with his ministers, but can, in so far as the Act is concerned, act upon his sole responsibility whenever he finds his ministers do not accept his advice. . . . And this being the real measure of the powers of ministers, it has been truly said that the position of these high-sounding officials will differ very little from that of the secretaries to the Government.

MR. PAL'S description is true enough of the position that was assigned to the ministers in the Government of India's dispatch of March 5 of last year, but it is a sheer travesty of the Joint Committee's recommendations in this behalf. The Committee say :

He (the Governor) should never hesitate to point out to ministers what he thinks is the wrong course or warn them if he thinks they are taking the right course. But if after hearing all the arguments, ministers should decide not to adopt his advice, then, in the opinion of the Com-

mittee, the Governor should ordinarily allow ministers to have their way, fixing the responsibility upon them, even if it may subsequently be necessary for him to veto any particular piece of legislation. It is not possible but that in India, as in all other countries, mistakes will be made by ministers, acting with the approval of a majority of the legislative council, but there is no way of learning except through experience and by the realisation of responsibility.

Again :

Ministers who enjoy the confidence of a majority in their legislative council will be given the fullest opportunity of managing that field of government which is entrusted to their care. In their work they will be assisted and guided by the Governor, who will accept their advice and promote their policy whenever possible. If he finds himself compelled to act against their advice, it will only be in circumstances roughly analogous to those in which he has to override his executive council.

The words which we have italicised in the above passage shows how absolutely groundless is the fear that the institution of transferred departments will, instead of conceding any real power, remove the only check, however imperfect, that is now imposed upon the autocracy of the Governor. Mr. Pal also maintains that the Montagu Act does not confer on the provincial legislatures any manner of control over the provincial executives. The fact is that, so far as transferred subjects are concerned, the legislature's control is complete.

THE criticism levelled by Mr. Pal against the Reform Act is, of course, ridiculously wide of the mark, and yet the Nationalists cannot help professing concurrence with it. Should they differ, they would, by implication, own to too many good points in it to fit in with the character which they wish to give it. If a fairly large domain of provincial government is entrusted to the charge of the ministers, and if over this field the ministers, responsible to the popular legislature, exercise control, without the interference of the bureaucracy, then this statement itself belies the epithet "disappointing," which the Congress has stamped upon the Act. But agreement with Mr. Pal's criticism leaves the Nationalists no alternative but to accept the policy which he proposes to them for adoption, viz. to decline the office of ministers. If ministers, even under the scheme recommended by the Joint Committee, are to be in no better position than the one described by Mr. Pal, no one can accept office without loss of self-respect. When the Government of India's fifth reform dispatch was published, we said that no self-respecting Indian could consent to become a minister if the reactionary modifications suggested were therein confirmed. If the Nationalists read the Joint Committee's report and the Act in the way Mr. Pal does, and if the powers of the legislature and the non-official executive are practically the same as were intended for them by the Government of India, the course urged by Mr. Pal is the only one open to them. They cannot "honestly" make themselves responsible for carrying out the provisions of the Act. Mr. Pal has placed them in a dilemma.

It must be conceded in fairness to Mr. Pal, that, for those who take the pessimistic view of the reforms which the Congress has sanctioned, there is no getting away from the policy of uniform opposition which he has been advocating with great force in the pages of the *Independent*. He would have the Nationalists play the rôle of the Opposition. They are to be the unfriendly critics of all measures proposed by the executive, whatever the intrinsic merits of those measures may be. Bad measures they will naturally oppose; but good measures also they must oppose, for some defect or another in them, which one can easily discover if one is bent upon doing so. A bill for compulsory education, for instance, is to be opposed if it is accompanied by a proposal for taxation, not because fresh taxation is not necessary (it may be necessary for aught one knows), but because it is the business of the Opposition to oppose. There is only this difference between the Opposition party in western countries and the one Mr. Pal proposes for India, that the Opposition here is to remain in opposition till full responsible government is established. Mr. Pal carefully considers whether it would be easier to produce deadlocks, which is the avowed object of this policy, by the Nationalists nominally taking office and trying from within to bring the administration to a standstill. But he cannot trust his party to be so averse from power as all this implies—there are too many black sheep in it to render this course feasible. To ensure success for his policy, therefore, Mr. Pal recommends that the Nationalists should remain in perpetual opposition till full home rule is won and, utilising every possible opportunity of obstruction which the new constitution places within their reach, cause the maximum amount of friction and trouble to the executive, and bring about a breakdown of government.

MR. PAL is one of the Trinity in the Nationalist pantheon, but now there is none so poor as to do him reverence. The Nationalists do not deign even to show him the common courtesy of examining his proposals. They condemn them out of hand as though they were afraid lest, on reasoned examination, it should appear that, starting from the same point, they have to reach the same alarming conclusion which he has drawn. A solitary journal like the *Janmabhumi* may say: "if the reforms are not up to the mark, our duty is clear—chuck up the whole lot," but with the rest of the exponents of the Nationalist thought, mum's the word. They inwardly resent that Mr. Pal should take them at their word, as it were, and strictly interpreting the expressions used by them in voicing their dissatisfaction with the shortcomings in the Act, should lead them, by a few short steps of unanswerable logic, to a conclusion which is so very distasteful to them.

IT must ever be inconsistent with the character of the Congress as a national institution to

play the part of one constituent party in it and to run candidates in its interest. But, even assuming that a fundamental change in its original character is now to be effected and that it is to be made a party organisation, at any rate the criterion dividing the sheep from the goats ought to be clearly intelligible and capable of only one interpretation. concurrence with the Amritsar reforms resolution is made the acid test in the present case, but that resolution itself, as is now plain, was, for the purpose of preventing an open rupture, deliberately so phrased as to disguise differences of a radical character. It is not a mere chance that the Amritsar resolution is interpreted to endorse the policy respectively of co-operation and obstruction by two schools, but the resolution was of set purpose so framed as to admit of two interpretations in contrary directions. And this very resolution, standing Janus-wise with different faces to different sets of politicians, is made the touchstone of one's loyalty to the Congress and is being used to exclude the Liberal party! It is noteworthy that none of the leaders outside the Liberal ranks, who ordinarily are extremely anxious for unity, has raised his voice of protest against the worst exclusive tactics that have yet been proposed in this country. But by now even the theory about the Congress is changed—Mr. Tilak's paper declares that, strictly speaking, the Congress is a party organisation. There is of course an end of the matter, so far as Mr. Tilak is concerned.

HAVE any changes been effected in the direction of popularisation of government in the constitutions of the Crown Colonies? The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies made a statement to the following effect: Steps have been taken to introduce an elected element into the Legislative Council of the East Africa Protectorate, and there has been an increase of the unofficial element in the Councils of Gambia and the Gold Coast. Proposals for a reform of the Ceylon constitution are now under consideration. Those for constitutional reforms in Malta are based upon the general principle that "the legislative, administrative, and financial control of all the purely local functions of government will be entrusted to the local Legislature and to Ministers responsible to that Legislature, the control of the services reserved as appertaining to the position of Malta as an Imperial fortress and harbour remaining vested in the Governor." In Uganda a Legislative Council is being established.

MR. THAKKAR, who has gone to Puri to organise famine relief, reports: The distressed area is about 250 square miles consisting of about 500 villages with a population of one lakh and a half. The distress has developed since August last. Now gratuitous relief is being given to over 5000 persons from four centres and 3 free kitchens have been opened, but relief works for able-bodied persons are badly needed.

COMPULSORY LABOUR.

IN March Mr. Spoor asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (1) whether a Government Commission on Native Labour sat in British East Africa in 1912-13; whether the Hon. A. C. Hollis, C. M. G., Secretary for Native Affairs, gave evidence showing that labour recruited through the native chiefs was in practice compulsory labour; whether it is the policy of His Majesty's Government now to introduce compulsory labour in British East Africa; if not whether the Governor's instructions to Provincial and District Commissioners, that the onus of finding labour was to be put on native chiefs and elders, will now be withdrawn; (2) Whether the Governor of British East Africa has issued instructions to Provincial and District Commissioners to inform native chiefs and elders that it is part of their duty to advise and encourage young men in their areas to go out and work on plantations; whether any such duty has been imposed by law on native chiefs and elders; if not on what authority the Governor's statement was made; on what authority reports are called for on any headman who is impervious to His Excellency's wishes; and what is the nature of the action which the Governor proposes to take against any such headman? To this question Lieut.-Col. Amery returned an evasive answer. He avoided a reference to the Commission of 1912 and only promised that the whole question of native labour in East Africa would be discussed with the Governor by the Colonial Secretary on his return. The reader, we are sure, will be anxious to know all about this Commission. We give an account below in the words of Mr. Leonard Woolf, who in his report to the Labour Research Department has described in sufficient detail the evidence given by the white settlers and the Commission's recommendations. The report has just been published in the form of a book entitled "Empire and Commerce in India" by Allen & Unwin.

In 1912 the complaints of the European land-owners and farmers with regard to the shortage of labour induced the Government of British East Africa to appoint a "Native Labour Commission" to enquire and report on the subject. The Commission consisted of a Judge, two Civil Servants, the Chief Engineer of the Uganda Railway, four persons representing the European community, and two European missionaries. The Report together with the evidence was published in British East Africa, but not in England.

A large number of European planters and farmers gave evidence. They all complained of the difficulty of obtaining native labour. Their evidence was confirmed by the Secretary for Native Affairs. The native would not work voluntarily for a wage, but only if he was forced out of the Reserves to work. "It was, generally speaking, not the really able-bodied, but the old and young who were forced out to work." The method of forcing the native out to work was described by

this Government official. The white settlers go to an Agent who undertakes to supply native labour from the Reserves. A native who leaves the Reserve to labour has to be registered with the District Commissioner. "There was no doubt at the present time," said Mr. Hollis, "that whenever an Agent wanted labour, he went to the chiefs and bribed them, with the result that a number of men were brought to the Commissioner to be registered. If these men were asked if they wanted to go they often said: 'No.' . . . One could not call this voluntary labour."

The evidence of a Chief, Muturi, shows how this system of forced labour actually works in the Reserve. "If," he said (p. 238), "word came through the District Commissioner that a European previously unknown to him wanted labour, he would summon a large number of men, and ask who wanted to go. If the number fell short of that asked for he would report to the Government Officer, and if informed that he must make the number complete, he would order certain men to go. A spearman would be sent to arrest any man who refused to go, and he would be taken before the Native Council at headquarters, by which he would be fined three goats for disobeying the chief. The goats would be slaughtered and eaten by the Council. The Council would then order him to go to work, an order which he could not escape obeying." The white farm-owners are very much against any District Commissioner who does not lend himself to this system of forced labour. Mr. Owen Grant, of the East African Estates Company, Limited, said (p. 10): "Every possible assistance had been given him by District Commissioners, but he considered that they were very much hampered by rules and regulations. It was wrong, however, that District Commissioners should ask natives who were brought before them to be registered whether they wished to go out and work. The native would naturally always say 'No.'"

Such native labour as is obtained by the white settler is, therefore, on the evidence of the Secretary for Native Affairs, forced labour. Let us examine the conditions of employment which are offered and refused by voluntary, and imposed upon forced labour. The evidence of the planters and farmers shows that the wages paid by them vary from Rs. 3 per month (4s. a month, or a little over a penny a day) to Rs. 7 per month (9s. 4d. a month, or a little over threepence a day). One planter said that methods of indenturing young native labour appeared to him to be excellent. "He himself had had splendid results from utilizing child labour on his farm, both boys and girls of about fourteen years of age. . . . Children were paid at the rate of Re. 1 (1s. 4d.) for fourteen days actual work, without food."

It is perhaps natural that an employer should consider that results are excellent when he can obtain children of fourteen years of age to work for him for one penny a day, and able-bodied men for threepence a day, the hours of labour varying

from eleven to nine (with one to two hours' break at mid-day). It is perhaps also natural that even East African natives will not work for these employers unless they are forced to do. The disinclination of the native to work on the white man's farm becomes even more intelligible when one enquires into the way in which he is treated. When the labour recruiting agent has bribed the chief and the chief has made his forced levy on the tribe and registered his victims before the District Commissioner, the labourers have to be removed from the Reserve to the white man's farm. The Commissioners reported that the disinclination of the natives to go and work on these farms was in part due to the method in which this removal was conducted on the railway. The conditions are thus described by the Commissioners (p. 325):

It is an acknowledged fact that native labourers are packed tight into the ordinary third-class coaches and even iron-covered goods vans during their journeys, which may extend to three consecutive days and nights, i they are travelling the whole length of the line, as they are not conveyed by the ordinary passenger train and are liable to be side-tracked to allow other trains to take precedence of them. The heat during the day, owing to the want of ventilation and the cramping for several hours at a stretch, must be well-nigh intolerable. Combined with this is the custom of locking the doors for long periods during the journey, with the natural result that the coaches become fouled, adding to the already inhuman crowding an unspeakable insanitary condition. In addition water can only be obtained now at such places where the doors are unlocked in accordance with existing railway regulations. (Italics ours.)

Under such conditions the British Government and English settlers have found it impossible to inculcate in the native mind the dignity of human labour. Perhaps we should at this point say with Montesquieu, "If I had to prove our right to make the negroes slaves, I would say: the people in question are black from head to foot; their noses are so flat that it is impossible to pity them. One cannot believe that God, who is a very wise Being, has placed a soul, at any rate a good soul, in a body which is completely black."

At any rate, even with these inducements in the rate of wages and the amenities of railway travel, and with the system of unofficial compulsion described above, the English settlers could not induce the natives to work for them. The planters and farmers who gave evidence before the Government Commission were practically unanimous in their demands for a solution of this labour problem. Their solution was a simple one. They asked the Government to cut down the native Reserves so that they would be unable to maintain the native population and to increase the hut tax to Rs. 10 for those natives who did not work on a European farm while reducing it for those who did work. At the same time many of them asked Government to fix by law a standard wage of Rs. 4 (5s. 4d.) a month.

It will be seen that this is a demand for slavery pure and simple. The reader who is familiar with the psychology of economic imperialism

may, perhaps, be disposed to think that I have misunderstood or exaggerated the demands of these Englishmen, I have not. Nearly every white settler who gave evidence before the Commission was in favour of these proposals. I will quote at random from their evidence. Mr. H. Scott of Limoru said (p. 5):

In his opinion the free movement of natives from one locality to another should be done away with. This would go a long way to solve the labour difficulty. . . . His idea was that the natives resident in any one District should supply the labour for the District. . . . A standard wage of Rs. 4 should, he thought, be established. . . . Increased taxation would, he thought, increase the labour supply, not so much, however, near towns, as in such cases the natives would be able to obtain the necessary money by raising and selling of additional produce. Boys who worked for a certain number of months in the year should pay less than those who did not work at all. The tax, therefore, should be raised to Rs. 10 for boys who did not work, and reduced to Rs. 3 for those who worked.

Mr. Fletcher of Kyambu said (p. 7):

In his opinion the only way to obtain more labour would be through increasing the cost of the natives living by means of additional taxation. He was in favour of a fairly heavy Poll Tax with a remission proportionate to the number of months a native had worked for a European farmer. The farmer would grant a certificate to all natives working for him showing the length of time he had been employed. A certificate from Indians should not be accepted. . . . The Reserves were a great deal too large. . . . If the Reserves were cut down sufficiently it would undoubtedly have the effect of turning off a large number of natives who would be made to work for their living.

Mr. P. E. Watcham of Ruaraka said (p. 9):

Reserves, he thought, should be cut down so as to force the natives to take up their residence on European farms.

These quotations, which are typical of the proposals in the 300 pages of evidence which the Report contains, show clearly enough the attitude of the English settlers. In their opinion the native has no right to land and no right to live his life for himself; he should be compelled to work on the white man's land for a wage fixed at twopence per day by law by the white man. They propose to use the power of the State to cut down the land, in occupation by the natives, until it is unable to support the native population. The native will thus be faced by the alternatives of starvation or of working for the settler on the settler's terms. And in order to make the result still more certain the cost of the natives' living is to be increased by taxation, so that they will be compelled to work for the white man in order to earn sufficient money to pay the taxes. It may be added that in British Nyasaland this system had already been adopted, and there the native who cannot prove that he has worked has to pay double taxes.

The white settlers, it will be observed, repeatedly in their evidence stated that the native Reserves were much "too large." But Dr. Norman Leys, Government Medical Officer, Mombasa, stated (p. 274):

The inadequacy of the Reserve in the Fort Hall and Nyeri district for future development is patent. There is little unused land except what is necessary for pasture

and fallow. There is a constant movement down into the poorer land on the plains (Crown land) from pressure behind. . . . *The Reserves are thus below the standard demanded by Sir Edward Grey from the Congo Free State, namely, land adequate for the development of two generations.*

The views of the English settlers which we have given above are merely a reflection of the beliefs and desires of economic imperialism. The Government, they hold, should see that the land and peoples of British East Africa perform the function destined for them, namely, to promote the economic interests of the white settlers. The attitude of the Commission in its Report and recommendations towards these demands is very curious. For instance, on the question of Reserves the Commission held that it had "insufficient information before it to decide whether the demarcated Reserves are too large, though there seems to be a general opinion in the country that this is the case." This was, it should be remembered, a Government Commission, and yet it states that it cannot obtain information as to whether the Reserves are or are not sufficient to maintain the native population. There is nothing in the evidence recorded to show that it attempted to get the information. It quotes a "general opinion in the country" that the Reserves are too large; but that general opinion to which it refers was the opinion only of white settlers, who frankly stated that the Reserves ought to be cut down until they could not support the native population. The Commission in its recommendations, in effect, adopted the white settlers' demand and proposal, though it did not state them quite so baldly. It recommended that all natives living outside the Reserves be removed within them, and that the Reserves should then be re-demarcated and cut down "with a view to reserving sufficient land for the present population only." The effect would therefore be that any increase of native population would immediately make the Reserves insufficient to maintain the population, and natives would be forced out of the Reserves to work on the white man's land.

But the recommendation of the Commission with regard to taxation is still more significant. It started by stating that "it is recognized that . . . taxation does bring natives into the labour market, but that to increase taxation . . . with a view to increasing the supply of labour is unjustifiable." In the very next sentence, however, the Commission expresses its opinion that increased taxation should be imposed upon natives to meet the expenses of its recommendations, and that owing to their wealth they are well able to pay higher taxes upon property. The casuistry of the Jesuit is famous, but surely it was never equalled by this casuistry of imperialism. For the recommendations of the Commission are not intended to promote the interests of the natives; the re-demarcation of the Reserves, etc., are recommended as means of increasing the labour supply, of promot-

ing the economic interests of the white settler. The Commission admits that increased taxation will "bring natives into the labour market;" it holds that increased taxation in order to bring natives into the labour market is unjustifiable; and then it finally recommends increased taxation (which will bring natives into the labour market) not in order to bring them into the market, but in order to pay for other recommendations the whole object of which is to bring natives into the labour market!

INDIANS IN EAST AFRICA.

(*Concluded from last issue.*)

THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION.

A REFERENCE was made above to Chapter 7 of the Report of the Economic Commission. The Commission appointed by the local Government did not include a single Indian representative, and by way of protest no Indian evidence was tendered, and practically no evidence bearing upon the Indian situation was produced before the Commission. Yet in that chapter the Commission, without supporting testimony of any kind, delivered an attack upon the commercial methods and the private morality of the Indian Community of such a character as it is impossible for any self-respecting and high-spirited people for one moment to tolerate. These allegations, of a most offensive type, have been made with the very clear object of creating an atmosphere of prejudice against the Indian section of the population. European and Christian civilisation has been deliberately invoked and contrasted with Eastern and non-Christian civilisation to the detriment of the latter and in the alleged interests of the native population and recommendations have been made that the Protectorate should be treated, together with adjacent territories, as a quasi-Dominion, and that power should be handed over to the small oligarchy of white settlers, whose views need no elucidation in the light of the declaration on the Indian question of the Convention of Associations of East Africa (the most important non-official body of Europeans in the country, which is often known as "The White Man's Parliament"), that their object was to change the whole character of the country and its population by the stoppage of Indian immigration and the gradual elimination of the Indian population. The Indian Community has felt that such a campaign, undertaken ostensibly on behalf of the native population, by the white settlers, is hypocritical in the extreme. Those who are best acquainted with local conditions and who can read between the lines of the proceedings of the Convention of Associations and the Report of the Economic Commission, are under no illusion as to the altruism of the motives of the European settlers.

The present agitation is strongly reminiscent of similar campaigns conducted at various times in different parts of South Africa preliminary to

the introduction of anti-Asiatic legislation imposing further disabilities upon the resident Indian population. The Indian Community in East Africa has bitterly resented the imputations that have been made against it, and it challenges impartial investigation. It desires at this stage to make no counter-charges, but it is content to quote the opinion of the authorised representatives of the Native people themselves. Mr. C. F. Andrews, who was specially deputed by the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association of Bombay to investigate the situation in East Africa recently, made a special point of meeting the Prime Minister and the Chief Justice of Uganda, two Ministers of the Native Parliament. This is what Sir Apollo Kagwa, Prime Minister, and Mr. Staisles Enganya, the Chief Justice, say in a letter to Mr. Andrews: "With reference to our meeting with you in our Native Parliament this morning, we beg to confirm in writing our opinion we expressed on the following two points which came out—namely: (a) We do want the Indians to remain in our country, as we consider that their being here would improve our country, and would do no harm to the country. Besides, we find them moral people. We would, of course, like better Indians. (b) We do not want our country to be united to any other Protectorate, for we consider that if this was done it would greatly interfere with our Uganda Treaty, 1900, and our customs. We have other reasons besides. Therefore, we would very much like this Protectorate to remain as it is." Dr. Cook, the well-known East African medical expert, has publicly corroborated the evidence of the Native leaders regarding Indian morality. In the light of this disinterested testimony, it is clear that the sole motive for the hostile activities of the European Colonists lies in colour and race prejudice and trade jealousy. It is significant, too, that the Convention of Associations has deliberately sought to raise the question of religious privilege and to destroy the religious neutrality for which the British Administration is supposed to stand, as the word "Christian" does not appear in the original draft of the declaration that the Convention circulated to its members. It is, however, no function of His Majesty's Administration in East Africa to promote specially any form of religious belief or civilisation. The threatening attitude of the European settlers towards the Indian colonists and sympathetic officials alike has filled Indians with alarm lest His Majesty's Government should mistake a clamorous and spurious agitation, based upon crude self-interest for a reasoned demand for changes in the Administration that will, if given effect to, completely alter its character, with calamitous consequences for the old-established Indian population. Indians recognise fully the fact that there are a number of officials of all ranks in the country who are anxious to administer it sympathetically and impartially. But they are not blind to the

hostile activities of the bulk of the European population, which includes a most violent element, and which threatens them whenever they show a disposition to fair-minded and just administration. Recent episodes of this character are well known, and it is strongly felt that His Majesty's Government ought to discourage severely the anti-Indian tendencies that are locally prevalent, and which are fraught with untold mischief to the Empire.

Having thus reduced to its true meaning and proportions the European opposition, the Indian Community desires to place the following views on record, in the knowledge that they have the support of the Indian people and the sympathy of the Government of India.

WHAT INDIANS WANT.

It is no longer possible for the people of India and the Indian settlers in British East Africa to tolerate or recognise anything in the nature of racial differentiation, whether as a matter of "administrative convenience" or by statutory enactment. If the European settlers could not content themselves with equality of treatment with their Indian fellow-subjects, they need not have come to or stayed in a country already widely populated by Indians, and in which Indians had preceded them by many generations; and had His Majesty's Government done their duty towards the Indian population, the disabilities to-day complained of would never have been imposed. The Imperial Government have never justified and cannot possibly justify to the people of India the anti-Indian policy that has been tacitly and officially adopted for the past thirteen years. The Indian communities in the neighbouring territories of Zanzibar, Uganda, and Tanganyika have watched with alarm the growth of anti-Indian feeling in the Protectorate, whose effects they are already beginning to feel. The policy of racial differentiation as regards ownership of land in townships has already been put into operation in Uganda, where it has hitherto been absent. Yet the Uganda Economic Commission, which has just reported, says of the Indian settler: "The country owes much to the Indian trader, and we consider a broad policy of toleration should be adopted towards him. He has shown energy and enterprise, and has assisted in the opening-up of the more remote districts. He is also of value as an agriculturist, and his activities in this direction might be well encouraged." That India is far from reconciled to the evil fate that has befallen her children in South Africa is evident from the anxiety with which the mission to the Union of Sir Benjamin Robertson, on behalf of the Government of India, is being watched. It would be disastrous, and it would be regarded as a breach of faith on the part of the British Government, if the history of the South African Indians were repeated in the East Africa Protectorate and the adjacent territories. India is proud of the results of the efforts of her colonists settled for centuries in

East Africa, and she cannot possibly look with equanimity upon a movement calculated to injure fatally a most important portion of her foreign trade. It is felt by all classes of the Indian people that, when the temperate parts of the Empire, controlled by self-governing European communities, are, for all practical purposes closed to Indian immigration, it would be inequitable and unpardonable if, as is now being attempted in the East Africa Protectorate, the same policy of exclusion were adopted. Therefore, Indians deem it essential, in the interests of all the elements of the mixed population of the country, that an absolutely open door, as regards immigration, should be maintained. Immigrants of both European and Indian origin should be equally welcome and given equal opportunities for the development of individual enterprise, and no special privileges should be given to any section of the population.

The political, as well as the municipal, franchise, which are at present confined to Europeans, should be equally conferred upon Indians. It is absurd to hold that Indians, who, in large numbers, in their own country, in British Guiana, Trinidad, Fiji, and even in the Cape Colony, have been enfranchised, should, when settled in East Africa, where the average is higher, be incapable of exercising the franchise. It is not even disguised that the European community have opposed an extension of the franchise to Indians because they wish, in a Colony that owes its very existence to Indian foresight, courage, and enterprise, to enjoy a monopoly of political power in the pretended interests of the Native inhabitants.

The people of India naturally look to His Majesty's Government to remove all racial checks, bars, and differentiations: such, for example, as the exclusion of Indians from the Executive Council; the practical municipal disfranchisement of Indians in Nairobi; the preferential grants of land to Europeans; the encouragement of settlement by European ex-soldiers without corresponding encouragement of settlement by Indian ex-soldiers; the sale of Crown lands by auction at which Indians are forbidden to bid, to the detriment of the finances of the Colony; the power granted to the Governor, under the Crown Lands Ordinance (1915), enabling him to veto (as he has invariably done in practice) the transfer of European-owned land to Indian purchasers; the policy of racial segregation in townships and extra-municipal areas; and the introduction of legislation, ostensibly of a general character, but capable of special administration for political purposes against Indians, by an Executive controlled by a hostile white minority.

The East African Indian community has placed its views on the various matters of complaint and disability upon record in a series of moderate and constructive resolutions passed unanimously at the recent session of the Eastern Africa Indian National Congress, to which reference is hereby made, in the earnest hope, that

in so far as they fall within the competence of His Majesty's Government, full relief will be granted. And here it may be added that the local Indian community is much alarmed at the prospect of ruin resulting from the adoption by the Colonial Office of a new policy of currency and exchange, without consultation with the East African Indians or reference to the India Office, and which it believes to have been adopted mainly in the interest of a small section of the European settlers. That this view is held by independent observers is evident from the opinion of the English President of Kisumu Chamber of Commerce, among others, and from the following message to *The Times* from its Mombasa correspondent:—

"*The Times*," March 12, 1920.

"MOMBASA, MARCH 6 (Delayed).

"Recent legislation respecting the rate of exchange enforced on instructions from the Colonial Office, by which the value of the rupee is fixed at 2s. 4d. now, 2s. 2d. as from July 1, and 2s. as from December 1, while in India the rate remains at about 2s. 8d., has resulted in a serious dislocation of the trade of the Protectorates of Zanzibar and Tanganyika (formerly German East Africa). In the first place, a considerable quantity of the trade and finance of the territories is geographically dependent upon India; secondly, the position is aggravated by the already serious shortage of silver; and, thirdly, the legislation is enforced during the harvesting of the Uganda cotton crop requiring about 150 lakhs (£1,750,000 at the exchange of 2s. 4d.) to purchase the 60,000 bales of native production. The impression locally is that in the introduction of the recent measures too great consideration was given to settlers' interests, to the direct exclusion of established commercial and industrial interests, and entailing restrictive consequences upon native production. The local conditions resulting from these factors warrant the assumption that there will be a breakdown of the country's trade, and that a financial crisis is imminent."

CONCLUSION.

India is to-day entering upon a new path, as a free Nation, on the road to Dominionhood within the British Empire. The susceptibilities of her people can no longer be ignored, as they have, in the matter of the welfare of her colonists, been only too often in the past. In South Africa, the existence of an independent Dominion Government has been held by the Imperial Government to excuse them for non-intervention on behalf of the unhappy and ill-used Indian population. The same considerations do not apply to East Africa, where the Imperial Government are solely responsible for policy and administration, a responsibility which they cannot share and have no right to delegate. As to the Tanganyika Territory, which will be governed under a mandate from the League of Nations, the British Government will be responsible to the international conscience of the world. But India, too, is an original member of the League of Nations, and is entitled to demand not only that all peoples alike should be treated equally in the mandated area, but that in the neighbouring British Territory equal treatment should be adopted, lest the evil results of the opposite policy react adversely upon the peoples on the other side of a vague and artificial

boundary. In the eyes of the Indian public, the sincerity of Great Britain's attitude towards India on Imperial questions will be tested to a great extent by the policy enforced in East Africa.

Indians look upon the British East Africa Protectorate, Uganda, Zanzibar, and Tanganyika as one territory which was for centuries settled and developed by Indians residing under the jurisdiction of Asiatic sovereigns, and who brought with them large amounts of capital whose investment in the country accounts for its present prosperity. Throughout this vast area there was no European settlement whatever until the mushroom growth of the last twenty years. If the Indian population were to leave East Africa to-morrow the entire territory would immediately fall into ruin and decay, and its Native population relapse into barbarism. It is believed in India that, when reminded of all the facts, the British people and the British Government will not allow judgment to go by default, but will respond generously to India's claim to the equal treatment of her colonists in East Africa, and the reversal of the present prevalent anti-Indian policy.

A LETTER FROM LONDON.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

LONDON, APRIL 22.

AN AFFRONT TO THE INDIANS.

ONE of the most outrageous pieces of carelessness and ignorance that I have ever observed in this country on the part of organizations pretending to a sense of responsibility, has just come to my notice. Mr. E. D. Morel, a prominent writer for the *Daily Herald*, and an authority on African peoples in the Congo region, besides being a well-known pacifist who suffered for his convictions during the war, has evidently a deep-seated sense of injury against France, for reasons that are somewhat obscure. A fortnight ago, he wrote some articles in the *Daily Herald*, in which he charged France with deliberately sending black African troops to Frankfort, in order to work their will upon the women of the occupied territory, as part of her policy of revenge and humiliation upon Germany. Anything more horrible it would be difficult to charge, in time of peace, against any civilised nation. There is no doubt that this episode, whether real or imagined, has been used for propaganda purposes very widely, for it would seem that there is to be a public meeting at the Central Hall Westminster, next Tuesday, advertised in the news columns of the *Herald* as follows:

The *Daily Herald* and the Women's International League are holding a protest meeting in the Central Hall, Westminster, on April 27th at which the following resolution will be moved:—

This meeting calls upon the League of Nations to prohibit the importation of Asiatic or African troops into Europe, for warlike purposes, and their use anywhere except for purposes of police in the country of their origin.

In urging this policy three considerations are of supreme importance:—

(1) The establishment of good relations between white coloured peoples in Asia and Africa.

(2) The prevention of the possibility of interference in European labour disputes by means of Asiatic or African troops.

(3) The security of European women from outrage by Asiatic or African troops.

Other societies co-operating in the meeting are: The Women's Co-operative Guild, the National Federation of Women Workers, the Federation of Women Teachers, the Association of Women Clerks and Secretaries, the Independent W. S. P. U., and the Standing Joint Committee on Women's Industrial Associations.

The Indians Overseas Association and the Britain and India Association immediately took exception to the injurious character of the proposed resolution, and the latter Association promptly addressed a letter of protest to the various bodies participating in the proposed meeting, calling their attention to the harmful nature of the proceedings, and urging suitable modification of the resolution, so that, at least so far as India was concerned, it should contain no cause of offence. The Britain and India Association objected to the resolution as advertised on the following grounds, which it embodied in a resolution of its own:—

"The League of Nations is called upon to prohibit the importation of Asiatic troops into Europe for warlike purposes, and their use anywhere except for purposes of police in their country of origin, without a corresponding demand for the prohibition of importation of European troops into Asia or Africa for similar purposes or their use anywhere except for police purposes in the country of their origin. The Britain and India Association objects to the demand upon the League of Nations, because *inter alia* (a) it is calculated to create the general impression that the degree of civilisation of Asiatic and African peoples is approximately the same and that in the case of Asiatic peoples it is lower than that of European peoples; (b) it is thereby calculated to frustrate the establishment of good relations between white and coloured populations in Asia and Africa; (c) to prevent the possibility of interference in European disputes by means of Asiatic or African troops without taking corresponding steps to prevent a possibility of similar interference by European troops in Asiatic or African disputes is calculated to give rise to feelings among Asiatic or African peoples of an intense racial character; (d) to desire to secure European women from outrage by Asiatic or African troops and to refrain from expressing a desire to secure Asiatic or African women from outrage by European troops is calculated, in the first place, to create the assumption that Asiatic troops, including the Indian troops, are prone to the commission of such offences, which is untrue, and, secondly, that, in the opinion of those responsibly connected with the meeting, the security of European women is of greater importance than that of their sisters in European or African countries. The Britain and India Association strongly and emphatically protests against resolutions of this character being pu,

forward for adoption by British audiences at a time when everything possible should be done to remove the suspicion in the mind of non-European peoples that strong racial and colour prejudice exists among the British people." To have passed such a resolution as that proposed by these organizations in sheer ignorance of its implications would have been an affront of an unforgivable character, especially when, as the Indians Overseas Association has pointed out, New Zealand troops have been used to intervene in an Indian labour dispute in Fiji. By the way, it would be interesting to know by what authority Dominion troops are removed from their territorial confines in time of peace, and used for such purposes in a Crown Colony whose jurisdiction is entirely under the Imperial Government and not of that Dominion at all. However, to return to our immediate subject, it is interesting and encouraging to know that, as a result of the representations that have been made, the promoters of the meeting in question, having reconsidered the matter, have decided to withdraw the objectionable resolution, and to substitute another of an innocuous character and with far narrower implications.

EAST AFRICAN INDIANS.

Last Monday, another matter of outstanding importance, from an Imperial point of view, came to a head. The East African Indian delegation, through the agency of the Indians Overseas Association, has been gathering a volume of support for the cause that it has been busily advocating, and after the two Departments of State had been for weeks bombarded by the Association with protests against various individual disabilities, Mr. Montagu and Lord Milner agreed to receive a deputation to make personal and constructive representations on the subject. The Association accordingly organized an influential deputation composed of the following gentlemen, who waited upon the Ministers, separately, on Monday afternoon:—Lord Islington, Mr. Charles Roberts, Sir J. D. Rees, Col. Wedgwood, Major Ormsby-Gore, Mr. T. J. Bennett, Sir Charles Armstrong, Sir Krishna Gupta, Sir Mancherji Bhowndagree, Mr. F. Sandbach-Baker, the East African pioneer, Mr. J. B. Pennington, Mr. H. E. A. Cotton, Mr. B. Dube, Mr. A. M. Jeevanjee, Mr. S. Thakors, Mr. S. Achariar (the last three from East Africa), and Mr. Polak. The deputation would have been even more imposing had not the following gentlemen, who wrote expressing support, been prevented, for various reasons, from joining it, namely, Lords Clewyd, Carmichael, and Lamington, Sir Wm. Meyer, Sir M. Visvesvaraya, Sir Frederick Fryer, Sir Charles McLeod, Rt. Hon. Ameer Ali, Mr. S. Digby, and Mr. G. Owen Dunn. I am precluded from giving any report of the proceedings at either reception, for as Lord Milner desired to treat the matter as one of privacy, Mr. Montagu, who had laid no such embargo upon the deputation, later felt obliged, for obvious reasons, to follow suit. I am in a position to say, however,

that the deputation to Mr. Montagu was led by Mr. Charles Roberts, and that the Secretary of State for India expressed himself in powerful language as being in whole-hearted sympathy with the objects of the deputation and promised his entire and energetic support, which, of course, was only what was to be expected of a Minister who regards himself as the ambassador charged with the interests and welfare of Indians wheresoever they may be, whether in the British Empire or outside it. I understand that he took occasion to offer a word of advice, which was intended to be of wider application than to the immediate circumstances, in pointing out that possibly the East African Indians had made a grave mistake in deciding to boycott the East Africa Protectorate Economic Commission. He was of opinion that it was far more statesmanlike to put one's best evidence before even the most unsatisfactory or prejudiced Commission, and leave the matter, under protest against the nature of the composition of the Commission and its proceedings, rather than let the case go by default. Incidentally, it is interesting in the extreme to note that the neighbouring Uganda Commission, which included two Indian representatives, has reported highly favourably to Indians, which leads a writer in the *East African Standard* to ask: "Is there a totally distinct genus of Indian in Uganda from the one known here and which alarmed our Economic Commission so thoroughly?" The Uganda Commission remarks: "The country owes much to the Indian trader and we consider that a broad policy of toleration should be adopted towards him. He has shown energy and enterprise and has assisted in the opening up of the more remote districts. He is also of value as an agriculturist, and his activities in this direction might well be encouraged." All of which supports the testimony sent back from that country by Mr. Andrews.

LORD ISLINGTON'S STRONG SUPPORT.

Lord Islington led the deputation when it went before Lord Milner, who received it with great courtesy and consideration, as was to be expected from a statesman of his broad experience and strong Imperial sentiment, to which, I understand, he several times, in the course of the proceedings, gave expression, as well as to his disapproval of the offending passages in the report of the East Africa Protectorate Economic Commission. As to the rest, it remains under careful and impartial consideration.

I have had the advantage of discussing the whole matter with Lord Islington, who holds strong views on the subject. He is of opinion that it is one in which there is an absence on the part of the Imperial Government of a clearly defined line of policy possessing continuity or consistency. He does not regard the position of Indians in East Africa as satisfactory from many points of view, or to contain any elements of permanency, and thinks that the increasing acuteness of the position constitutes a serious problem with-

in the Empire. The action that has hitherto been adopted by the Imperial Government has, he believes, justified the anxiety existing in the minds of Indians that it is based upon racial differentiation causing disability to the Indian settlers. From an administrative point of view, the adoption of administrative action, in this connexion, has invariably entailed a conflict between the two Departments of State directly affected. When the Colonial Office has set it in motion, the India Office is urged from India to remonstrate. This interdepartmental divergence on matters of high Imperial policy is not, in Lord Islington's opinion, calculated to produce Imperial harmony. It tends to give the impression—a disastrous one—that Indian interests abroad are regarded by at least one Department of the Imperial Government as subordinate to non-Indian interests. This relates in particular to East Africa, where, unlike the cognate case of South Africa, the Imperial Government are directly responsible, and, through the agency of the Colonial Office, exercise sole authority. He thinks that, now and onwards, it is of vital importance that the impression should not be created that there exists a differential policy by which the Indian community suffers in status and rights adversely to other communities by the direct action of the Imperial Government. The East African Indian population are especially entitled to sympathetic treatment, having regard to their prior colonisation and their long establishment in the territories concerned, besides the considerable character of their financial investments and their influence upon the industrial development of the country. Lord Islington quite appreciates that, having regard to the close economic relations between the two countries, India is very sensitive on the subject of the treatment and rights of her people settled there. She naturally looks upon the solution of this problem as in the nature of a test of the reality and sincerity of the recent constitutional developments in India, and Lord Islington points to the tremendous changes of her status within the Empire of recent years. A policy that would injure the growth of Indian industry, by ruining or restricting one of the oldest markets for Indian goods would undoubtedly render a grave disservice to the Empire. He is therefore driven to the conclusion that the solution of these problems can no longer safely be left to the sole discretion of a single Department of State. They appear to him to be beyond the scope and responsibility of any one Department, but are eminently fit for the fullest consideration of the Imperial Government as a whole. He therefore suggests that an independent and impartial inquiry should be held immediately, in which all interested parties should be adequately represented, so that a fair and just policy may be maintained and give reasonable satisfaction to all concerned, which, at the same time, would have the sanction and authority of the Imperial Government. There should, he thinks, be no delay either as to appoint-

ment or as to report, as delay merely serves to accentuate an already difficult position and render its solution more difficult. Matters of this urgency and importance should at once be removed from the region of interdepartmental conflict, for they are of the utmost concern to the Empire, and should be dealt with as being of vital Imperial importance.

I have no doubt that Lord Islington laid great emphasis upon these aspects of the problem, and I know that that old watch-dog, Sir Mancherji Bhownaggee, is in full accord with his suggestion, as regards something in the nature of a Royal Commission. He himself pressed a similar suggestion years ago upon Mr. Joseph Chamberlain in the case of South Africa. Sir Mancherji specially emphasises the unity of Indian sentiment on this and allied questions, and he tells me that he has taken care to represent to His Majesty's Government the keen interest felt in the activities of the Association by friends in India, including the Aga Khan, its Chairman. I am informed that Mr. Charles Roberts, Sir Mancherji, Mr. Bennett, Major Ormsby-Gore, and Col. Wedgwood contributed powerfully to the generally satisfactory results of these representations, and I shall be greatly disappointed if something substantial is not done to remove the sense of grievance from the minds of the local Indian community and the sense of injustice and humiliation from the minds of the people of India.

TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

THE demand of the Cape Indians as expressed in a petition presented to the Asiatic Commission is that the power to grant or refuse licenses should be vested in judicial officers who should be governed in their decisions by certain definite rules; that before a license is refused the objections on which the refusal is based should be stated before the Magistrate and an opportunity allowed to the applicant to meet the objections; and that the Magistrate should be required to state reasons for the refusal of the license and that there should be an appeal to the provincial or local divisions of the Supreme Court. The Indians want the rules to be similar to those under section 90 of the Transvaal Licensing Ordinance of 1912, except for the deletion of sub-section (e) which makes "the opinion of the Council that applicant is not a desirable person to hold such license" a valid reason for refusing a license. This sub-section opens the door to racial discrimination which it is the object of the Indians to prevent.

CRITICISING what has come to be called Nationalist Finance, the *Janmabhumi* says: Such a course is illogical and difficult to comprehend. It has only one merit, and that is that it, strangely enough, agrees with the settlement announced by Mr. Todhunter the other day to have been reached between Lord Willingdon's Government and Lord Chelmsford's. Some of the Nationalist leaders have the knack of thinking in unison with Lord Willingdon on the question of the president of the legislative council, provincial contributions to the central exchequer, or the Prince of Wales's visit. Their co-operation in these matters is ungrudging and unbounded.

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