

THE Servant of India

Editor: S. G. VAZE.

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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

WHAT Mr. Gandhi wished to lay down in law his followers have brought about in practice in the Madras Presidency. The Congress having adopted the programme of non-co-operation, no-one who does not carry out in his own person that portion of the programme which nearly concerns him should be entitled to hold responsible office in the Congress organisations. That was Mr. Gandhi's desire, but it was foiled by the leading Nationalists of Madras and Poona, who naturally saw in such a resolution their own political extinction. Mr. Gandhi gave in for the moment, but his disciples, the true non-co-operators, have begun the process of weeding out pseudo-non-co-operators from the Congress executive. In Madras the editor of the *Hindu*, who in his personal conduct has been maintaining a consistently defiant attitude towards non-co-operation is the first to be thrown out. Such a sorting-out was surely needed to purify the movement and to put it on a secure foundation. If non-co-operation is to be tried, let it at least have a fair chance.

IT is very funny to see Mr. Gandhi putting up the vendors of abkari licences to approach the Government for a refund of their licence fees. On account of the picketing campaign the contractors have suffered a loss. Now, picketing, in theory at least, means nothing more than an intensified use of moral suasion. Persuasion has always been allowed by law and the contractors when they bid always take into account the possibility of persuasion being used on a large scale. Mr. Gandhi does not certainly mean that any other method than persuasion is being followed by the pickets. We also hear that in Poona at least those who came forward to take part in the auction were warned by

the Collector of a likelihood of picketing being organised. It is difficult to understand how in these circumstances the contractors can claim a refund. Even if any part of the loss which they have sustained is of such a character that Government should make it up, we do not know yet the extent of the loss which has resulted. And, further, whatever compensation the abkari contractors may be entitled to receive, we fail to see how Mr. Gandhi can go so much against his principle as to advise them to apply to Government. They are not non-co-operators; it is open to them to take Government's money, he says. People are nowadays made co-operators or non-co-operators just as it may suit the convenience of the moment. But Mr. Gandhi at any rate is a non-co-operator. Can he consistently give them such advice, just to obtain a respite for picketing volunteers.

MR. KELKAR has the best of reasons to resent the Working Committee's resolution "unnecessarily (?) bringing under judgment the conduct" of certain persons, as his own conduct was involved in the resolution. But his protest, which is now formally submitted to the All-India Congress Committee, really proves too much. In trying to prove that the boycott of law courts, carried to the length to which the Working Committee seeks to carry it, is unreasonable and impracticable, he really proves that the whole programme of non-co-operation as conceived by Mr. Gandhi is futile and injurious to the best interests of the country. Instead of resisting the attempts of Governments to put national workers *hors de combat*, why should we, he asks, by our own action help such attempts? Non-co-operation is certainly not meant, he says, "to facilitate the designs of Government upon political workers, but to accentuate the fight to the point of maximum resistance to Government such as may be compatible with non-violence." And there is much more in this strain. What he says of boycott of law courts applies with equal or greater force to the boycott of councils or the boycott of schools, and Mr. Kelkar's opposition to one form of non-co-operation, because he is personally implicated in it, must really be taken to extend to all forms of non-co-operation, for they are all based upon the principle of non-resistance, which he abhors.

MR. JINNAH evidently is no believer in the doctrine that Indians must not breathe a word of censure against popular movements in India to

English audiences, but must present a united front to the English people; for in his speech at the Caxton Hall the other day he took, we are told, "very considerable exception" to the programme of non-co-operation. He took up the several items in this programme and declared that all of them had failed and were bound to fail. Indeed, his condemnation of the non-co-operation movement was no less strong than the Liberal condemnation of it; only his violent disapproval is too seldom expressed to incur popular odium. However, the leaders of non-co-operation are well aware that in Mr. Jinnah their movement has an adversary quite as relentless in his hostility as can be found anywhere. Mr. Jinnah no doubt qualifies his opposition to the new movement by the statement, which he repeated at Caxton Hall, that he is in favour of the principle of non-co-operation: such qualifying clauses will, however, deceive nobody. For what remains of the principle of non-co-operation after a detailed denunciation of every conceivable application of it, except that one should offer constitutional opposition to every Government measure which requires opposition? In this sense every one supports non-co-operation, and Mr. Jinnah need not single himself out from other opponents of non-co-operation as assuming a peculiar attitude to the movement.

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HE even promised his hearers to give a detailed scheme of the kind of non-co-operation he would support; and the correspondent who reports his speech says that "Mr. Jinnah was a long time coming to his own constructive proposals." The fact is, that he has no alternative to suggest except that of constitutional opposition. So, the correspondent tells us, "it ultimately appeared that in his opinion the Congress party ought to have seized the opportunity of capturing the legislative councils at the recent elections" and opposed all unjust measures of Government. But this policy is identical with what the Liberals are pursuing at the present moment. Thus, both in his negative criticism and positive proposals, Mr. Jinnah takes up the same position as the Liberals, and the definite suggestions which he made in his lecture with a view to the Indian settlement are of the same kind as those which were put forward, e. g., by the U. P. Liberal Association the other day. Nor does he think that constitutional methods have entirely failed and that recourse must therefore be had to extra-constitutional measures. On the contrary he feels that, as a result of the influence exerted by the new legislatures, a different spirit has come over the European officials the true significance of which is not sufficiently recognised. For instance, Government has apologised for the excesses committed by officials in the Punjab. Those he said, who thought this was a small matter were very much mistaken. In such constitutional action, he declared, lay their salvation for the present.

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IT is superfluous to examine in detail the demands which Mr. Jinnah has made, but one can-

not help noticing that among these demands there is no definite proposal as to how the Khilafat wrong can be rectified. Again, he blames the Khilafatists for making a religious question of what is wholly a political matter. Nor does he support the Congress demand for immediate *swaraj*. He asks for a further instalment of reforms, but only for an instalment, and that, again, to come not immediately but after three years. Among the constructive proposals which he makes is the one for the prevention of the recurrence of atrocities such as took place in the Punjab. He understands that a military manual has been prepared which provides the necessary safeguards, and he asks that if it cannot be published it may be shown in confidence to a few select people who may afterwards issue a manifesto expressing their satisfaction with its terms. We believe that Mr. Jinnah is imperfectly seized with facts about the military manual. It cannot be and is not intended to be a confidential document. Its revised version must be, as the present one is, available to the public. Mr. Jinnah is wrong in supposing that there must be something secret in a military manual. The English military manual, which clearly indicates the limitations upon the use of force in case of a riot, is published for general information; and so must the new Indian manual be.

* * *

IN the *Times* of June 29 appears a letter from Mr. Jinnah in which he practically summarises the points of his lecture. In this letter there is one point, not mentioned in the lecture, which deserves attention. He suggests that the present councils should be dissolved and fresh elections held. One has often heard of this suggestion being talked about in whispers, but it is put forward now for the first time under influential auspices. Now, what is the *raison d'être* of this proposed dissolution of councils? Is it because they are not fully representative? If they do not contain representatives of a certain section of politicians, it is so by a free choice of the latter. They were implored by the Liberals to contest the elections; but they were taught by Mr. Gandhi to believe that councils were death-traps, and they did believe so. The conditions which necessitated then the boycott of council elections remain now and would persist even when Mr. Jinnah's requests are fully granted. If non-co-operators now take part in the elections on the present councils being dissolved, they will do so not because any change in the conditions which now makes co-operation desirable, but only because they have ceased to believe in non-co-operation. We do not think, however, staunch non-co-operators will look upon such a proposal with favour; those who make this proposal only show thereby that they are bitterly regretting their own abstention from elections. Government, we are sure, will at once put any such suggestion out of court; for it will not pacify genuine non-co-operators, whom alone, if at all, Government will try to pacify.

* * *

IN the Commons debate on the work of the Imperial Cabinet on June 17, India figured prominently. Men of differing views like Sir John Rees, Sir T. Bennett and Col. Wedgwood united in insisting on the recognition by the Cabinet of India's equality of status with other Dominions. The first-named, who is the most conservative of the three and who could not understand why Japan should not be allowed to annex Korea, laid down the broad principle that "when you have many nations constituents of one Empire, you must provide for equal status for them in all parts of that Empire," and as an instance of the application of this principle he hoped that "on all occasions whenever the two races (one black and the other white) come together at least there shall be no possibility in future of reserving an area of a country for what is called white occupation." Sir John does not think that there is anything in the white skin which can be regarded as indicative of a superior moral virtue; on the contrary, he reminded the House that "throughout a great part of the world a white skin is looked upon as a sort of leprous eccentricity which is by no means regarded as beautiful or superior." Indians do not cherish any such vulgar prejudice, but they certainly do not regard the whites as necessarily superior to the blacks.

COL. WEDGWOOD thus defined the equality of status, that "every British citizen, whether he be brown or whether he be white, has a right to an equal vote, to equal justice before the law, to equal treatment." The best way to secure equal rights for India in the Dominions is, he says, for the British Government to accord such rights in the Crown Colonies and then to leave India to use retaliatory measures against the Dominions if they do not yield to the voice of reason. "The acceptance by us," Col. Wedgwood observed, "of the principle of equal rights, of equal status does not involve our going to Mr. Hughes and telling him he must let Indians into Australia or else the British Empire will break down. It does not depend upon our coercing South Africa even into that elementary justice of giving votes to our Indian fellow-subjects in South Africa. Let India apply to South Africa, if she chooses, the same regulations that South Africa applies to India." What scope there is for such reciprocity has not yet been fully explored, but it is at least clear that before England pleads inability to interfere in the domestic concerns of the Dominions, she must give equal rights to Indians in colonies directly governed by her.

THE latest move of the British Medical Council is quite in keeping with its traditional policy of straining every nerve to keep the I. M. S. as a close preserve for Europeans. It has now suggested that medical degrees of Indian Universities should be made non-registrable in the United Kingdom unless the maternity training obtainable in our medical colleges is brought up to the standard in British Colleges by February next. If carried into

effect, the proposal will result in making competition by Indians for the I. M. S. examination a matter of great difficulty. Graduates of Indian Universities can at present appear for this examination without being put to the necessity of acquiring a British degree. Indeed, cases are known in which they have passed this examination within six months of their reaching England. The proposal of the British Medical Council, in case it materialises, will not only deprive promising Indians of the facility they have been enjoying for years past, but will place an additional obstacle in their way. It will moreover blast the chance of graduates holding Indian medical degrees now have of starting private practice in the United Kingdom. Indian publicists have been demanding both in the Press and on the platform that the I. M. S. examination, being intended mainly as a recruiting ground for service in India, should be held in this country rather than in England. So far from supporting this demand, the British Medical Council aims at restricting the admission of Indians in the I. M. S. as much as possible by such questionable tactics. We have no doubt Indian public opinion, especially the medical profession in India, will not be slow in giving expression to its strong disapproval of the Council's activities.

AS a sure means of inviting the attention of the Government to the serious defects and draw-backs in the Poona drainage and water supply works, Mr. Kelkar has suggested the non-payment of further municipal instalments towards the liquidation of the loan advanced by Government for the purpose. His motion will shortly form a subject of discussion in the local municipality; but whatever its fate, it shows how the municipality having despaired of securing due relief by the usual means, is forced to resort to this extreme method. It is time the Government paused to consider if their officers charged with the execution of the whole scheme have properly acquitted themselves. It is a matter of common knowledge that not long ago Poona was noted for its healthy and bracing climate, so much so that for middle-class people in the neighbouring province of Berar and C. P. it did duty more or less as a sanatorium. All that is changed and it has now become the hot-bed of malaria and similar other complaints. Its health has deteriorated and its mortality has proportionately increased. The percolation of lakhs of gallons of water consequent on the leaking settling tanks and the defective and incomplete drainage for the city is promoting the spread of disease among the inhabitants; and the sooner steps are taken to check its growth, the better for all concerned. The Government wants to keep the actual management of the works in its own hands in the hope that it will ensure their efficient upkeep. The experience of the people however points quite the other way. It is to be hoped that the Government will look into the matter and restore the city to its former health.

VOLUNTARY AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION.

IT is admitted on all hands that universal primary education cannot become possible in a day; it will take at least ten or twelve years for all children of school age to be brought under instruction. The main difficulty is that of finance. The vast increase in the present resources that will be needed to make education available to all can come about only gradually. In the meantime the question that arises for consideration is how much money can be spared altogether for being expended upon primary education, and in what proportion it should be divided between direct compulsion and extension on a voluntary basis. It may be assumed that, in the new régime, compulsion will soon form an important feature of the educational system of all provinces; but it cannot be altogether compulsion. For, in the first few years, compulsion will have to be confined to municipal towns and large villages. If all the available funds are applied to the introduction of compulsion in towns and big villages, the rural tracts not included in the area of compulsion will suffer. On the other hand, education cannot proceed on the sole basis of voluntary extension, for in that case many localities which are quite ripe for compulsion will have unnecessarily to wait till the programme of expansion is worked out in full. Thus, it is clear that the interim measures which are necessary with a view to the eventual establishment of a complete national system of education will partake in most provinces of both compulsion and extension on a voluntary basis; and the problem is, how should the funds at the disposal of the Education Minister be allocated to these two programmes? It is of course impossible to determine upon any fixed ratio for all provinces, but the proportionate usefulness of adopting either measure may be considered:

It may at first sight appear that it is unnecessary and inadvisable to adopt compulsion till expansion on a non-compulsory basis has exhausted itself. It may be thought that if, as soon as you open new schools, they fill with scholars, there is clearly no need for enforcing compulsion; compulsion is after all an evil, though, in certain circumstances, a necessary evil. If, then, you cannot arrive at universal education in one bound, but have necessarily to reach it by several successive steps, why should you seek, in the intermediate stages, to force education on those who are unwilling to receive it when there are quite enough whom you can first approach, who are willing, nay anxious, to have the advantages of education? The objection is therefore raised, not always by people who are opposed to compulsion *per se*, that there is still wide scope for the extension of education on a voluntary basis, and that till the maximum use is made of the latter, compulsion should not be adopted. Those who urge such an objection are not fully alive to the comparative merits of the two methods. In villages where education is practically unknown,

wholesale compulsion cannot immediately be introduced, but in places where education has already made some amount of progress, it is easier and less costly to bring all the children of those localities to school than to tap new areas and to provide educational facilities in them. A given amount of money will go much farther when applied to enforcing compulsion in an area which has already made some advance in education, than when applied to the establishment of schools in an educationally virgin area. That is to say, the former process will bring, at the same cost, a much larger number of scholars under the influence of education than the latter process, and, therefore, when the funds at our disposal are limited, it will be more economical to spend them on compulsory education in tracts which are ripe for it than on voluntary education in tracts in which there is no general appreciation of education. Although voluntary education has not yet penetrated the lower strata, still complaint is heard in some provinces that the schools started even in big villages containing from 500 to 1,000 population are languishing for lack of local interest. We believe that the experience of Bombay is not dissimilar; the attendance in several schools is too poor to make good work possible. It is only when there is good and regular attendance that efficiency can be maintained, and it is often found that in some rural tracts where schools have recently been opened, not only is the number of scholars unsatisfactory but the quality of education is inferior. This shows that there are real limitations on the spread of education without the aid of compulsion.

What we have said above with regard to the economical use of money applies with tenfold force to the adoption of the two-shifts system. With 25% additional expenditure, we can by means of this system increase the number of scholars by 100%, the same buildings and the same teaching staff being used for two sets of pupils. Clearly there is no room for a double-shifts system in a place where only one school can go on. To utilise this system to the full, we must select places where more schools will be required than we can afford to conduct with the resources at our command. It will therefore have the utmost scope in towns or villages where the number of pupils in schools admits of a large increase; but where the increase will entail expense beyond our capacity to bear. It is thus found that in the Bombay Presidency, with a two-thirds grant from Government, we can cover almost the whole field of primary education at nearly the same cost to municipalities as at present, if we adopt the system of double shifts (leaving out of account, for the present, the additional expenditure due to increments in the salaries of primary teachers). The introduction of compulsion is thus brought well within the bounds of practicability in municipal areas, and with no serious addition to the present scale of expenditure, municipalities can bring all the children of school age into school; that is, they can provide education for the remaining 60%

children who do not attend school at present. Compare to this the additional expenditure that will be required in opening new schools in villages which are not yet endowed with schools, and see how many scholars will avail themselves of such schools there. Measured in the number of pupils that will be brought to school, it is clear that the results that will be yielded by the former process will be far superior to those that will be yielded by the latter process. Ignoring, for the present, all other considerations, we can assert that our object of bringing the largest number of scholars under instruction will be best served by devoting the money that we can spare for this purpose to enforcing compulsion in localities which are sufficiently advanced in education to admit of the introduction of compulsion.

But other considerations cannot be altogether ignored. Although it is doubtless true that it is proportionately more economical to introduce compulsory education in advanced areas than to extend education on a voluntary basis in areas not so advanced, it would be highly unjust to leave the present educational destitution of backward areas unremedied, and to devote all the monies available to the betterment of advanced areas alone. It will in effect mean making the rich richer and the poor poorer—comparatively. Till now no serious complaint was made of making education compulsory in urban areas at the cost, so it will doubtless be represented, of rural areas, because the rate of progress in general has been much too slow. But if now we intend to spend much larger amounts on education and to quicken the rate, the gross injustice that will be entailed by the exclusive application of all the funds that may be forthcoming to compulsory education in urban areas will be felt and must be avoided. Some portion of these funds ought to be applied to the extension of education in rural areas on a voluntary basis; and in opening more schools care must be taken not to starve altogether any large area. If an extensive programme of educational expansion is to be undertaken, necessarily more taxes will have to be levied, and in such taxation the rural classes also will have to bear their share. It is therefore necessary, if we have to devote the greater portion of the money to compulsory education in localities which are more favourably situated, that the villagers should be satisfied that if they have not yet had a school in their village, they have it in the vicinity, and that after a short space of time their own village will boast of a school. It is only when such a feeling is induced in them that it will be possible to impose a general cess on land revenue, and it is difficult to see, when such a huge task lies in front of us, how it can be avoided. Our purpose here is to show the necessity for apportioning the money available for primary education between compulsory and voluntary education, keeping in view the larger return which the former yields. It is time that our educationists decided in what ratio the money should be divided and by what steps our progress towards universal education should be completed.

FACTORY LEGISLATION IN INDIA—I.

If there is one problem more than another, on the satisfactory solution of which depends in a very large measure, firstly, the allaying of the present discontent and unrest in the whole world, and, secondly, the future universal peace and prosperity, it is labour. It has become a mighty force which it is impossible to ignore. Never, perhaps, has it organised itself in such an extraordinary manner as now. Labour is determined to win for itself a position of equality with other factors of industrial development. It has already begun to assert itself and make its influence felt in all directions. And the day is not far off when labour will have gained its legitimate place in the industrial world.

To attain this natural position, which has already been secured to a large extent by western labour, Indian labour has yet a great leeway to make up. An awakening has taken place, and Labour is impressed with the necessity of organisation. Labour unions have been and are being formed in great industrial centres. Strikes and lock-outs, the lawful weapons in western countries, are resorted to for the redress of grievances. Labour has its representatives in the Legislative Assembly and the provincial legislatures created by the Reforms Act of 1919. Indian labour has thus begun well. It has, however, to carry its organisation to a high pitch of efficiency and to secure the moral support of the public. It has also to obtain its legal position in the eyes of the law.

At this psychological moment in the history of Indian labour has been introduced in the Indian Legislature a bill "further to amend the Indian Factories Act, 1911." This bill is the direct result of the Draft Conventions passed by the International Labour Conference held at Washington in 1919, under the auspices of the International Labour Organisation of the League of Nations. It is one of the important measures with far-reaching results that will be considered during the coming session of the Indian Legislature; and as such it deserves careful study. But before proceeding to do so, it would be advantageous to review briefly the history of Indian Factory legislation so that we may be able to get a correct idea as to how far the present bill takes us; and in what respects it falls short of our expectations and the necessities of the time.

The time when India began to move in the direction of developing her textile and jute industries unfortunately coincided with the time when England's textile industry had enormously grown and her export trade in that commodity had found in India a very good market. The result was a regular conflict of commercial interests between India and England. This conflict continued until Indian Factory legislation reached such a stage that Lancashire was convinced that its export trade to India had nothing to fear. This struggle constitutes a sad chapter in the history of Indian labour legislation, and, we are afraid, has added

not a little to a feeling of bitterness between the two countries. We shall have further occasion to refer to and criticise the action of Lancashire in this matter. We simply note this fact here in order to remind ourselves while treating this subject that unlike other countries, India had to reckon with a powerful factor, viz. Lancashire, when she had to find an issue out of the conflict between labour and capital.

Since the beginning of the latter half of the last century, the cotton industry in India began to make rapid progress. In 1818 the first cotton mill was started in Bengal; and Bombay established her first mill in 1851. By 1880 there were as many as 58 cotton and spinning mills and 22 jute mills in India, with over 70,000 men daily working therein. The great prosperity that this new industry brought to the millowners tempted them to run their mills for from 13 to 16 hours in some cases. The Collector of Broach reported, in 1875, cases from his own district in which some of the ginning mills used to work "20 out of 24 hours, Sundays and week days." The result was obvious. The output increased; and English capitalists thought that their export trade with India was seriously threatened. Agitation was started both in England and India almost simultaneously for the regulation of factory labour and for shortening hours of work. About the year 1872-73, Mr. Redgrave, H.M. Inspector of Factories, first drew the attention of the English public to the factory conditions in India and declared:—"It is well that the Legislature should step in while the industry is, so to speak, in its infancy, and by wise and moderate regulations stop the growth of habits of long hours and of the employment of child labour." Major Moore, Inspector-in-Chief of the Bombay Cotton Department, did in India what Mr. Redgrave did in England; but instead of proposing new legislation, he thought that a section added to the existing Act would be sufficient. A deputation of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce waited upon the then Secretary of State for India in 1874, imploring him to repeal the import duty on cotton goods and commending the subject of factory legislation to the best attention of the Bombay Government. The matter, however, did not stop here. Parliament was next approached. A question in the Commons in 1874 and another next year forced the Secretary of State to direct the Bombay Government "to enquire into, and report on, the present condition of system of work in the factories in Bombay and its vicinity, with a view to determining whether any legislation is necessary for regulation of the hours of labour, especially in the case of women, young persons, and children, for the protection of labourers against accidents, for the proper ventilation and sanitation of the factories, and generally for improving the condition of the workpeople employed." The Bombay Government accordingly appointed a Commission in the same year which presented its report within four months. They found that the machinery was protected fairly well, that the children above 8

were generally employed, that the hours of work were from sun-rise to sunset with half an hour for midday rest, that the working days during the year amounted to between 300 and 320, and that the health of the operatives was generally good. The Commission found themselves divided on the question of legislation. The President and another member (Dr. Thomas Blaney) were in favour of a simple legislative enactment. The majority were of the opinion that legislation was unnecessary. The Bombay Government, therefore, decided to shelve the question.

But the commercial interests of England would not allow the question to be shelved. They succeeded in raising it again in the House of Lords. The view put forward on this occasion by the Earl of Shaftesbury deserves to be quoted here, as it well illustrates the motives that prompted the Earl and men of his ilk to take interest in the Indian factory question. "We must bear in mind," said the noble Earl, "that India has the raw material and cheap labour; and if we allow the manufacturers there to work their operatives 16 or 17 hours and put them under no restrictions, we are giving them a very unfair advantage over the manufacturers of our own country, and we might be undersold, even in Manchester itself, by manufactured goods imported from the East."

A counter agitation on the part of those who were deeply concerned with the Indian textile industry, followed close upon the Lancashire agitation. The Chambers of Commerce of Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras and the Bombay Millowners' Association strongly protested against the unnecessary meddling of Lancashire. They declared that factory legislation would only check the progress of an industry that was growing rapidly. The majority of the local Governments, also, were not in favour of introducing any legislation.

But, at last, the Government of India prepared in September 1877 the first draft of a bill "to protect children and young persons employed in factories." "This left," to quote Mr. A. G. Clow of the Government of India, "the lower age of children blank and fixed the upper age of children at 11 and of "young persons" at 14; but as no difference was made in the draft between children and young persons this distinction was superfluous. The draft permitted children and young persons to work only 8 hours, limited the hours of females to 10 and provided one holiday in 7 days. In a second draft prepared in January 1878, the provisions relating to females and holidays were cut out along with some sanitary provisions, but a clause was added requiring notice of injuries to children and young persons. This clause was widened in the third draft (May 1878) so as to require injuries to all employees to be notified; and in July 1878 the final draft was prepared for issue. This restricted the hours of work of a child to 6 and for a young person to 8 and provided that the lower age for a child should be 7 in 1879 and 8 years thereafter."

The bill in its final form was introduced in the Imperial Legislative Council on the 7th November 1879.

R. R. BAKHALE.

A LETTER FROM LONDON.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

LONDON, JUNE 30.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS ANNIVERSARY.

LAST Saturday was the second anniversary of the inauguration of the League of Nations, and it was celebrated in characteristic British fashion by a great assembly at Hyde Park, when at different platforms large gatherings were addressed by some of the most prominent men in our public life. They united to emphasise the spiritual meaning of the League, in spite of its imperfections, and the grave danger to mankind unless its promises were fulfilled and its contracts implemented.

In the House of Commons this week, Mr. Montagu gave particulars regarding the coolie troubles in Assam and Bengal, but definitely laid down the principle that the liability and responsibility for breach of contract by a coolie owing to gross misrepresentation must not fall upon the Government of India. . . Mr. Montagu was not to be caught in Sir Charles Yate's net by supplying a definition of bogus candidates to the Councils. He will not meanwhile decide what steps should be taken to prevent freak candidatures at future elections. That was a matter that the Government of India would doubtless look to in due course. The present system of emigration will continue to Ceylon, pending the passing of the Emigration Bill. But this whole matter will need careful watching. Mr. Rupert Gwynne is still anxious to know who authorised the inclusion of Mr. S. M. H. Kidwai in the Islamic delegation from India, and what was the cost. Some members were quite disturbed because Mr. Montagu was not there to answer questions that they were not present to put. It did not seem to occur to them that he was attending the Imperial Conference at the time. The Indian Divorce Bill has now passed both Houses of Parliament and should become law at any moment.

MR. SASTRI'S SPEECHES.

Mr. Sastri had a very fine reception at the Empire Parliamentary dinner the other night. His speech at the conclusion of the proceedings in response to the toast of India was received with acclamation, and was generously applauded by the Lord Chancellor, who presided. It certainly contrasted with the somewhat pedestrian platitudes of at least one of his Dominion colleagues, who, so I am told, spoke more in the manner of a country squire addressing a village political meeting than a responsible statesman addressing a distinguished audience. The *Evening Standard* comments that "by common consent" Mr. Sastri's speech was the best of the evening. When he rose to speak, everyone, guest and host alike, rose to pay him courtesy. Perhaps out of these little things more results ensue than out of greater and more formal occasions.

At the Empire Development Parliamentary Committee's dinner, last week, Mr. Sastri, responding on behalf of India, thought that the fact that he was there was evidence of the recognition of India's advance towards Dominion status. He was of opinion that despite temporary aberrations, India's loyalty to the Empire was deep and true. She felt that within the Empire she could attain to the full height of her political aspirations. But if that ambition were to be achieved, the Empire must stand for something higher than a mere comity of white peoples. It must transcend race and colour. No lesser ideal would do. The speech, which made a great impression, was received with loud applause.

THE IRISH SETTLEMENT.

The Irish situation has undergone kaleidoscopic changes during the last fortnight. Some time ago, it was announced that the King, in going to Ireland to open the Northern Parliament, was doing so under the advice of His Majesty's Ministers in London, and that his Speech from the Throne would be in terms that they had approved. It would seem, however, that at that time, the pacifists in the Cabinet had for the moment gained the upper hand and all hoped that the King would make an announcement of a kind that would facilitate the movement for peace with Ireland regarding which moves have been made behind the scenes for a long time past. His Majesty did, in fact, make a most human and sympathetic appeal for reunion, which, coming on top of the statement of the Viceroy at the first meeting of the Ulster Parliament that the Act was already in need of substantial amendment, which was interpreted to mean a move in the direction of Dominion Home Rule, made an admirable impression upon a generous people quick to respond to an appeal couched in a generous spirit. But to the immense astonishment of everyone, on the very day that the King was making his great attempt to bring the two countries together and heal the breach of centuries, the Lord Chancellor, in the House of Lords, in reply to an interpellation, made a speech of utter frightfulness, in which he announced a programme of military repression, compared with which what has gone before was a mere preliminary. His language was harsh and his manner was gloomy in the extreme, and people's hopes were rudely dashed to the ground, for it was openly stated next day in the *Daily Express* that the reactionaries had once again gained the upper hand in the Cabinet, in spite of the opposition of the Lord Chancellor himself and Mr. Churchill, and that they had done so at the instigation and under the persuasion of the Prime Minister himself. It was also stated that in making the speech he had made, the Lord Chancellor had not sought to wrap up in diplomatic language the real implications of the new Ministerial policy in regard to Ireland. There, for the time, the matter remained to the immense distress of all who are eager for peace in and with Ireland. Another shake of the kaleidoscope was given at the week-end. It was announced that Mr. Lloyd George, with a dramatic sudder-

ness, had, in the spirit of the King's Speech, issued an invitation, without conditions, to Sir James Craig, the Ulster leader, and to Mr. De Valera, the leader of the rest of Ireland, to meet him, with their advisers, in London at an early date to discuss the possibilities of an Irish settlement by consent. After consulting with his colleagues, Sir James Craig accepted the invitation. Mr. De Valera, whose position is a much more difficult one, thought that the best way of dealing with the matter would be to have a preliminary conference in Dublin of the leading Irishmen of the different parties, and accordingly invited Sir James Craig and the Southern Unionist leaders to meet him there. Sir James Craig has so far refused, on the ground that he has already accepted the Britain Prime Minister's invitation to go to London. The others have accepted, and the Dublin meeting will now take place. Mr. De Valera, in expressing regret at Sir James Craig's decision, has written him that Mr. Lloyd George's proposal, because of its implications, is impossible of acceptance in its present form. Irish political differences, he says, ought to be adjusted, and can, he thinks, be adjusted, on Irish soil; but, he adds, it is obvious that in negotiating peace with Great Britain the Irish delegation ought not to be divided, and should act as a unit on some common principle. Sir James Craig's reply to this suggestion is not known, but I hardly think it likely that he will assent to the suggestion that his party, at any rate, is in need of negotiating peace with Great Britain.

INDUSTRIAL SITUATION.

The industrial situation is being slowly smoothed out. The coal strike is practically over, the miners having come to the conclusion that they cannot carry on any longer on the basis of their demand for a national pool. A settlement was inevitable, in spite of the adverse ballot of the men recently, when the executive failed to give them a lead. The only question was how to bring it about. The threat of a general strike was regarded from the commencement as a bluff and no one was surprised to find that the other unions, who had been very hard hit by the stoppage and the consequent industrial depression, would follow the miners' lead. What has happened is that good friends in the Labour Party have intervened between the miners and the Government, and have induced the owners to reconsider the wages cut proposed, in the light of the immense hardships that would have to be endured in any event, and with the renewal of the Government's offer of a subsidy of 10 millions sterling, in order to help the wage adjustments required by the economic needs of the period between the present time and the date when a permanent wage base could be arrived at, a settlement has been at last reached. The strike has lasted for three months, and could have been settled on the present basis a long time ago. There has been much selfishness, muddling, and obstinacy on the part of all the three parties to the settlement. None of them escapes free from blame. But on the whole

and especially having regard to the splendid manner in which the miners have kept a strong control over themselves, in spite of the great sufferings that they and their families have had to undergo, public sympathy has been mostly with them, and public opinion has understood that the main claim of the miners has been for the certainty of a descent livelihood. The struggle has, however, resulted in an enormous weakening, both morally and financially, of the trade union movement. The trade unions have shown very little statesmanship and the executives have shown a lamentable lack of moral courage in going frankly to the rank and file and explaining the possibilities and the impossibilities of the situation. It must be admitted that, with the suspicion that riddles the trades union movement, the position of the leaders has been none too pleasant, but nevertheless one feels that there was much that they could do, if they had been willing to face a temporary unpopularity. The man who seems to have come best out of the trouble is Mr. Frank Hodges, who is more convinced than ever that great changes depend upon the proper use of the ballot box, and who was badly let down by his own executive. Nor is the coal settlement the only one that has been reached. In the trades connected with engineering, cotton, woollens, road transport, tramways, gas works, and railway wagon building, wage reduction settlements have been reached in an amicable fashion, and at last there seems a likelihood of an industrial revival. Hard work for less pay, and maybe longer hours can alone save this country from the peril of losing markets that will otherwise fall to Germany, who has to pay her reparations bill by goods which she cannot sell except at cut prices.

IMPERIAL CONFERENCE.

The Imperial Conference has hardly yet got to grips with its business. It is now discussing the Japanese Treaty, and in all likelihood it will adopt dilatory tactics, for there are strong differences of opinion already developing as to the desirability of continuing the Treaty and if so of the conditions. But there seems to be a growing feeling that it will be impossible to have a stable situation in the Pacific unless the three main parties, the British Empire, America, and Japan can come to a satisfactory arrangement, at a conference, having for its object a reduction in armaments. But this can only come after frank talks on policy. There must be a great deal of concession and understanding on all sides, and no-one can yet say whether a basis of agreement can be reached. If it is not, then war must be the inevitable result, in which either Japan will have to stand alone, to be crushed, or she will have to take the hegemony of Asia, with such assistance as she can get from other hostile powers.

The Greco-Turkish situation remains where it was. The Greek Government has rejected the Allies' proffered mediation between Greece and Turkey, and has replied that the matter must depend upon the arbitrament of the sword. It is

doubtful if anything useful will result from that arbitrament. At any rate Turkey will continue to fight for Anatolia, and for a wider territory in Europe, even if Eastern Thrace fall to be administered under the League of Nations. Much will depend upon what happens in the neighbourhood of Smyrna during the next few weeks. The Greek offensive is expected to open within a few days. Public opinion is on the whole veering towards Turkey, and the Treaty of Sevres is certain eventually to be largely scrapped.

Lord Lytton's Students' Committee will be back in London for some time, about the middle of next week. I think that it has already done a great deal of good at the various University centres. Mr. Ramchandra Rao and Mr. N. M. Chatterjee are reported to have done very useful work, but the same may be said of several of the other members, and the Chairman is showing that he has not forgotten his Indian birth.

RAOE EQUALITY.

Mr. Montagu has won a considerable victory in Imperial politics in inducing Mr. Churchill to accept, on behalf of the Colonial Office, the principle that in Crown Colonies there ought to be no racial distinctions and differentiations. It is to be hoped that this principle will be translated into useful action in the case of Kenya. The first fruits have, however, to be sought in Fiji, where the Government has accepted the proposition that the Indian residents are to be placed upon the same terms of equality as the most privileged residents of the Colony. Mr. Sastri's Committee, consisting of Messrs. Kunzru and Corbett besides, should do a great deal to clear up the local situation. But the problem of the self-governing Dominions remains, and one cannot say how far the Dominions Governments can be got to accept the principle of racial equality as regards their Indian residents. That question has, I understand, not yet been reached at the Imperial Conference, though it is definitely on the agenda.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE.

OUR analysis last week of the forces leading to the dramatic reversal of policy in Ireland finds corroboration in an account to hand by mail of the Commons debate on June 2nd, when for the first time apparently even the Coalition members turned upon Sir Hamar Greenwood. This revolt of even Mr. George's faithful finds expression in such utterances as that of General Seeley, who declared: "It is necessary to stop brutal murders and to respect the homes of the Irish people." Lord Henry Bentinck said: "We are not going to get peace in Ireland by a policy of arson." Captain Mosley, son-in-law of Lord Curzon, added: "You are venting on the innocent the spleen of your inefficiency because you can't catch the guilty." And be pleased to note the only reply Sir Hamar Greenwood could give! "Nothing is ever done by way of reprisal, except by order of a Brigadier General." That of course settles it. What has not India missed by not having

had Sir H. Greenwood as Secretary of State! Why, there could never have been any pother about that little affair at Amritsar, for would he not have triumphantly closed the whole incident by showing that there too nothing had been done, except by order of a Brigadier General, to wit, Brigadier General Dyer?

No wonder Mr. George has had to look for another Irish policy.

TULSA is a town in the State of Oklahoma, U. S. A., and happens to be within the petroleum belt, which in that part is only just beginning to be exploited. During the war, to be correct, on November 9, 1917, the local paper (with the modest title of the *World*) came out with an editorial, in the course of which the citizens of Tulsa were exhorted as follows:—

If the I. W. W. or its twin brother, the Oil Workers Union, gets busy in your neighbourhood, kindly take occasion to decrease the supply of hemp. . . . The first step in whipping Germany is to strangle the I. W. W.'s. Kill them, just as you would kill any other kind of a snake. Don't scotch 'em; kill 'em. And kill 'em dead. It is no time to waste money on trials and continuances and things like that. All that is necessary is the evidence and a firing squad.

And when one of the members of the "Independent Workers of the World" came before Judge T. D. Evans there, he was told "You are not guilty, but I will have to fine you \$100. These are no ordinary times."

THE disgraceful lynchings and riots against the Reds at that time took place because a white workers' organization was threatening to reduce the oil dividends by insisting on better working conditions. These scenes, however, were even surpassed in savagery by a race riot between Negroes and Whites which took place in the same town some few weeks ago (June 1st and 2nd), when 30 people lost their lives and the whole Negro residential district of the town, valued at \$1,500,000, was destroyed. At first blush, there seems little connection between the former and the latter events, except that lawlessness breeds lawlessness. A better clue however is provided by the *New Republic* of New York which reports that "business interests in Tulsa were seeking to dispossess Negroes of real estate holdings valuable for oil."

A fine example of the crude and unvarnished ways of Capitalism! In older countries Capitalism attacks its victims in more subtle ways—but can one deny that they are any the less damnable for that? And is it really inevitable that India must go through this hell of Capitalism, if she is to increase her productivity?

AS for the genesis of all this race-riot of murder and arson and for the mentality of race-hysteria out of which all such horrors arise, the *New Republic* of June 22nd reports and comments as follows:—

The race feeling in Tulsa before the riot seems to have been just so much gunpowder that lacked nothing but

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