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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

The Anglo-Afghan Treaty.

THE conclusion of the Anglo-Afghan Treaty has been made the occasion of much self-congratulation on the British side, from a royal message to the Amir to viceregal thanks to Sir Henry Dobbs and a chorus of the inspired press about a British diplomatic "success" and the great "satisfaction" felt about it all. Methinks, they protest a trifle too much and too loudly. Only a few short months ago the Afghan Embassy to the Outer World, on reaching London and calling at the Foreign Office, were curtly refused admittance and referred to the India Office, where needless to say the envoys refused to go, seeing that their whole mission consisted in establishing the claim of their country to be a sovereign and completely independent Power, instead of merely some sort of appendage of India. This regrettable and stupid snub has now been more than wiped out by the British Foreign Office having to eat its own words and to set its seal to the present Treaty, which definitely establishes the right of Afghanistan to be represented at the Court of St. James, as one amongst the comity of nations. Much is made in official communiques of a so-called *quid pro quo*, viz. that "no Russian Consulates will be permitted" in the three frontier districts. Is it seriously pretended that the Russian virus, if virus it is, will not affect the Indian frontier, if no accredited Russian officials are actually stationed in Jalalabad, Ghazni and Kandahar, but have free scope everywhere else in Afghanistan? The other point much emphasized is the discontinuation of the "subsidy"—though the "valuable present" to be made on ratification, takes a good deal of gilt off

that piece of gingerbread. Anybody who believes, as we do, in the self-determination of peoples must welcome the new treaty: but, one doubts how far this treaty will go without a new treaty with Russia.

The Basilisks' End.

THE compulsory retirement of Sir Basil Thomson is an event of first class importance; for it is not merely a personal affair, but, as we gather from the mail papers to hand, implies the disbandment of Sir Basil's whole department, the "Intelligence Department of Scotland Yard;" in other words, the English Political Police. It is one of the glories of England that, alone of the West, it used to get on without any of the "Secret Service" agents, which were a commonplace of Continental Governments and played such a sinister rôle in the life of their people. With the war and the removal of one English liberty after another, came Sir Basil and his department: at first, to foil the German spy, of course. But, equally of course, as the war developed, new "enemies of the country" were manufactured, designated by the newly coined and comprehensive term of "defeatists." When the supply of military spies ran out, these "defeatists" were always ready at hand to be "discovered" and placed under "preventive" arrest. Since the nominal conclusion of peace, Sir Basil and his sleuth-hounds have specialized in spying on, harassing, deporting, interning, &c., &c. "bolshéviki" and "communists." Sir Basil in the anguish of his soul gives vent to his despair in the paper of his own heart and party, the *Morning Post*, which of course takes up the wail on seeing the work of the last seven years swept on to the dust heap to which it properly belongs. Spying is not a profession which appeals to the average clean-minded person, nor does it coincide altogether with one's ideas of justice, to punish people, not for what they do, but for what they think. It is interesting to see in the *Nation* (of Nov. 5th) that Oxford undergraduates used to receive special attention from these "Intelligence officers:" for young Oxford to-day thinks much on "Labour" lines—to the grave concern of all the authorities, whether academic, political or parental. It is indeed a matter for congratulation that England should now have decided (even if only as an anti-waste measure) to return to its old ways of individual and political liberty: principles, which, after all have made England what she is—or used to be. Espionage is essentially un-English

and all true Englishmen (not the new Anglo-Prussians of post-bellum times!) must rejoice at the removal of this blot from English public life.

Casultry.

FORTIFIED by an inexhaustible faith in the power of non-co-operators to restore order in Malabar without the use of force, Mr. Gandhi thinks that the present hostilities—for the continuance of which strangely enough he holds Government solely responsible—mean a wanton destruction of the Moplahs. It is unthinkable that the hostilities will terminate only after the whole Moplah race is exterminated, but to those who have the misfortune not to share the simple faith of Mr. Gandhi in the magical powers with which the non-co-operators are gifted, the problem presents complications to which happily Mr. Gandhi's mind is a stranger. However the casuistry of his appeal to the Liberals is hard to beat. He is precluded by his principle of non-co-operation from directly approaching Government in regard to anything; and therefore he wishes to approach them *via* Liberals in the matter of Malabar. For his appeal to the Liberals is for the purpose of getting Government to agree, among other things, to let non-co-operators go to the disturbed area. Is this not co-operation, we ask. In the second place, there is no general prohibition; the non-co-operators as a body are at liberty to travel about in Malabar just as well as anybody else, and they have not yet brought peace to that harried district. But if Mr. Gandhi alone is able to restore order, we would humbly suggest that when the time comes for commencing civil disobedience, he had better select this prohibition order for non-compliance. In that case he would be able at once to break the Government and to prevent the cruelties which are now in progress. In the meantime, he might try and convert at least the non-co-operators in Malabar that the best way to stop the trouble is for Government to withdraw their troops. The complaint that we have heard is that, instead of Government employing excessive force, they are not employing enough, and are thus deliberately protracting the agony, just to teach non-co-operators a lesson.

Asphyxiation of Moplah Prisoners.

IT would be meet to refrain from commenting on the dreadful tragedy of 64 Moplah prisoners meeting their death in a railway waggon, till we have had the findings of the committee which has been appointed to investigate the matter. The presence of Mr. Manjeri S. Ramier on the Committee—than whom there is not a more independent man in Malabar—is a guarantee that the investigation will be searching and that all the relevant facts will be brought to light. For the moment we are willing to leave it there, but the fact about terrible overcrowding in a closed van is undisputed and may be commented upon. In a carriage of the capacity of 26 x 8 or 208 sq. feet, 106 prisoners were huddled together; that is to say, each prisoner had not even 2 sq. feet to himself. Now the least sitting accom-

modation required for a single person is 2½ sq. ft. Thus the martial law prisoners carried in this van over the distance of nearly a hundred miles in a very leisurely fashion had not even the bare sitting accommodation required for each individual. Add to this the fact that the waggon was a closed one, and the inhumanity of the proceeding will be apparent. Now the question that occurs to one is: are all prisoners treated in a similarly inhuman manner, or is it the fate particularly of the Moplah prisoners? In the latter case the Government would be guilty of a vindictiveness which we refuse to believe until it has been proved; in the former case the whole penal system needs drastic amendment immediately. On this question the Government should be able forthwith to publish full information.

The Policy of Intimidation.

IN Bengal and the United Provinces Government has been driven to take action under the "Samiti Act" and to proclaim certain bodies of non-co-operation volunteers to be unlawful associations. Lord Ronaldshay, in justifying the action taken by him to the Legislative Council in his opening speech, remarked that during the past week or two wholesale intimidation and terrorism had been practised in Calcutta and hinted that if this state of affairs continued, Government would be forced to impose restrictions upon the freedom of holding meetings and processions, the freedom accorded till now having been scandalously abused. Perhaps no part of India is now completely free from coercion of one sort or another, and in the Bombay Presidency especially we have had a most deplorable exhibition of the spirit of violence and intimidation. And yet, on reading Lord Ronaldshay's speech which describes how grave is the menace to the liberty of law-abiding citizens in Calcutta, one wondered if the situation was quite as bad as it was depicted. Any doubts one may entertain in this connection will be dissolved, not only by the unanimous approval which the speech met with from all quarters in the Bengal Council, but by the utterance of Sir Ashutosh Chaudhury, in which he did not support the Government's drastic action so much as demanded it. The position which Sir Ashutosh holds in Nationalist councils forces on one the conclusion that Government is not, for the moment, without justification in the restrictive measures it has taken.

Changed Policy of Government.

INDEED in the policy which the Bengal and the U. P. Governments have initiated, they have, as it now appears from Lord Reading's reply to the deputation of the Punjab Chamber of Commerce, the unwavering support of the Government of India. The Viceroy warned the country on this occasion that "the full strength of the Government would if necessary be exerted for vindicating the law and preserving order." He claimed that the Government had till now sought to avoid action which might either be misconceived or misrepresented as

too severe or as provocative and disclaimed the intention even now to interfere with the lawful activities of political parties, but he intimated that Government would not hereafter hesitate to take action that might be necessitated by the course of events. It must be admitted that no fair-minded person can refuse his testimony to the policy of forbearance which Lord Chelmsford's Government inaugurated in regard to the movement of non-co-operation and to which, on the whole, Lord Reading's Government has loyally adhered till now. But that policy is now to be changed for one of "vindication of the law," and if the present turn of events justifies this change, we hope that the Government will speedily return to its old policy and will discard the one which it has been forced to adopt.

ON the other hand, we fear that Mr. Gandhi is not going to desist for long from the inauguration of civil

Old Policy of N.-C.-O. disobedience. The Working Committee's resolution passed on the 24th instant, warning Provincial Congress Committees against embarking upon mass civil disobedience without first making certain of a peaceful atmosphere throughout the province, is interpreted as foreshadowing abandonment of the projected movement in Bardoli, but we must not delude ourselves into thinking that the interval of suspension will be long. The Working Committee's resolution itself should guard us against any such illusion. It says that "the Committee notes in the voluntary restoration of peace the great advance the nation has made in the practice of non-violence." One should not thus wonder if Mr. Gandhi declared his conviction after a few days that the nation had learnt the lesson of non-violence, if not thoroughly, at least well enough to enable him to commence passive resistance without danger to the preservation of peace, and started it. It therefore becomes all the more incumbent upon us, in view of the changed policy of Government, to press the view which we advanced before—that the best means of counteracting the new movement is to leave it alone till there is immediate danger of order being overthrown. If non-co-operation is to be killed, it should be killed not by the superior material force which Government can always bring into requisition, but by the will of the people themselves. We hope therefore non-co-operation will yet be given free scope—so long as it is kept within the limits mentioned above.

Absorption in Government? AFTER establishing the need for pushing forward the movement of non-co-operation in an intensified form, Mr. Jayakar, in his speech at the Thana District Conference, proceeds to criticise the various items in the programme as probably few "co-operaters" have done before, and concludes by making suggestions for amending the scheme which amount in effect not to its partial contraction, but total rejection. The criticism itself has now become almost trite by repetition and acquires

significance only from the personality of the speaker, inasmuch as it affords infallible proof that by this time every other Nationalist has become severely critical of the Congress programme. We need only refer here to Mr. Jayakar's description of the Liberals as a party of politicians bent on assimilation with the bureaucracy. This is a perversion of facts, no doubt unintentional, but still entirely inexcusable in view of its repeated contradiction. The Liberals consent to be merged into the Government only in so far as the Government changes its policy so as to accord with their convictions; and self-government is nothing else than an extension of this process of absorption so that ultimately the affairs of the country come to be administered in entire consonance with the country's wishes. But the Liberals have not failed to oppose Government whenever its policy was opposed to their views. And Mr. Jayakar's speech itself furnishes testimony to this fact. Take, for instance, the plucky fight put up by the Liberals in the United Provinces on behalf of the tenants, to which Mr. Jayakar refers. But the ill-success which attended their efforts is adduced by him to prove that the reforms are illusory. If the reforms have proved shadowy, then the expectations not only of the Liberals, but of politicians like Messrs. Jinnah and Jayakar as well, have been falsified. We will leave this point on one side for the moment;—but we may ask Mr. Jayakar, what else would the Nationalists have done if they were in the councils? Their view of any particular question might conceivably have been different, but surely Mr. Jayakar does not expect the Liberals to adopt Nationalist opinions because Nationalists have chosen, against their better judgment, to boycott the councils. All that we desire to show is that the Liberals fight, and have fought, Government whenever necessary, though of course they fight it with their own convictions, and not with the borrowed convictions of any other party.

Where Lies Common Ground? THIS charge has been laid at the door of the Liberals in order to justify the giving up by the Nationalists of constitutional agitation (of which they approve) in favour of non-co-operation (of which they disapprove). "We have numerous differences with Mr. Gandhi," says Mr. Jayakar, "but we have still more with the Liberals, who have identified themselves with the bureaucracy." If so, the Nationalists could have carried on constitutional agitation independently in their own way, without joining the Liberals and yet without taking up a programme of which their conscience speaks in clear accents of disapprobation. At any rate, as Mr. Gandhi himself says in the last number of *Young India*, there can be no meeting ground between a non-co-operator whose moral principle strictly forbids him to enter the council and a Nationalist who thinks it both right and expedient to do so. On the other

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MULSHI PETA.

THAT the present position at Mulshi Peta cannot indefinitely be prolonged, is self-evident. The crisis of the whole drama has been reached and it is only a question now which of the two ways open will be taken by the opposing forces which have been gathering for so long: the way of *detente* or detonation. At such a time all men of goodwill have a very real duty to perform, and since we may fairly claim to have taken all along a perfectly unbiassed and impartial attitude, we venture to sum up the present position, not for the purpose of generating more heat, but for spreading more light, as it cannot be denied that the real issues have been not a little obscured of late.

There can be no question but that the husbanding of a country's resources should be the first duty of statesmanship; and of such resources that which easily takes the first place is water, both for irrigation and power purposes. More and more nowadays is it being recognized how stupendous the reserve of power is, which hitherto has been allowed to run to waste. All mountainous countries of the world have an unfailing and cheap form of power readily available in the torrents and streams which rush down the hillsides, to lose themselves eventually in the broad rivers of the plains and in the ocean. Norway and Sweden, where nowadays electricity is laid on in practically every house as water is already in all civilised countries, are good instances of the wonderful development that has taken place in this respect in modern times. There is no question but that the Western Ghats of India provide an ideal opportunity for tapping similar reservoirs of power. The more closely people live packed together, the more urgent is it to make power universally available—whether for lighting, for transportation, for pumping, for heating, or for more specifically industrial purposes. With a great city like Bombay lying at the foot of the ghats it is almost a platitude to say that the whole of its inhabitants should have electrical power made readily available through the harnessing of the water resources of the ghats by a system of hydro-electric power stations. To employ instead coal, gotten from the other end of the continent, from Bihar, Bengal or where not, is sheer economic madness. That this present-day madness must give way to a more sensible system, is therefore not only devoutly to be desired by all well-wishers of the country, but it is clearly a development which is inevitable.

It may here be interposed, whether it is right to leave the supply of such a fundamental necessity as cheap power to private enterprise. It may well be argued that to make electricity readily available to every citizen is a public utility which should be the concern of Municipality or State, but not of a dividend-seeking private company. Against this it is necessary to say that the State has fully recognised this principle, by only giving a "license" to the private company and by

reserving to itself the right of taking it over (after fifty years), in the same way as the State is about to take over railway companies. One may deplore that the State has not felt equal to start and run such an undertaking itself; one may feel that it is shirking a responsibility; one may think that in any case fifty years is too long a period in which to give a free run to a private company. But granted all that—and what good crying over spilt milk?—it remains yet true that all this does not affect the individual case of Mulshi Peta. For it is the State that expropriates the Mavalas for a State power scheme. That the State happens to farm out its scheme may be bad policy, but it does not alter the fact that the State feels obliged to move some thousands of some people for the greater benefit of some lakhs of other people; and that in doing so, the State is acting upon a perfectly legitimate and sound principle. That this principle has been obscured is primarily due to the fact that all along the licensee has in the eyes of the public been simply a private owner, who owing to his influence is able to enlist the powers of the State, the better to encompass his sole object, the amassing of still more wealth. However, no one who is not altogether blinded by prejudice can deny that with the private owner in the present instance the industrial development of the country is at least as powerful a motive as that of pecuniary gain. All the same it seems to us a great tactical mistake that the Tata Company has been brought in at all at this stage and still more so, that it has been allowed to occupy the whole stage. No doubt the reason was once more reluctance on the part of Government to shoulder tasks—but the result has been as natural as it is deplorable. All the more reason that the true position should now be more openly vindicated and the Tata Company relegated to the only position it is entitled to—that of a *pis aller*, and a temporary one at that.

Having cleared the ground in a general way, we now come to the particular case of the Mulshi Hydro-Electric Scheme. As is well known, the water to be caught is to be stored in a tank which will submerge 3,500 acres of good agricultural land. Now, with the great pressure of population on all food resources, such as is the case in India, the destruction of any area of good agricultural land is a grave matter. We presume that engineering skill has exerted itself to find another way of tapping these water resources, without having to submerge so much of good rice land, but has failed to discover a practicable alternative. And when we say "practicable," we do not mean a no more expensive alternative, but an alternative, which, although more difficult and therefore costly, yet will not make the ultimate cost per electric power unit produced altogether unremunerative. We say, we presume that this question of an engineering alternative has been carefully gone into and found wanting: if so, we have never seen it stated, and, again, we think it advisable that a clear statement on this point should be made. However, taking it that the

submersion of these fields is inevitable, we then have to take the relative value of the food production and power production available from the same area, and we think it is obvious that the latter far outweighs the former in the economic life of the country. If, moreover, as we understand, the overflow on the Konkan side will be turned to irrigation purposes there, the answer to perfectly legitimate misgivings as to a reduction of the cultivable area would be complete.

There remains the crux of the problem, the personal question of the Mavalas who are to be taken from their ancestral hearths and homes, for the benefit of the Commonwealth at large. About 9,000 people are concerned. Even from an economic point of view it is no light matter to risk the transformation of such highly skilled labour, as all agricultural labour is, into that of unskilled navvies. Even from that point of view alone, it is of the greatest importance to see to it, that that agricultural skill is not lost to the country: and it is therefore very satisfactory to hear that the Government have land available on which to settle the expropriated Mavalas and there to give them the opportunity of turning their agricultural skill to the same good account as in their old home.

But the question is more than an economical one, for it is a human one, first and last. The idea therefore that all that was needed, was to value the land to be submerged and to pay down the market price for it, is as mischievous, as it was generally prevalent. Whatever may have been the outlook at first, we have it on the best authority that at present nothing like such an impersonal view is being taken, whether by the Tatas or by the Government. The duty of the expropriators is very properly recognized to consist primarily in finding another home for the expropriated. Hence Government is now much more looking upon these people as it ought to have done from the start—i. e. as people who are suffering for the good of the Commonwealth and who therefore ought to be treated, not as land speculators, but as refugees. This is the proper principle, the only possible principle, to adopt; and Government have adopted it. But if that is only right and fair, it is equally right and fair that the Mavalas also should accept this principle. Once this principle is mutually agreed upon, the road is clear to a settlement of details by arbitration.

We understand that the Government are not only willing, but anxious to go to arbitration on the details; we have been assured that "the whole of the Government machinery would be placed at the disposal of the Mavalas," to settle them happily on suitable land, in the Nasik District, or perhaps if feasible on the Neera. The Government would have to be held responsible for giving each family the offer of land, not so much of equal area, but of equal productivity; and not only that, but a liberal money compensation as well for "disturbance". These details are necessarily open to further discussion, but they represent to our mind the

right spirit in which compensation for the Mavalas should be conceived. The one thing needed is mutually to agree upon such principle, and, based on it, to proceed to arbitration.

The alternative to that is for the Mavalas to persist in what could only be the utterly selfish or ignorant attitude of refusing to listen to reason and to the larger interests involved. It is emphatically not patriotism on their part to cling to the land, but to surrender it; in fact, in the one case they would behave as enemies, in the latter as benefactors of the country at large. What course is ultimately adopted is the tremendous responsibility, not of the Government now, but of the Mavalas themselves and of those who advise them.

CALCUTTA MUNICIPAL BILL.

SIR SURENDRANATH BANARJEE introduced the Calcutta Municipal Bill in the Bengal Legislative Council on November 21. A bill revising the present Act of 1899 was prepared and introduced in the Council in 1917, but was withdrawn in 1919 at the instance of several public bodies on the ground that a question of such tremendous importance ought to be left over to the Reformed Council. An informal conference of all representative men—officials and non-officials—was called by him in March last to discuss the necessary amendments in the present Act before the bill now introduced was even drafted. This was a very desirable departure and the present Bill embodies the recommendations of that conference in the main.

The constitution of the Municipality has been sought to be liberalised by this Bill. It now consists of a paid chairman, nominated by Government, and fifty members, called commissioners, 25 of whom are elected by the citizen-voters, one from each of the 25 wards, 10 by the Chamber of Commerce, the Trades Association and the Port Trust, and 15 nominated by the Government. The three bodies named above are almost wholly European electorates, so the representation of Indians is just less than one-half, a result of the Act of 1899 which created at the time a great stir in the then capital of India, and which reduced the popular representation given by the Act of 1888 from two-thirds to one-half. The new Bill provides that the total number of commissioners should be 80, of whom 55 shall be elected by voters, 12 by the three bodies mentioned above, 5 aldermen co-opted by the Corporation and 8 nominated by the Government. Thus the nominees of Government will form only one-tenth of the total number. To the Mahomedan community 13 seats are reserved out of the 55, thus dispensing with the pernicious practice of separate communal electorates. Both Mahomedans and Europeans may get themselves elected by the general electorate, thus winning seats in addition to those reserved for them. It is to be deeply regretted that 21 out of the 29 Mahomedan members of the Council opposed the introduction of the Bill.

merely on the ground of the omission of provision for separate electorates, regardless of the great benefits that are expected to accrue from the Bill. The institution of aldermen will be introduced for the first time in this country and will supply the means of utilizing the services of such experienced and eminent citizens as may be unwilling to face the trouble and risk of a popular election.

The Bill proposes an advance in the matter of franchise also. Under the existing law (1) those who pay municipal taxes not less than Rs. 24 per annum or (2) license fee on profession or trade not less than Rs. 25; or (3) those who own and occupy land or building assessed at not less than Rs. 150 per annum; or (4) those who either own or occupy land or building assessed at not less than Rs. 300, are entitled to vote. The Bill lowers the first limit from Rs. 24 to 12 but fails to make any change in any other limits. We very much wish that those too had been lowered to one-half. It is calculated that the proposed lowering will bring a larger number of Mahomedans than Hindus on the electoral roll, and thus reduce the disproportion that exists at present between the voters of the two communities and their total population. It would be interesting to know what will hereafter be the total strength of the voters and what proportion it will bear to the whole population. At present the franchise for municipal election is the same as for the election of members from Calcutta for the Bengal Legislative Council. The Bill proposes to lower the former which is a satisfactory advance, especially in view of the fact that the Bombay Corporation has recently recommended to keep the municipal franchise in Bombay higher than the legislative. Plural voting has been considerably reduced.

The present Act of 1899 limited the powers and functions of the Corporation by creating co-ordinate bodies—the General Committee (corresponding to the Standing Committee in Bombay) and the Chairman, who holds the dual position of the President of the Corporation as well as the Committee and of the chief executive officer. This arrangement is said to have been based on the Bombay model, though the popular element in the General Committee is much smaller than in the Standing Committee and the Calcutta "Chairman" has more independent power and authority than the Bombay "Commissioner." With the passing of the Bill supreme authority will be restored to the Corporation in Municipal matters, the General Committee and the Chairman, to be now styled the Chief Executive Officer, being authorised to wield only such powers as may be delegated to them, as is the case at present in mofussil municipalities. The Chairman is now appointed by the Government, but under the changed circumstances will be appointed by the Corporation, subject to confirmation by Government. The Corporation will elect their own president, who will be called the Mayor, perhaps the Lord Mayor, at some future date.

The Bill has no doubt given great personal gratification to the Minister who has introduced it,

and will give general satisfaction in the country. The serious mistake which the Bengal Government and Lord Curzon's autocratic Government committed in the teeth of severe public opposition by passing the retrograde Act of 1899 will be rectified in 1922, about a quarter of a century after, by a partially responsible Government. During its passage through the Committee stage, we hope, the Bill will be improved in several directions. We would emphasize one, i. e. the disqualification of the female sex, both from voting and election. The Legislative Councils of both Bengal and Behar and Orissa, have, by their rejection of "vote for women" resolutions, proved themselves backward, but we hope that our Bengali brethren will not let this opportunity, of righting the wrong they have done to the weaker sex, pass. Women in Bombay city have exercised the right of voting for a long time past and no evil has happened to them nor to the men of Bombay. We wish better luck this time to our sisters in Calcutta. We also hope that our Mahomedan friends will hereafter adopt a saner attitude than they did when the Bill was introduced. How long do they wish to cling to their separatist tendencies?

GOD OR CÆSAR ?

(Concluded from last issue.)

SINCE, then, there is more than one Supernatural Religion accepted by different men and since modern States are composed of individuals differing in their Supernatural Religion, it is commonsense that a State should only concern itself about the natural law of Natural Religion, which is common and fundamental to all mankind *qua* rational beings. It is even more than commonsense; for the State is itself subject to the authority of Natural Religion only and therefore by its very constitution incapable of dealing with Supernatural Religion—just as foundations cannot determine the architectural style of the building. The State lacks competency to adjudicate in supernatural matters, and History bears eloquent testimony to the hopeless disorder into which human affairs have inevitably been thrown whenever that plain lesson has been neglected and theocracies been attempted.

From all that has been said it is therefore clear, that the State can only admit a plea that such and such a statute of his is in conflict with Natural Religion, but never, with Supernatural Religion. It furthermore admits the existence, the reasonableness, the legitimacy of the existence and practice of supernatural religions. But the claims of these latter are conflicting, since every supernatural religion demands a unique relationship—as for instance Hinduism that of the Vedas to the rest of beings; Islam that of Mahomed to other men; Christianity that of Jesus to God: therefore the State, recognizing the limits of unaided reason, must necessarily make the selection of a particular supernatural religion the prerogative of the indi-

vidual and it is thus that we demand from the State "Liberty of Conscience," *i. e.* of Religion. One thing only the State can except and must except—*viz.* that the unimpeded exercise of individual religion must not clash with Natural Religion. The latter comes first: and if there is a clear, logically irreconcilable conflict between Natural and Supernatural Religion, the second must, in the very nature of the case, give way to the first. If, therefore, to take an illustration, cannibalism or human sacrifices was the injunction of some religion, the State would rightly have to prevent the exercise of that religion in that respect—not because it is competent to interfere in supernatural matters, but because supernatural religion cannot contradict natural religion.

If therefore a citizen is impeded in the exercise of what he holds his religion to be, the question is not merely whether his religion really does bind him to some such conduct: but whether such conduct is against reason and moral order, *i. e.* Natural Religion. In the case of the Karachi trials therefore it follows, that the accused ought not to have merely pleaded before a secular tribunal that Islam obliges them as Moslems to disregard certain State laws: they ought also to have proved that the Islamic law in question in no way interferes with or contradicts the natural law of Natural Religion which is binding on all men *qua* rational beings. In other words, it was only competent for them to prove that the contract entered into between the "seduced" soldiers and the War Office was against natural law, against public policy, immoral. Being that—and if Islam is a true supernatural religion—it would naturally follow that such contract was against Islamic law too; but in itself, it being a Moslem precept is no argument whatever before a State Tribunal.

The learned Maulana is satisfied that the contract, to which the Indian Government would hold its Moslem soldiers, is contrary to Islamic law; other Moslem doctors hold that it is not. This is a matter for them to decide; but what Moslem and Non-Moslem alike is interested in, what is of relevance and even of great importance to all Indians *qua* citizens, is whether

- (1) killing in itself is wrong;
- (2) if not, whether killing in war is wrong;
- (3) if not, whether this contract to kill in war, is wrong.

In the latter case, it could have been pleaded, for instance, that the contract was invalidated through ignorance on the part of those enlisting, as to the full extent of what they were committing themselves to. But if it is lawful to kill in war and if the would-be recruits knew that they contracted to kill, at the word of their superiors, Afghans, Turks, Persians, Arabs, no less than Germans, Armenians, Bulgars, Russians—yes, and fellow-Indians too: not because of their nationality or because of their faith, but because opposed to the Government represented by their own superiors: then it is impossible to see, how it can be pleaded to be against

"the law of God" to carry out the contract. If the nature of the contract itself is lawful, the contractors on the one part (the soldiers) contracted a lawful debt towards the contractor on the other part (the State), and they are in justice bound to carry out their part of the covenant. The community is entitled to protect itself and if such protection implies the maintenance of police and military, then individual police and military by the law of God are bound to the terms of a covenant, which, *ex hypothesi*, is lawful and has been freely entered into.

There remains one more point—and that is whether the Government, which at the time of the contract may have been the legitimate government of the country, has not in the meantime so acted as to have become in itself contrary to Natural Religion. A government must be carried on with at least the tacit consent of the majority of the governed and must in any case intend the welfare of the whole community. But if the Government of India fails on either count and has become "tyrannous" in the technical sense of the term: then "the law of God," *i. e.* of Natural Religion, releases from the covenant, not only Moslem soldiers, but all soldiers, and from any sort of allegiance to such Government not only all soldiers, but all other citizens as well.

I may perhaps be permitted to add, parenthetically, that if the Indian Government can be called tyrannous at all, it can only be so called in a loose, *i. e.* a rhetorical, sense, because even if this or that concrete act of a particular official was technically "tyrannous," nothing has happened to vitiate, strictly speaking, the whole basis of government and to make it immoral for any citizen to obey it. Yet only in such a case could in strict parlance of the science of Ethics any government become a "tyranny." This is not the place to develop this further: it has only been adduced to show a last eventuality in which the "Law of God" supersedes the "law of man."

The purpose of this study has not been to elucidate the ethics of "Civil Disobedience," but to make clear the principle on which a conflict between State and Religion must be judged. Supernatural Religion, we have seen, must, if true, reinforce, or at least not contradict, the dictates of Natural Religion; for if there was a real incompatibility between a point in Natural and one in Supernatural Religion, that would be *prima facie* evidence that the latter religion in that respect was false. Again, if there is any true conflict at any time between State and Religion, that conflict affects every single citizen *qua* citizen, *qua* rational human being, immediately and individually; and if, on the other hand, citizens as a whole are not involved, it proves again that there can be no such conflict.

If the law of British India was contrary to the law of God, it could not be a Moslem, but would be an Indian concern. And if it is not an Indian concern, then Indians who happen to be

Moslems have no rational alternative but to obey the law of their country and to revise, if necessary, their own interpretation of this or that "Islamic law" in the light of Natural Religion, "even of that light which lighteth every man coming into the world."

H. C. E. ZACHARIAS.

LAND IMPROVEMENT IN THE DECCAN.

AT a meeting of the Bombay Provincial Board of Agriculture recently held in Poona, under the chairmanship of the Hon. Mr. C. V. Mehta, Dr. H. H. Mann read an interesting note on the "Preparations for Famine Conditions" so far as the Agricultural Department is concerned. In this paper Dr. Mann discussed the problem of the utilization of insufficient and badly distributed rainfall for the purpose of preventing famine especially in the typical area of the eastern part of the Bombay Deccan. In 1919, the attention of the Government was called by a resolution passed by the Indian Board of Agriculture to the question of regulating the run-off of water on the soil and the need of extensive development of embankments and other village works was definitely suggested as a measure for the prevention of famine. The remedies adopted in the past consisted of the development of large schemes of irrigation and construction of wells, financed out of tagavi loans. Dr. Mann has attempted to prove in his note by means of facts and figures that the possibilities for the development of irrigation in the famine tracts of the Bombay presidency are extraordinarily poor and hence they must either depend on the rainfall or adopt some other methods for improving irrigation. Even supposing that all the recommendations made by the Irrigation Commission of 1901 be carried into effect, the relief that would be granted would not reach more than 8 p. c. of the land in these tracts. They will have to depend more or less on the annual rainfall. There are about 206 lakhs of acres of land under crop in the Bombay Deccan and the Karnatak. Of these, according to the estimate made by Dr. Mann, not more than 15 lakhs of acres can be irrigated by canals and wells. Therefore, the problem is mainly that of preventing the run-off and utilising the rainfall to the utmost. In considering this question, the case of altogether dry years must be left out of account and attention confined to those years in which there is a rainfall, but it is either badly distributed or is somewhat insufficient.

From the history of famines in these tracts during the last fifty years it is found that the majority of the famines are caused by unevenly distributed rainfall, and hence, if this can be utilized, the problem is brought within the reach of solution. The average annual rainfall in these tracts is about 18 inches, but for the *jowari* crop which is usually cultivated in these districts, the amount of rain that is required is about $6\frac{1}{4}$ inches only. The wastage of the rainfall is due to (1) run-off on the surface, (2) out of season rains, (3) loss

by evaporation from monsoon rains, and (4) loss by drainage. Supposing that the average total rainfall is 18 inches, according to Dr. Mann's calculation, the average run-off carries away 2'2 inches, the out of season rains are responsible for a wastage of 1'8 inches, and the loss by evaporation amounts to 5'7 inches; but the loss due to drainage is variable. Thus, though out of an average rainfall of 18 inches only $6\frac{1}{4}$ inches is required for the crop, it is not available owing to a loss of 9'7 inches due to the above-mentioned three causes, and a variable amount due to the last one, viz. drainage. Dr. Mann suggests that if run-off and evaporation, which consume about 7'7 inches, be kept down to the above proportions, the occurrence of famines may be rare and less severe. The method suggested to bring it about is to develop the construction of embankments and *tals* in these tracts. According to him two things seem to be wanted in this connection:— (1) An expert officer who will be charged with the work of preparing schemes for embankments or other means of preventing "run-off" for individual cultivators or for groups of cultivators working in co-operation; and (2) co-operative bodies of cultivators who will be ready to risk money in carrying such schemes into effect.

The suggestion for the appointment of an expert land development officer is not likely to meet with the approval of the public in general. The higher posts in the Agricultural Department have recently been increased enormously, but the utility of the Department has not been enhanced to the same extent. The posts of Deputy Directors of Agriculture and Divisional Superintendents have been multiplied beyond expectation and the officers who were originally intended for research work have been engrossed in mere clerical and administrative duties. The appointment of a land development officer will therefore be an additional burden on the public treasury. This work can be entrusted to one of the Deputy Directors of Agriculture, who, if necessary, should be assisted by a staff of agricultural graduates who had studied land development as a special subject for their B. Ag. examination. The object of the new proposal, viz. the development of embankments by preparing schemes for individual cultivators, can be carried out by the help of the subordinate staff. The idea of employing a land development expert from a foreign country will not be profitable in the long run. He will have to be paid a comparatively large salary and will in all probability be quite ignorant of the real conditions in this presidency. He will waste a couple of years in studying the conditions here and even then may not be successful. Again, if the contemplated land development officer is to be appointed for the whole of the presidency, he will not be able to do much good to the public. He will spend the greater portion of his time in touring over the whole of the presidency and yet may not find sufficient time to study the conditions in any part thoroughly. We would therefore suggest that the work of land development be

made a necessary part of the duties of the Deputy Directors of Agriculture with the assistance of a special staff if necessary. The creation of a new office is not expected to do much good to the people.

As regards the financing of these schemes, none can deny that much can be done by co-operative associations of the cultivators; but the Government must take the initiative in this matter. Every year the Government of Bombay is required to set aside a sum of Rs. 63 lakhs for the purpose of famine insurance. A part of the money is spent on protective irrigation. It is perfectly reasonable to expect the Government to spend a part of it on land development which so far as the 90 p. c. of the land in these tracts is concerned is the only effective method of protection from famines. The Government should not therefore wait for the promotion of co-operative societies for the embankment schemes, but should launch the project on its own initiative. Loans should be advanced to individual cultivators for the special purpose of construction of embankments and *tals*, if the schemes are approved by the Agricultural Department. It may not be out of place here to suggest that these loans may be granted through the agency of the Agricultural rather than the Revenue Department. The experience of tagavi loans in the past, which are obviously granted for effecting improvements on lands, shows that they are not utilized for their original object on account of bad supervision and lack of interest on the part of the revenue officers, who, being generally overworked, do not find sufficient time to inspect whether the loan has been properly utilized. Again, the revenue officers cannot be expected to see whether the loan has been used economically. The Agricultural Department can do both these things efficiently and will be able to bring home to the cultivators the utility of such operations. This problem is of immense importance and it behoves the Minister for Agriculture to take it up in right earnest without much loss of time.

AN AGRICULTURIST.

A LETTER FROM LONDON.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

LONDON, NOVEMBER 10.

IRISH NEGOTIATIONS.

THE political situation is inchoate. Parliament is to be prorogued this evening, but no-one seems to know whether, after all, there will be a new Session or a new Parliament. Everything will turn upon the success or failure of the present negotiations on the Irish question. These have gone beyond the stage of discussion between the Government representatives and those of Sinn Fein. Apparently, these have come to an agreement—a contingent one on the questions of allegiance, non-coercion of Ulster, and Imperial security guarantees, and the agreement that has been reached, for the moment, has been apparently reduced to a series of proposals

which have secured the unanimous support of the Cabinet. It is at this stage that Ulster has been called into council, for Sinn Fein insists that Ireland shall be treated as a self-governing unit, and not a partitioned territory, expressing at the same time the utmost willingness to give to Ulster every guarantee as regards autonomy in her internal affairs. Whether Ulster, whose Ministers are now in London, will agree is a very moot point. Last night, speaking at the Lord Mayor's Banquet—what they wanted a Banquet for, after a day of pea-soup fog, no-one quite seems to be able to explain—the Prime Minister made the important remark that at no time had the settlement of the age-long Anglo-Irish quarrel seemed so near as at present, and one draws some comfort from a declaration of this kind coming at this moment. Nevertheless, there are few public signs that Ulster is willing to make the step in advance that is required of her, and thus make her contribution to Irish peace and the stabilisation of the Empire. It is, of course, asking a great deal of Ulster to surrender some of the powers that were conferred upon her so recently under the new Act, but things have changed with an astonishing rapidity, and those who rely upon Mr. Bonar Law to lead an anti-Government cave of Unionists on the strength of his known commitments on the Ulster question some time ago are reckoning without this change in the time spirit. The fact is, even among Unionists, as was shown in last week's debate, when the Government achieved an overwhelming victory over the Unionist "Die-Hards," there is a strong desire that at last the Irish problem should be got out of the way. But if it is not, on account of Ulster obstinacy, then it is clear, after what the Prime Minister said last week, in the debate, he will no longer be a party to the coercion of the South of Ireland, any more than under his pledges, he will be in the case of Ulster. So we may, after all, have a General Election, and there may be a great change in the political situation as a result of the forces set in motion and the others that will be released by the resulting split among the Unionists on the Irish question.

A STRAIGHT TALK.

The Rev. H. T. Vodden, a missionary of Aurangabad, had some unpleasant things to tell the Northern Congress of the Church Missionary Society, at its sittings last week end. He described the impressions of the Christian Church and Christianity current in India. To the non-Christian Indian, he said, all Western civilisation was supposed to be the religion of Jesus Christ put into practice. These last few years had brought a terrible disillusionment, for the non-Christians had seen all the leading Christian nations of the world at war. This fact alone, he remarked, possessed terrible significance. Then again Christian industrialism in India had led to the building up of crowded cities where hundreds of thousands of the Indian's fellow-countrymen were herded together to minister to the greed of Christian men. The Indian saw

that men in Christian lands were bound by vice as foul as any in his own. It had led one Indian to say, "Your Christianity is nothing but dancing and drink." They had got the impression that the British had relied more on the power of the gun than on the strength of spiritual forces. Could it be wondered at, that Christianity as seen in our Christian civilisation was not wanted? That is the kind of straight talk that does much more good than harm and is badly needed.

"THROWN TO THE WOLVES."

Among the extreme reactionaries in Anglo-Indian circles, undoubtedly Sir Michael O'Dwyer stands pre-eminent. He has written a long screed to his favourite organ, the *Morning Post*—I suppose that he could not write a short letter if his life depended upon it—in which he holds the Government of India and Mr. Montagu, of course, up to ridicule and shame for the manner, in which, he declares, they have offered up the Indian civil servants, who are unwilling to accept the detested reforms, as a sacrifice. The paper, under the heading, "Thrown to the Wolves," naturally points the moral, and declares that because they saved a desperate situation in India, and because some of them in difficult circumstances gave orders which are not strictly covered by the letter of the regulations, they have been officially rebuked, and are treated as marked men, who must be shelved or shunted, so as not to give offence to the seditious. "To such depths has British policy fallen in India," laments this impartial critic. And then to show how clearly things appeal to it, it ascribes to the cowardly policy of throwing over the gallant General Dyer the present Moplah outbreak and the heavy loss of life that has occurred in overcoming it. "Such evil consequences have flowed from the policy of sacrificing friends to please enemies." Another reactionary, of a somewhat minor character, but who has done a great deal of mischief here, is the Rev. C. Poyntz Sanderson, who spoke a few days ago on the position of India in the Empire at the Newcastle Rotary Club. He took up the bold, bluff British attitude, and strongly supported the position taken up on Indian questions by no less an authority than the Duke of Northumberland, who sees Bolsheviks everywhere, and is just now providing much amusement for the Labour Party. Mr. Sanderson, too, sees the hand of Bolshevism in Mr. Gandhi's movement. He expressed great sympathy with the educated Indian, and went on to say that India could never hold the same position as Australia or Canada. What the status of India should be he would not venture to prophesy, which is a pity, but he still hoped that it would be found possible to rule out impracticable ideals, and find a status which would gratify India's legitimate desires without entailing misery upon multitudes. That, he thought, would be a danger to the Empire. In these expressions of opinion, he seemed to have the support of Sir Theodore Morison, Principal of the Armstrong College, who moved the vote of thanks. From these experts it is pleasant to

turn to such a convert as Sir Valentine Chirol, who has just published a new book entitled "India Old and New," in which he reproduces the bulk of his recent articles to the *Times*, with a good deal of original matter. His main thesis is very different from that of the others whom I have quoted, for he is firmly of opinion that the solution for Britain's Eastern problems is to be found in "a frank recognition of racial equality in the sense of equality of rightful opportunity for both races, Asiatic and European." Partnership in the Imperial Commonwealth—partnership in rights and duties—is the one means, Sir Valentine Chirol insists, whereby throughout India and all over Asia a reinvigorated faith in the British Empire's mission may be restored. Fortunately, Sir Valentine better represents average British opinion than Sir Michael O'Dwyer or Mr. Sanderson.

THE CHAGRINE OF THE DIE-HARDS.

That this is so is clear from the non-success of the Unionist "Die-Hards" in obtaining a day specially set aside to debate the wickedness of present British policy in India, which is apparently causing them much alarm. Undeterred by their defeat the other day over the Irish question, they evidently thought they might obtain a better success here of showing the Government what they thought of them and their laches. But Mr. Chamberlain, simple man that he is, was not to be caught in their trap. He suggested that they should see him privately, and then, after explaining the difficulty of setting aside a day for such a discussion just as Parliament was to be prorogued, he suggested their sending a deputation to Mr. Montagu. But this was being thrown out of the frying pan into the fire, and with some precipitancy, they declined this suggestion without even thanking its proposer. Then yesterday they brought the matter up again, but once more Mr. Chamberlain was adamant. Even were there time, he thought, and so did the Government, that the present time was inopportune for such a discussion as that proposed, and he could hold out no hopes. Nevertheless, it having been pointed out to him that since the Secretary of State for India's salary had been placed upon the British Budget, there had been no debate on Indian affairs, he took pity upon the unfortunates whom he had so sadly disappointed and promised them an early day next session—if there is a next session and not a new Parliament, with an entirely new administration.

THE FRANCO-TURKISH TREATY.

The independent Turkish Treaty with Angora, on the part of France, has given rise to much controversy, and is now the subject of diplomatic exchanges between the two countries. The French cannot understand the British objection at this stage to some of the proposals, which, they allege, are exactly the same as those previously submitted to the Foreign Office, without any objection at the time. This is denied entirely, and there is a pretty mess to be cleared up. But the most startling fact arising out of the controversy lies in France's

having agreed to the transfer to the Nationalist Government of Angora a part of Syria which she held, not as a Colony of her own, but as a mandatory under the League of Nations. This is an intolerable breach of the very spirit of the Covenant of the League, revealed at the very moment that the Washington Conference on the limitation of armaments is about to open. It is to be hoped that France will hasten to repair her error in this matter, and make it clear that she does not interpret a mandate as conferring upon the mandatory the right to dispose of the mandated territory as she pleases, and without reference to the League from which she draws her powers and rights, and to whom she is in the last resort responsible.

SELECTIONS.

THE FAILURE OF NON-CO-OPERATION.

MR. JAYAKAR'S TESTIMONY.

MR. M. R. JAYAKAR, in his Presidential Address at the third Thana District Conference, thus testified to the failure of non-co-operation:—

It will not be difficult to find out in what directions the programme (of non-co-operation) has not achieved the expected success and the reasons for the same. For instance, the boycott of schools and colleges has not succeeded and even persons of known and undoubted loyalty to the cause, complain that the action of Congress workers has caused more harm than good. They concentrated too much on the disruption of existing institutions and less on the creation and maintenance of new ones on "national" lines. They forgot that a student cannot be left idle in the street and that, if the Congress must call him out, it can only be after it has provided for him a good substitute. In Bombay, we let pass the psychological moment when we could have founded and reared up an excellent college with various branches. Public enthusiasm was ripe for it in the early part of the year, but we let it evaporate in declamation and emotional exaltation. Some went so far as to suggest that it was no part of the Congress programme to start national colleges, though the terms of the Congress resolution specially provided for it. 50,000 boys are out in idleness, says Sir Ashutosh Mukerji. Some may glorify in this catastrophe, but there are many who regard this disruptive event with sad dismay. We have experimented too much in youthful sacrifice. Our youth have reciprocated with more love and tenderness than we have shown for their welfare. The few good institutions, which Congress workers have created, are suffering from our neglect and apathy and dragging a weary existence. The shadow of a name has very often been pursued to the abandonment of the substance, and we now find a large number of boys in the country, who are practically loafing in the streets, with a vague ambition "to do something patriotic."

Our ban on lawyers has, likewise, not attained much success. Few lawyers, whose sacrifice of their practice has added strength to the Congress cause, have responded to the call. Litigation has not gone down; in Bombay, on the Original Side, it has very much increased. The prestige of British Courts, in civil suits between an Indian and Indian has not been destroyed and cannot be so easily destroyed; for, ordinarily, this variety of legal contests is not much coloured with injustice, as political trials are. If lawyers had been called out, because, being a trained class of workers, the country wanted their undivided time and attention at this critical hour, it would have been a different matter, and, perhaps, if the call had been so made, many more would have responded to it. But it was put the wrong way, and the lawyer was made to appear as if, in pursuing his profession, he was acting sinfully and must atone for it by a complete withdrawal from

practice. The result was that, out of sheer self-respect, many really good lawyers have declined to respond to the call. Many could not give up their practice for pecuniary reasons and were too honest to adopt subterfuges calculated to create a semblance of sacrifice. Lawyers have become "pariahs" of our present political life. Some of them had borne the brunt of public agitation for more than two decades; their place is vacant and no class of workers of equal intelligence and keenness has come forward to take it.

This part of the Congress programme has created a foul atmosphere of hypocrisy, intolerance, imposture and conceit. In the Congress camp, in which modesty, self-respect, and honesty oftentimes find it hard to hold their place. In our enthusiasm, we forget that many lawyers value their profession for the training it affords in courage, truthfulness, honour and toleration. No other profession trains a young man so well to withstand and expose injustice and to uphold the traditions of truth and honour. Our past political history of thirty-three years is a brilliant record of the services rendered by lawyers to the Congress cause. If a greater sacrifice than before was needed now on their part, a direct call on their self-respect and patriotism on this footing should have been made, but no good has arisen from putting the lawyer under the ban of ridicule and infamy. The call made upon them was singularly harsh. No other class of public workers was required to give up his means of livelihood. The importing merchant supports British prestige as much as, if not more than, the lawyer and yet he stalks unabashed in the Congress camp without closing his shop. No ban was put on litigants,* without whom the lawyer cannot thrive. I am, therefore, surprised that notwithstanding so much hardship, so many lawyers have come out and are to be found in the vanguard of the movement. The few courts of justice, we called into existence, have not had enough support and are a mockery.

The failure of these parts of the programme is now practically admitted and they are now pushed into the background. It would be better if, in revising the programme in the next session of the Congress, these limbs, which have ceased to function or respond to the laws of our growth, are boldly amputated. In any event, they make clear the necessity of a revision, so as to render the programme more effective, elastic and practical. Let us keep in view the main aim of the movement, viz. to develop the strength of the people, their confidence in themselves, their self-respect as Indians and their power and capacity to resent national wrongs. Let us also keep in view the other object of the movement, viz. to weaken the irresponsible power of the bureaucracy and to make Government by fright impossible, and let us, for this purpose, take advantage of every clean weapon, even if it is not of the true N.-C.-O. brand, provided it is effective for our purpose. Let us not neglect or despise any legitimate avenue of fighting against the administration. The fight requires to be carried on in manifold ways. Some may carry it in the councils, face to face with the officials. Why cannot "non-co-operation" in its proper sense, be practised in the Councils? Sir P. M. Mehta when he left the Council Hall with his colleagues on a memorable occasion or when he, face to face with the then Home Member, mercilessly unmasked the preposterous pretensions of the beaucracy, was fighting with weapons and a spirit which many non-co-operators of the true and accredited brand may envy in these days. If non-co-operation is an *attitude* of the mind, as its eminent author conceives it, and not so much a programme or a creed, a Council Hall is as fitting a place for its display as a mass meeting in Marwadi Vidyalaya. The spirit resides in the mind and is independent of the environment. It is no ground to say that, oftentimes, the environment frightens a weakling, for we do not build our doctrines only on the possibility of men being weak and timid.

We have already departed from the original rigour of our programme in this behalf. A non-co-operator can now compete at municipal elections. He can offer advice to Govern-

* The ban was extended to litigants as well.—Ed.

ment in or outside private interviews. Non-co-operator papers do report the proceedings of the Legislative Bodies, comment on them, and suggest remedies for the benefit of the Government. Scarcely a non-co-operator now-a-days speaks without referring to gubernatorial utterances and orders in Council. He comments on the policies of Government, suggesting remedies as he goes on with his comments. Several lawyers in Bombay, who are still in practice, are now allowed to occupy prominent places as speakers at non-co-operation meetings. This is as it should be, for we cannot afford to ignore or despise, in the stunted state of our resources, the co-operation of any honest worker prepared to make a sacrifice commensurate with his capacity. This is all done now silently and as a concession. My plea is for making the programme so wide, elastic and natural, as to turn these concessions into acknowledged rights. The Congress creed calls upon us to obtain Swaraj by all legitimate and peaceful means. All weapons, all avenues of work and all manner of public workers are enjoined on us, for the attainment of the common end. Why set up ascetic standards, impractical tests, and unnatural bans which may often let in the dishonest but keep out the honest man, whose co-operation, even with a difference, is often worth having. The programme may become theoretically less perfect, perhaps logically less consistent, but it will certainly be more natural, real and effective. If people are a living organism, subject to changes from time to time, you cannot cure them by an unalterable shibboleth. You must vary your programme from time to time in exact proportion with their requirements, as they advance on the path of their progress. Weapons, once coveted as useful, may get blunt. Theories once charged with potency may become obsolete. A wise leader has to reject these, time after time, regardless of their ancient utility. This is often a merciless process, like the cutting off of a gangrenous limb, but the body politic needs such excisions for its growth, even more than the human frame. The boast must be confined to Manu's age that he could speak and write for all times. We moderns take a humbler view of our efforts. The spirit of the times requires that we suit our programme to the need of the hour and the capacity of our comrades. The Gandiva (गन्धर्व) was a strong bow, but only Arjuna could wield it. In the hands of Uttara, it proved an encumbrance, a menace and danger. His safety lay in having a weaker weapon, which he could wield with ease and comfort.

(Continued from page 519.)

hand, there ought to be much common ground between Nationalists and Liberals who are both inspired by a common faith in council work but whose methods of work possibly differ a little. The differences that divide Liberals and Nationalists are differences on detail, while those that divide Nationalists, from Non-co-operators are differences on principle, and therefore irreconcilable. If, however the Nationalists scorn joint action with the Liberals, we have no desire to press it on them, but they should recognise that it is not right or just to misrepresent the Liberals in order to defend their own departure from the path marked out by their conscience.

Concerted Action Necessary. THE Nationalists of Maharashtra are meeting to-day in conference at Akola to discuss their future policy. There will be a practical unanimity in this conference as to the need for what is euphemistically called revision of the present non-co-operation plan, for the Poona organ of Nationa-

lism correctly represents the prevalent feeling in these ranks thus,—“Constitutional agitation is quite intelligible, similarly organised obstruction is intelligible, and armed resistance also is intelligible; but what is not intelligible is non-violent non-co-operation which suffers from the combined drawbacks of all these three courses.” But the question is not as to the opinion of the Nationalists, but as to their ability to give effect to it. In the Calcutta Congress the Nationalists of Maharashtra were equally unanimous in their opposition of non-co-operation, but their opposition was overborne by Mr. Gandhi's following. It remains to be seen whether they will show more strength this time. If the Nationalists in all the provinces make a combined attempt to secure a majority at Ahmedabad, and, in the event of their failure, break away from the Congress, or, remaining in the Congress, accept only such of its resolutions as are approved by their conscience, then only will the Nationalists have a chance. It will be very difficult for any party in a single province to assert itself without aid of the other provinces; and it will look very ungracious now for the Nationalists in one province to secede at a time when the movement of non-co-operation is under a cloud. Everything therefore depends upon concerted action.

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