

# THE Servant of India

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Office: KIBE WADA, BUDHWAR PETH, POONA CITY

VOL. IV, No. 4 ]

POONA—THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1921.

[ ANNUAL SUBSN. Rs. 6.

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## TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

THE writer of notes in this journal offers an apology to Mr. Gandhi for having carelessly used an expression which has been understood in a sense different from what he meant. When he spoke of Mr. Gandhi's action as 'amazing conduct even in a prophet,' he did not mean to imply that Mr. Gandhi looked upon himself as a prophet. The *writer* looked upon him as a prophet and therefore as entitled to be judged by a different standard from other men, but even so it was amazing conduct. He never meant any 'unkind cut' and is very sorry for his carelessness. Mr. Gandhi claims to be walking in a mine with the knowledge of an expert and a safety lamp in hand but admits the possibility of an explosion. Those who differ from him have no confidence in his safety lamp and are staggered to think of the ruin which the explosion may cause. Hence their amazement at his walking boldly in the mine.

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WE do not think Mr. Gandhi should expect the spinning wheel to be treated as too serious or too sacred for a jest. It is not that it is always treated lightly, but once in the way we think it may be. Mr. Gandhi himself has quite a strong sense of humour and could refer only the other day to the resolutions passed by the Congress during the last thirty-five years as 'long yarns' The Congress to most people is much more serious than the spinning wheel. Humour as caricature or satire has a legitimate place in decent journalism. It is not necessarily rudeness. It serves the very good purpose of restoring the sense of proportion in the face of exaggerated advocacy. What is out of court is malice and we claim we have no malice against the

spinning wheel. In fact we expected Mr. Gandhi to join in the laugh, not feel annoyed. He reiterates with warmth all the alleged properties of the wheel. As we do not see much use in trying to argue, we are quite ready to derive patriotic comfort in the idea that before the East India Company destroyed our spinning wheels, poverty, vice, famine and all other familiar ills were unknown in the history of India.

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THE Madras Legislative Council deserves to be congratulated on the precedent it has set in adjourning for the consideration of a definite matter of urgent importance, namely, the arrest of Mr. Yakub Hassan and three other Khilafat workers at Calicut. It is however a matter for regret that no resolution was validly put before the Council and that the motion was merely talked out at the end of the allotted time. Though the leader of the ministerial party, Sir P. Theagaraya Chetty, strongly defended the action of the District Magistrate it is more than probable that had it been put to vote the Magistrate's action would have been condemned. As was pointed out by the mover and others, there was not sufficient justification for the District Magistrate to prohibit the meeting that was intended to be held at Calicut where there was no lack of facilities for enforcing peace and order. This was certainly different from prohibiting Khilafat agitation in the Moplah area for which no strong objection was taken by the public. At the same time it must be admitted that Mr. Yakub Hassan disregarded the instructions of the Non-co-operation Committee when he elected to practise civil disobedience and took a very risky step in beginning it in the land of the Moplahs. One feels thankful that worse consequences have not followed. It is however a matter for great regret that, while the age of autocracy is announced to have ended and the worst of repressive laws are expected to be repealed, acts of repression should be getting more frequent.

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THE announcement of the Bengal Ministers that while they will draw the full salary of Rs. 64,000 per year to which they are entitled, they will keep for themselves only Rs. 48,000 and spend the rest on charity, was by no means happy. The Legislative Council is not very much concerned with how salaries are spent after they are drawn. If the Ministers disapproved of a smaller salary being fixed for them than for members of the Executive Council, they could have announced that they

was disallowed. Now the resolution was not only admitted, but accepted. No Indian will feel that adequate reparation has been made for official atrocities, but every competent observer will admit that Government expressed unqualified regret for such excesses and dissociated themselves from them in emphatic terms. Government's pronouncement in regard to the Esher Committee's report was quite satisfactory. They repudiated the notion to which at any rate some expressions used in the report gave rise that, if its recommendations were carried out, the Indian army would be placed under the control of the War Office, and accepted a resolution declaring that the army should be entirely under the control, real as well as nominal, of the Government of India, free from any interference from the War Office. The Government have already made an announcement on the Khilafat question which ought to satisfy the public that they are themselves losing no opportunity to keep British statesmen in intimate touch with Moslem sentiments in the matter. Not only on these big questions, but even in small matters, a change in Government's attitude is visible which is in keeping with the spirit of reforms.

### THE ESHER COMMITTEE'S REPORT—III.\*

Part IV deals with the subject of closer relations between the British and Indian armies.

The principles on which the recommendations under this head are based are to be found in the following remark in the opening letter of the Report:—

"We cannot consider the administration of the army in India otherwise than as part of the total armed forces of the empire, yet we have no indication of the form of organisation which may be set up for the control of the other part of the forces or of the whole."

It is therefore evident that this assumption on the Committee's part is not only gratuitous but unwarranted.

Again in para 8, section II of Part IV, we find the remark:—

"It (the Indian army) must rather be treated as a part of an imperial army ready to serve in any part of the world. It follows that the organisation of its auxiliary services should, if confusion is to be avoided, conform closely to that of the rest of the forces of the empire."

These conceptions are erroneous. If India is to have a Dominion status and an independent existence, it follows that her armed forces cannot be treated as a part and parcel of imperial armies. Like other dominions, self-governing India would be mistress of her own house; she would insist upon having full and undivided control over her armed forces; she will determine herself their strength, organisation and administration. Like the other dominions, out of her own free will and choice and with the consent of her people, she will be willing to take a hand in the imperial quarrels as she did in the last war. The Committee consider that the services in India should generally speaking consist of:—

"(a) British personnel maintained by the War Office and sent out to India for tours of duty.

b) Indian personnel enlisted in India for service with the Indian formations and employed to replace British personnel as far as is compatible with efficiency."

Further, that the British officers will keep going backward and forward, serving in England and India, till they retire from service on higher rates of pension from the Indian revenue.

Stripped of its camouflage this means in plain language, that the higher ranks in the military service of the country will be entirely and solely recruited from England and that under the convenient pretext of efficiency the Indians will be excluded as heretofore from the commissioned ranks of the army.

In the case of the medical services, the Committee swallow the bitter pill of inclusion of Indians as a *fait accompli*.

With regard to the Royal Army Veterinary Corps, the Committee make the following generous recommendation:—

"We consider that the question of the admission of Indians duly qualified to commissions in the veterinary service in India should not be overlooked. It is understood that the charter of the Royal Veterinary Corps like that of the Royal Army Medical Corps provides that only persons of pure European descent can hold officer's commissions in the corps. We recommend that the question of removing this restriction be considered, and that Indians who obtain the necessary qualifications by passing successfully through the Royal Veterinary College of Surgeons should be allowed to compete on equal terms for admission to the Royal Veterinary Corps. It should be desirable in this case to arrange that Indians thus admitted should be ear-marked for continuous service in India."

It is surprising and a matter for disappointment that the Committee did not make recommendations on similar lines with regard to other branches of the army such as the Artillery, Royal Engineers, Ordnance, Supply and Transport Corps, &c. especially in view of the valuable services rendered by India during the last war, and the capacity of command and military talent shown by Indians wherever they had been given a chance, and lastly in view of the mighty changes which have taken place in the outlook of things in general in the world at large including India.

In vain did our distinguished countryman, Sir Krishna Gupta, raise his feeble voice to plead the cause of Indians. In vain did he point out that "During the last half century, measures have been taken to extend the Indian element in the higher branches of the civil administration and in later years to introduce the principle of representation in the legislative councils, which culminated in the statute of last year. On the military side, however, the tendency has been to make the grip closer and tighter, so as to not only keep the Indians out of all superior positions but also practically to exclude them from the artillery and various other services which form the essential branches of army organisation."

In vain did he appeal to the declaration of policy of August 1917 and ask that the angle of vision

\*Previous articles in this series appeared in the issues of Feb. 10 and 17.

in regard to army administration in India be changed and that they should be prepared to share the control of the army with the people of the country.

They say that John Bull is a shop-keeper. He remains a shop-keeper whether in England or outside. Like the brethren of that profession he can do no business without haggling whether in Ireland, Egypt, or India. His empire is a fabric of chance; he has no imperial instincts of generosity or even of justice where his own material interests are concerned; he is mean and niggardly and will not part with anything with good grace. He loathes change of any kind and prefers to live his placid phlegmatic life in a world of his own, till he is rudely awakened by some catastrophe to the reality of things.

The Committee, true to their traits of John Bullish character, refuse to believe that the world has changed. They sadly deceive themselves if they imagine that the India of to-day is the India of John Company's days.

They allow admission of Indians in the medical services, but they ignore their right in the case of combatant arms. Is it because they imagine that the medical services are harmless in which the Indian can't do much damage, but in the case of other branches of army service they distrust the presence of Indians? Are they afraid that after learning the use of arms, the Indian would turn round and try to expel the British Government out of India? Or do they imagine that a dole of nine King's commissions in the Indian army is sufficient to satisfy the rising ambition of young India or to officer the national army which India aspires to control? It is evident that if this remains the corner stone of British policy in India, then the Reforms are a fraud and so much scrap of paper.

We have noted before that the Committee had started on their arduous task on misconceived lines. They had deliberately set their face against the Reform Scheme. And as such their recommendations cannot be worthy of acceptance.

The Government of India know it to their cost that it is their own policy of domination and race supremacy, which is responsible for the political upheaval which they have to face in the country. No sane man, much less a Government which holds itself responsible for the ordered progress of the country and for the safety of the millions of its people, can be blind to the disastrous consequences of such a policy if persisted in. Distrust begets distrust. If the Government do not trust the people, the Indians cannot have much faith in the genuineness of Reforms. It therefore behoves the Government to take their courage in both hands and with the initiation of reforms to liberalise their military policy by freely admitting Indians in the higher ranks of all branches of the army without reserve, as they have done in the case of the civil administration.

Part V recounts the grievances of British officers of the Indian army and recommends that

the Government should make the following provisions:—

(a) House accommodation by building, buying or hiring bungalows in the cantonments; the bungalows should be furnished, and fitted up with fans and electric lights; a reasonable charge to be made for the outlay.

(b) Tents for use on active service and manoeuvres.

(c) One soldier servant for each officer.

(d) Travelling and detention allowances to be made more liberal.

(e) Free passages home for officer and his family once at the end of his service.

(f) The authorised number of chargers, with one Indian groom, free forage, saddlery and horse kit. No reduction in pay to be made in consideration of these concessions.

(g) Officers should have the right to purchase from Government rations, fuel, oil and other stores, stocked by Government departments for themselves and families, these articles being sold by Government at much lower rates than the market prices.

(h) "Another matter which has been brought prominently to our notice, relates to the insufficiency of European medical officers. We find considerable anxiety is felt by married officers of the Indian army and their wives in regard to medical attendance in the future. It is recognised by these officers, that the Indian Medical Service is being recruited more and more from Indians and that in consequence, there is an increasing probability of their wives and daughters being stationed in places where European medical aid is not procurable without much delay and great expense. We strongly urge that hospital accommodation for the wives and families of British officers should be provided in places where European doctors are available either in station hospitals for British troops or in civil hospitals."

(i) That the limit of time of transfer to half-pay list on account of wounds received or illness contracted on active service should be abolished.

(j) The rate of interest on the family pension funds should be increased and a balance sheet should be published, and that the accounts of the fund should be open to examination by a committee of the subscribers to the fund.

From the long list of concessions proposed by the Committee, it is obvious that the British officer in the army will have everything found for him by the Government in future and that he will have his pay to pay for his messing and club bills.

(k) The pay of a British officer serving in India is made up of the following elements:—

(1) Pay of rank; and

(2) Excess over rates of British pay.

This moiety represents a permanent consolidated allowance to cover expenses of the upkeep of the authorised number of chargers, tentage &c. and to compensate for the loss of certain concessions, which the officer gets when serving in England such as fuel, rooms and servant.

The amount of this element in the officer's pay is not uniform; but varies with his rank, being £190 for a second lieutenant rising to £736 for a lieutenant-colonel.

The following is the scale of Indian Staff Pay :

Rs. 100	for a Subaltern.
„ 150	„ Quarter-Master.
„ 200	for an Adjutant.
„ 200	for a Company commander.
„ 250	„ Second in command.
„ 600	„ Commandant of regiment.

Officers in cavalry regiments receive Rs. 50 more than infantry regiments as they have to keep more chargers.

The British officers serving with the British regiments in India receive pay which is made up of items 1 and 2, while the officers serving with Indian regiments receive pay made up of items 1, 2 and 3.

The Committee recommend that in the case of European British officers the item (2) should be retained as it exists at present, and that the expenses to defray which this moiety in their pay was intended, should also be met by the Government.

The Committee state that this item (2) in the officer's salary is equivalent to between £190 and £736, according to the officer's rank. It is, therefore, evident that the Committee, by this proposal, recommend the increase of each officer's salary to that extent. The reason for this generosity is not however apparent, except perhaps that the Committee are giving away money from other people's pocket. The case of Indians holding King's commissions is treated by the Committee in another way.

The Committee observe that "the Secretary of State has laid down the principle, that the pay of European officers of the civil departments should include an item to be called "overseas or expatriation allowance" which will be drawn by Europeans only whilst serving in India and by Indians only when serving outside India."

The Committee, who repudiate the Indian Reforms and believe only in rule by domination and race supremacy, find in this too good an opportunity to lose. In the next paragraph they proceed :

"It appears impossible to resist the view, that a similar principle should be applied in the case of the Indian Army, that is to say that Indian officers with King's commissions should receive rather less emoluments in India than the British officers. At the same time, it is undirable to make any great reduction in the emoluments of Indian officers, in view of the fact that they will have to live in the same style as the British officers, pay the same subscription and conform generally to the same standard in respect of entertaining sports, games, social obligations &c. To this extent their standard of obligatory expenditure is perhaps more definitely fixed than is the case with Indian officers of other services, such as the Indian Civil Service and the Police, who can regulate their style of living within certain limits, to suit their own tastes and pockets."

"For these reasons we recommend that the overseas allowance of the British officers of the Indian Army which will not be drawn by Indian officers with King's commissions should bear a lower rate than in the case of either the I. C. S. or the Police service."

The Committee are so obsessed with the idea of

race distinction that they don't seem to appreciate the weight of their own argument when it tells against their side of the case. If the King's commission imposes upon its fortunate recipient the obligation of a certain standard of living, of social entertainment, of games and sports, it also carries with it the privileges of pay and emoluments for the adequate discharge of those obligations. Are we to understand that the Committee honestly believe that an Indian can live in style in less, can entertain in less and can indulge in sports and games in less than a European officer, without being regarded in service circles as an outcaste?

AN ARMY OFFICER.

( To be continued. )

### BUDGET IN THE ASSEMBLY.

IT is too late in the day to tell that the phrase 'public budget' implies a constitutional right on the part of the people of placing a limit to public income and of exercising control over public expenditure. Budgets assume importance in proportion as the people or their representatives consciously aim at controlling public policies. The treasury is the heart of the State and money the vital principle of the body politic. He who controls the finances of the State controls the nation's policy. Constitutionalism is the idea, and budgets are the means by which that idea is realised.

The object of this article is to examine how far the Indian budgetary rules will help the representatives of the people to realize the ideal of popular government. The most important points to be borne in mind with regard to a budget are (1) its preparation, (2) the organisation of the legislature for its study, and (3) its voting.

In India, as everywhere, the estimates will be prepared by the Executive. They should reflect the administrative divisions or departments into which the Government is divided. These divisions may be further divided into appropriate chapters, which in their turn should reflect the organisation within the departments themselves. The Indian Budget following the same form will, as mentioned in Rule No. 44, ordinarily make a separate demand in respect of the grant proposed for each department. But the same rule gives power to the Finance Member to lump together two or more departments in the same demand or to make a demand in respect of expenditure which cannot readily be classified under particular departments. How this proviso is likely to operate it is just now too early to say anything upon. If the budget is clear, simple and easily understood and if the same form is preserved from year to year, there will be little ground for complaint.

When we go to the Rules to find out if there is any provision made for an organisation of the legislature for the study of the budget, we find that they are absolutely silent. The only provision made in Rule No. 45 which says that the Budget shall be dealt with by the Assembly in two stages namely, (1) a general discussion and (2) the voting of demands.

The President of the Assembly announced on the 15th instant that the Financial Statement would be presented to the Assembly on the 1st proximo, that there would be a general discussion on the Budget as a whole or any principle involved therein on the 7th and 8th of March and that the voting of demands for grants would be held on the 10th, 11th, 14th, 15th and 16th of that month. This shows how the Budget will be rushed through and no time will be allowed for its proper study.

In all countries some organisation under some form of the committee system is provided for the study of the budget. In England the committees in question are the House organised as committees of the whole. In France provision is made for committees of investigation by the rules of the Chambers. In the United States standing committees have come to be a recognised part of the parliamentary machinery. The three requirements of a good organisation for the study of the budget are a study of the budget by a small body of men, by a body of men who are experienced in political affairs and by men who represent fairly well parties, factions, sections and interests. It is really interesting to know how the organisation in England works so well. It is the whole House of Commons that goes into the Committee of Supply or of Ways and Means. In theory every member of the House has a right to be present at a meeting of either Committee, but as a matter of fact it is only the leaders that commonly attend. This means that in England the study of the budget is committed to a set of men who are brought together by a process of natural selection and who are fit and competent to deal with the intricate subject of fiscal policy. If the Assembly is to have the right of voting on the estimates of expenditure of the Government of India, they must also be provided with an organization for its study.

It may be argued that the study of the budget by a committee will mean delay and the Assembly will not be able to pass the budget before the 1st of April. It is not difficult to give a reply to this argument. We have the illustrious example of England before our eyes which should help us out of the difficulty. There the Parliamentary session begins in January or February; we know this year it began with great pomp on the 15th February, and the Appropriation Bill does not get passed until towards the end of the session in August. How is the Government then kept going? They have a device of the Consolidated Fund Act which keeps the executive provided with enough funds for the intervening period. There even this Consolidated Fund Bill has to go through both the Committees of Supply and Ways and Means and has to be passed in a desperate hurry before the financial year runs out. But the so-called desperate hurry of the Consolidated Fund Bill is nothing before the hurry with which the Indian Budget is to be passed. Here everything from start to finish, from the presentation of the Budget to the voting of the last demand, everything must be finished within sixteen days. One is unable to understand why the budget is being rushed

through like this. If the representatives of the people are to vote on it, they must be given ample opportunity to study it. So this year which is the first year after the introduction of the Reforms, the members of the Assembly should move immediately after the presentation of the Financial Statement that the Chamber should resolve itself into a Committee of Supply for the study of the estimates of expenditure, as these alone are to be voted. Voting need not begin on the 10th. It may wait till the 20th and go up to the 26th. Under the rules the Governor-General can appoint days for general discussion; but for the discussion of the demands it is not for him to specify days; he has only to allot a certain number of days for the purpose. It will not be an infringement if the President shifts the date on which the discussion of the demands is to begin.

Responsibility is not introduced into the central administration and therefore power is reserved to the Governor-General-in-Council of treating as sanctioned any expenditure which has been either refused or reduced by the Assembly. It is therefore the duty of the representatives of the people to act as keen watch dogs of economy, to guard the people's purse against undue exactions and against waste.

On the analogy of Consolidated Fund Services, certain heads of expenditure are not to be submitted to the vote of the Assembly. We have no means of knowing what expenditures are to be classified as defence or political. The Hon'ble Mr. Hailey has assured us that the powers of the Assembly to criticise and discuss the military expenditure are by no means limited. We hope that army estimates will not be classified either as defence or political. Similarly no tax is to be submitted to the Assembly for its annual sanction. In England income-tax and tea duty are the only taxes that are annually authorised by the House of Commons. One big direct and one big indirect tax are thus kept within the immediate control of the representatives of the people. The Government of India could have followed this principle without any fear of being upset in their arrangements.

It appears the budget will be merely presented to the Council of State. There will be neither discussion nor voting. What is the use of mere presentation?

C. S. DECLE.

#### THE CHAMBER OF PRINCES.

THE inauguration of the Chamber of Princes took place at Delhi at the hands of His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught on the 8th inst. The ceremony was fascinating and picturesque from a spectacular point of view. The Royal proclamation which heralded this opening sounded a true note when it expressed the confident hope that the institution would be fruitful of lasting good both to the Princes and their subjects. But it studiously abstained from referring to the means by which this hope was to be realised. The proclamation stated that the Chamber would afford opportunities to the

Princes for comparing experiences, interchanging ideas and framing mature and balanced conclusions on matters of common interest. Unless the Princes follow the same policy which is being pursued in British India, how can they ensure that spirit of co-operation which alone will strengthen the bonds of union for the common good? The proclamation assured the Princes the inviolate and inviolable character of the pledges given to them. It affirmed the determination of His Majesty to maintain unimpaired the privileges, rights and dignities of the Princes of India. It is a matter of intense regret that the proclamation did not remind the Indian Princes of their obligations to maintain good government in their States. The British Government has guaranteed the maintenance and succession of the Princes to the Gadis of their States on the distinct understanding that they conform to the requirements of good government. The term "good government" is wide enough to include all forms of enlightened rule and even self-government. In this proclamation His Majesty's Government ought to have given as much prominence to the obligations of the Princes to the Imperial Power as they have done to the obligation of the latter to the former. Duties and obligations are as much imposed by the treaties as privileges are conferred. The speech delivered by His Excellency the Viceroy in requesting His Royal Highness the Duke to open the Chamber was very disappointing. The Viceroy has more than once frankly advised the Indian Princes to move along with the progress of the times and to be alive to their responsibilities towards their own subjects. But on this memorable occasion when he should have advised the Princes to follow in the foot-steps of the British Government and to introduce responsible government in their States, he observed a reticence which was thoroughly discouraging. As the highest representative of His Majesty in this country it was the bounden duty of the Viceroy to have conveyed this pressing message to the Indian Princes. His statement that the great ideal was of an India governing itself through its Princes and elected representatives and owing allegiance to a common head is equally open to exception. No body desires the continuance of personal rule in Indian States. The people of the States do not cherish the ideal of autocratic rules. What every one ardently wishes is the co-operation of Indian Princes with the constitutional Government of the democracy in British India. His Excellency should have emphasized the need for introducing the forms of constitutional Government in the States. The speech of His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught was statesmanlike and worthy of the occasion. He stated that the sanctity of the treaties was a cardinal article of imperial policy and eulogised in eloquent terms the splendid services rendered by the Indian States during the dark days of 1918 when the fate of civilization seemed to hang in the balance. His remark that 'this help can only be forgotten with the Empire itself' will be treasured for ever by every patriotic Indian. We only wish that H. R. H. had

associated the subjects of Indian States with their Rulers in this due meed of praise, because, as is too well-known, this help has substantially come out of the pockets of these poor people. Not a single Prince has paid anything out of his private resources towards these contributions. It is therefore in the fitness of things that those who have borne the brunt of the burden ought to have been remembered prominently along with those who were only the medium of conveying this help to the paramount power. H. R. H. the Duke earnestly reminded the Princes and we only hope that this advice will be borne by them as a keep-sake of this momentous occasion. "Increased opportunities, as I need not remind Your Highnesses, bring in their train responsibility. I know well that Your Highnesses will appreciate the trust reposed in you by His Imperial Majesty and his Government and will worthily respond both as pillars of the Empire and as Rulers, striving ever for the greater happiness and prosperity of your own subjects."

It is really a strange irony of fate that H. R. H. the Duke was called upon to perform within the interval of a day two functions of a diametrically opposite character. In the Chamber of Princes the formula of 'the preservation of rights, dignities, privileges and *izzat* of the Indian Princes' was repeated *ad nauseam*, while in the legislatures inaugurated on the next day it was loudly proclaimed that the principle of autocracy had been entirely abandoned, that its retention would have been incompatible with that contentment which has been declared by the late Queen Victoria to be the aim of British rule, and that it would have been inconsistent with the legitimate demands and aspirations of the Indian people and the stage of political development which they had attained. Are not these noble sentiments, so vividly expressed by the veteran Duke on the occasion of opening the Councils equally applicable to the Indian States? Why should British statesmen shrink from courageously giving expression to them when the occasion legitimately demanded it? There seems to us some peculiar propriety in selecting the courtyard of the Dewan-i-Am for this glorification of autocratic rule. The massive building, once the seat of the Moghul Empire and resplendant with gorgeous wealth and colour which oriental imagination would display presented a hoary and deserted appearance on this occasion. It was not even cleaned of its dust nor was any attempt made to remove its sombre look by dressing it with ordinary carpets or decorating it with buntings which were lavishly scattered all round. If this desolate hall had been gifted with a tongue, it would have very eloquently unfolded the mournful tale of despotic rule. It, however, told in a subdued voice the fate which autocracy always meets with in this world. Its very existence as a relic of a bygone empire must have conveyed to the glittering audience assembled in its front the transitory character of imperious pride and vainglorious pomp. While on the other hand the new foundations of the Council Chambers were laid quite outside the

dilapidated city for starting the future Indian Parliament on its career, which would attract the elected representatives of the people from every part of India to shape the destinies of this country. The Chamber is a mere museum of antiquity. The Councils are alive with new vigour and are pulsating with new consciousness. One is past history; the other has the making of new history. We only hope that the Indian Princes who had assembled there bear in mind would this contrast and compare their own aspirations with those of the Government and the chosen leaders of the people and would try to imbibe the right lesson from their environments and from the new order of things and the world forces which are marching very rapidly and covering all the ground.

We, however, sincerely regret that very few Indian Princes realised the duties and responsibilities imposed on them. The resolution of thanks moved on behalf of the Indian Princes to the Royal Duke and the speeches of eminent rulers who supported this, did not at all disclose that breadth of vision which ought to have characterised them. The reiteration of fidelity and loyalty to the British Throne has lost all its novelty and charm at this hour of the day. Every citizen of this vast Empire is fully alive to his sense of duty in this respect. It is enlightened self-interest that makes us all genuinely loyal to the British Throne. The Government does not expect these platitudes to be repeated on every conceivable occasion. If instead the Princes had enthusiastically responded to H. R. H. and assured him of their determination to unflinchingly follow the same policy on which the British Government has entered and accepted the same ideal which has been laid down by His Majesty's Government in August 1917 and which has been only partly carried out at this moment, it would have given unqualified satisfaction to the Duke for all the troubles he undertook in coming over to this country at this time of his life to inaugurate this Chamber. Such an assurance would have also immensely pleased His Gracious Majesty the King-Emperor for that uniformity of policy which the Viceroy so vigorously advocated and which alone will strengthen the bond of union and maintain the solidarity of this Empire. As pillars of this Empire nothing short of an honest and sincere effort to immediately introduce responsible Government in their States is expected of the Indian Princes. It was therefore a matter of some relief to find that at least one belonging to this distinguished order, His Highness the Maharaja of Patiala, is conscious of his duty in this respect. His Highness the Maharaja observed: "The Princes of India realised fully that as rulers of men they cannot remain unaffected by what may well be called world movements and they must be prepared to tackle the new situation with the principal object of making their present interest identical with that of their people." We fervently hope that the Indian Princes will bear out the Maharaja in their administration and thus

try to establish constitutional government in their own States.

G. R. ABHYANKAR.

### THE MADRAS COUNCIL.

CONSTITUTIONAL writers have laid great emphasis on the need of two well-organised political parties as a necessary condition for the success of responsible government in any country. Responsible government having been declared to be our goal and the same having been established, if only partially, in the provinces, the coming into being of two such parties in the several provinces of India ought to rejoice the hearts of all genuine well-wishers of that system of Government. Of the local legislatures that have been in session during the last few days, that of Madras seems to be the only one where some sort of party system is visible. There would be cause for joy in this, if only one could be sure that this crystallisation of parties was proceeding on right lines. But what will cause the keenest regret in all patriotic hearts is that the formation of parties there is based not so much on sound principles as on communal considerations. On their account, one is sorry to observe, that two such resolutions as the one asking for elected presidents for district boards and another for the separation of judicial from executive functions were rejected. It is only in proportion as the non-Brahmin party proves its capacity to place the interests of the country above everything else that it could be said to establish its fitness to govern. The practice of 'finding of places for political aspirants' which Dewan Bahadur M. Ramchandra Row rightly deprecated is another evil of the party system in Madras. Attempts are being made in other countries to keep it within proper bounds, if not altogether to stop it. The non-Brahmins, who are in the ascendant to-day and who, on account of their numerical strength in and outside the Council, are bound to be a factor of no mean importance in the management of public affairs in the southern presidency, should guard themselves against this grave temptation. Nor should they allow their anti-Brahmin prejudices to prevent their considering on their own merits schemes of administrative and other reforms suggested by Brahmins.

The Madras Government was the first to avail themselves of the provisions of the Reforms Act to appoint Council Secretaries to help ministers in their work. When the question came before the Council in the form of a motion to vote their salaries, the necessity and propriety of the appointments were questioned on, among others, economical grounds. While all reasonable retrenchment in public expenditure is to be aimed at, it would be false economy to refuse the necessary facilities to ministers merely on that ground, when there is the additional advantage of so many more men familiarising themselves with the details of administration. Moreover, a salary of Rs.500 is not at all exorbitant in view of the work which the Secretary is expected to put in. The attempt to raise the salary

of the Deputy President from Rs.5,000 a year to Rs.12,000 was rightly defeated, as his work is comparatively light. It may be mentioned here that Bengal and the U. P. have also fixed Rs. 5,000 for their Deputy Presidents; while in Bihar the post is to carry only Rs. 3,000. The Council would have liked to apply the scissors even to the President's salary, but for the fact that the salary of the first President is to be, under the Act, outside the Council's jurisdiction.

The Council discussed a number of other resolutions; but two or three stand out prominently. Mr. Shiva Rao asked for the postponement of resettlements till the principles of land revenue assessment were embodied in legislation in accordance with the recommendation of the Joint Select Committee. The resolution was carried in spite of the opposition of Government. The Government took its stand on the fact that the resolution, if carried, would result in a reduction of land revenue collections at a time when more money was wanted to carry out long-expected schemes of reform and when the excise revenue was going to suffer as a consequence of non-co-operation activities. At the instance of Mr. K. S. Venkatarama Iyer, a committee was appointed to submit a scheme of revision of salaries of non-gazetted and village officers and to suggest ways and means to meet the extra expenditure it might involve, which, according to the Hon. Mr. Todhunter, would be Rs. 4½ crores. This is perhaps the first time that the responsibility of making proposals as to the financing of a scheme has been thrown on non-officials. The motion to discontinue the annual exodus of Government to Ootacamund elicited an assurance from the Government that the Governor alone would take up residence on the hills and call Executive Councillors and Ministers for cabinet meetings. We are sure this will not be regarded as a perfectly satisfactory arrangement.

D. V. A.

#### OUR DELHI LETTER.

DELHI, FEBRUARY, 19.

MR. SASTRI'S speech on the repressive laws resolution, if you will let me say it in your paper, was brilliant. His plea for individual liberty was thrilling. The central point of the resolution was well expressed by the *Pioneer* (and it is a remarkable admission from an Anglo-Indian newspaper of such a peculiarly virulent type): "Certainly in the changed conditions created by the reforms, it will be impossible for Government to pass or to continue permanently in operation any legislation of a special character without the consent of the legislature." The committee to be appointed will consist as to two-thirds of their number of non-officials, and if the personnel is well selected (Mr. Sastri emphasised this point in his reply). The Hon'ble Mr. Khaparde's amendment advocating immediate repeal of the worst repressive laws, though summarily dismissed, certainly deserved a better fate. Hon. Members acted as if it was very sin to clear the statute book of the accumulated cumber of repressive laws. As to some of them at any rate, was there any doubt that they were unnecessary for good government and they made good government impossible? The procedure recommended in Mr. Khaparde's amendment, viz. that of total repeal of certain specified laws, would indeed have been better than the committee procedure recommended in Mr. Sastri's resolution, if it were acceptable to the Council. But in the present composition of the upper chamber, it was

certainly unwise to advocate a radical measure and draw down upon the mover the opposition of his colleagues, thus spoiling the whole affair. Mr. Khaparde did not take the measure of the Council, but, considered inherently on its own merits, his proposal had much to recommend it. Mr. Sastri recognised this and in his speech expressed himself in full sympathy with the object of the amendment, but he said that on a balance of advantages and disadvantages it seemed preferable to him to have a committee. The main consideration which weighed with him when he made the remark was the political complexion of many of the 'popular' representatives returned to the Council of State. In the matter of recommending laws for immediate repeal, Mr. Sastri adhered closely to the resolution of the Liberal Federation, but the mention of a few as requiring, in the judgment of the Liberals, immediate repeal, must not be construed as forbidding a similar drastic treatment of the remaining. High hopes have been raised by the acceptance of this resolution by Government, and it is believed that, as a result of the committee's inquiry, many of the fetters on personal liberty will be removed and the remaining considerably loosened, in the immediate future.

#### MR. SAMARTH'S RESOLUTION.

Mr. Samarth's resolution on military expenditure came up for discussion in the Assembly on the 17th inst. Seeing that the Assembly has little or no power over the military budget, Mr. Samarth sought to repair this grave defect by securing for the local Governments a collective voice in determining India's military expenditure. He put his case very briefly. He pointed out the serious limitations which the Government of India Act put upon the Assembly's constitutional power and pleaded that if the Assembly was not to be given a voice, the local Governments at any rate might be given—not a determining voice, but the power of tendering advice. This would be some sort of check, though by no means satisfactory; and the Afghan war in the sixties had shown what financial scandals were possible when no outside check whatever was exercised over the military budget. The Finance Member scouted this proposal as being both unnecessary and ineffectual. His main argument was that the Assembly itself had far greater powers of control, which, if only it exercised them, would render any external assistance entirely unnecessary. It could discuss and vote the military budget and, through taxation bills which would come up to it for consideration, it could control indirectly all military expenditure. It was only a distrust of the powers conferred upon the Assembly by the Act which had occasioned such a resolution. The clue was taken up by non-official members, and several rose one after another to condemn the resolution in the strongest possible terms. In his reply Mr. Samarth reiterated the limitations embodied in the Government of India Act itself which the Assembly could not transcend. Sec. 25 (3) of the Act says: "The proposals of the Governor-General-in-Council for the appropriation of revenue or moneys relating to the following heads of expenditure shall not be submitted to the vote of the Legislative Assembly, nor shall they be open to discussion by either chamber at the time when the annual statement is under consideration, unless the Governor-General otherwise directs." And among the items which follow the last expenditure on defence, the Act confers no power of either voting or discussing the military budget which is taken out of its purview by this section; if the Assembly at all votes or discusses the budget it will be by grace of the Governor-General. Again, the provision in regard to taxation bills, like all other bills, is that the Governor-General has the power to give legislative effect to all such bills even if either chamber or both the chambers refuse to pass them in the form acceptable to him. Mr. Samarth was perfectly right in his exposition of the constitutional position of the Assembly in this matter as given above. It is, however, possible to give a more liberal interpretation to the provisions in actual working of the Act. Can Mr. Hailey's confident asseveration that the Assembly as a matter of fact had all the powers it would need for the purpose be taken as an expression of desire on the part of the Government of India, that however severe the limitations might be in law, they will be considerably slackened in administration, and that the Assembly will



be allowed to exercise the full influence which such an all-India Assembly must exercise over Government's decisions? Will the Assembly at least by grace be allowed ordinarily to discuss and vote the military budget and will the exceptional power which vests in the Governor-General to pass a bill over the heads of either of his chambers be never used so far at least as taxation bills are concerned? It is really difficult to conceive of a Government which is even partly responsible to exercise this exceptional power and levy taxes without the consent of the legislature. No Government which has risen ever so little out of the purely bureaucratic system can think of issuing ordinances for taxation.

#### ESHER REPORT.

Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer dealt in his resolution with the Esher Report with, as the Military Secretary observed, remarkable lucidity and extreme ability. It was really a luminous exposition of the subject to which most members in the Assembly must be more or less strangers, and the danger to which India would be exposed if the recommendations were carried out in the sense in which they were generally understood was so graphically described that every member became alive to his duty in the matter. The speech showed that the Assembly had a non-official member of first rate ability, quite competent to hold his own and more than hold his own with the front rank men. Government gave an assurance that, whatever the Esher Report might mean or seem to mean, they would not place the Army in India under the control of the War Office.

#### GOKHALE'S ANNIVERSARY.

On the occasion of the sixth anniversary of Mr. Gokhale's death, the Deccan Sabha held a meeting which was presided over by Prof. V. B. Naik of the Fergusson College, Poona. Prof. V. K. Rajwade, late of the Fergusson College, gave an address on Gokhale's life-work, from which the following passages are extracted:—

"Whenever he heard of the valour of his countrymen in Europe, it filled him with hopes and confidence that the sacrifice of the nation would react on the relations between the rulers and the ruled and that the brand of inferiority that galled him incessantly would be removed. No one felt this sting of inferiority more poignantly and when he stood witnessing the march past of the Indian troops on the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in London, an English friend expressed admiration for the troops, which he as an Indian, he said, could not share, as their inclusion in the procession was not an acknowledgment of India's equality with the Dominions; but a triumphant exhibition of the conquered led in the train of the conquerors. It was this keen feeling of inequality that largely inspired his political life. By speech, by writing, and in conversation, he showed to the Englishman that the Indian was his equal, that placed in better, more congenial circumstances, there was nothing that he could not achieve, that the so-called failure or inability to rise to the occasion was not inherent, but simply a result of his having been kept so long in a state of subordination. The inability was taken for granted and positions of trust and responsibility were studiously denied him. The Armageddon has changed all and politicians of all shades now declare that India is the equal of the Dominions and that she is entitled to take part in the Council of Nations. But the German War in itself would have been powerless to beget this sounder view, if the past had not done a deal of spade-work in that direction. In recounting this preliminary work, Gokhale's name must be mentioned along with those of Dadabhai Naoroji, Hume, Mahadev Govind Ranade and Wedderburn. These great men laid the foundations of political life in the country, and voiced the people's grievances.".....

"Figures were to him full of life and soul; however huge they might be. He never felt smothered under them, was never repelled by them. He made his case telling, because of his tact in handling figures, because he laid bare the soul that lay in them. You can refute words, but not figures. His proposals in the Council Chamber might be defeated by official

majority; yet their influence could not be resisted. When once he complained to Mr. Brodrick, now Lord Midleton, for a time Secretary of State for India, that his proposals were being studiously ignored, the latter exclaimed: "Mr. Gokhale, how can you say so? Are not we improving our administration in the light of your criticism?" He could influence English statesmen, not because he was eloquent, but because his case was irresistible. The one thing to be remembered about him is that he was a student to the last. He never tolerated slovenliness in his followers, because he himself was so severely rigorous. As teacher, examiner, manipulator of figures, publicist, he aimed at scrupulous correctness and succeeded. Politics is a game in which you must play your cards well. In winning this game so many things count. The trump-card is the sound preparation of your case, in which you must leave no loop-hole for the adversary. In addition to such preparation, you must put your case well, must know in what order to marshal your arguments. You must do it in adequate language and appeal to emotion as well as to reasons. Good dress also has its own value. You cannot command good looks and a sweet, mellow voice. But Mr. Gokhale was fortunate in these respects too. His face was exceedingly mobile and capable of expressing feelings suited to the occasion. Hence the charm and fascination of his speeches. It was truly remarked that his speeches were a treat and ladies flocked to the Council Chamber and hung on the strains of his oratory. There was a magic in his voice that eludes description. The speaker was himself all the while absorbed in his subject, incapable of using artifices for capturing attention. He never played to the gallery, knew not the arts of the demagogue. It was because he never condescended to please audiences that he latterly became unpopular. He led and never allowed himself to be led."

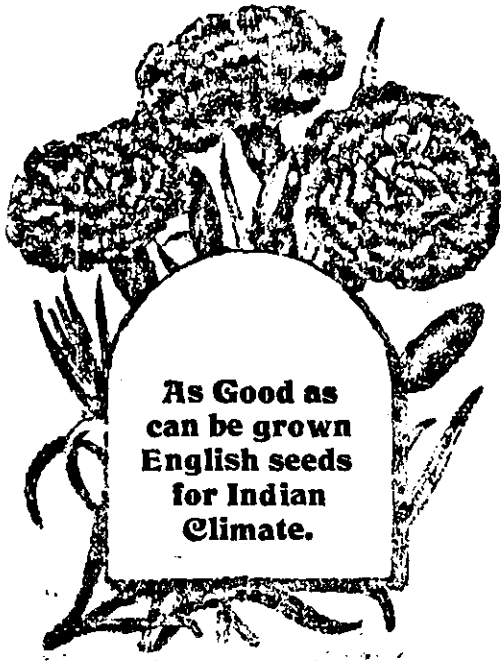
"He was sensitive by temperament, sensitive to colour and sound sensitive to what was best in speech and writing. He became super-sensitive, as his end drew near. Then came the attacks in the local newspapers, which were deliberately false. Misrepresentations and allusions to his approaching death, which was said to be a foregone conclusion, stung him to the quick. He on whose life attempts had been made by fanatic school boys, which he laughingly described, could not stand calculated falsehood. He fell a victim to overwork and virulence and meanness of party-attack. Had he lived, what might he not have done! A terrible brain-worker, yet he was at home in tennis, cricket, and billiards, and as a teacher had thought it no shame to take part in school-boy drill. Mr. Ranade had often advised him to consider one month in the year as legitimately his own, which no public work ought to be allowed to trench on. Yet as self-consciousness increased and nothing would satisfy him but his own work, he retrenched leisure and recreation and may be said to have killed himself. Had he had tolerance for fools and villains, had he borne and foreborne inferiors as his political mentor had done, he would have prolonged his life. Indians must work with what tools they have."

In the course of a very feeling speech Prof. Naik said that Mr. Gokhale had fallen a victim to public misunderstanding and as a consequence had to bear a great deal of abuse and villification at the hands of his own countrymen. This, in the speaker's opinion, required, in the case of a man so keenly sensitive by nature as Mr. Gokhale was, even a greater spirit of sacrifice than all the indignities and horrors of prison life. It appeared to him that Mr. Gokhale invested moderatism with a kind of romance by the work that he did in spite of the constant sense of disappointment at being misunderstood by those whom he so dearly loved to serve. In popular imagination moderation was associated with indecision and half-heartedness. The speaker was not concerned on that occasion to examine the correctness of such a supposition. He could however assure the audience from what he had seen of him that Mr. Gokhale was completely free from any of these defects.

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Printed at the Arya-Bhushan Press and published at 'The Servant of India' Office,  
541, Budhwar Peth, Poona City, by Anant Vinayak Patvardhan.