

THE Servant of India

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Office : KIBE WADA, BUDHWAR PETH, POONA CITY.

VOL. VI, No. 7.]

POONA—THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 1923.

{ INLAND SUBNS. Rs. 6.
FOREIGN SUBNS. s. 10.

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TOPICS OF THE WEEK

WE are sorely grieved to find the Punjab Government making unnecessary difficulties about the release of prisoners convicted in the course of the recent Gurdwar agitation. The Government insists that, prior to their release, the prisoners should give an undertaking not to commit the same offences as had brought them into conflict with the executive. We cannot say that such a demand on the part of the Government is altogether unusual. The late Mr. Tilak was asked to give, and did give, such an undertaking as a condition precedent to his release some time before the expiry of his first sentence. But probably it is the Government's view that in his case the undertaking was of no avail, and generally it is bound to prove infructuous, unless it is the purpose of such a demand to humiliate the prisoner. We deprecate this move on the part of the Punjab Government, because in our opinion nothing will render more difficult the Akalis' reversion to constitutional methods than the proposed exaction from them of a forswearing of direct action. It was generally felt when the Akali movement was in progress that a satisfactory settlement of the Guru-ka-Bagh embroglio was an indispensable preliminary to a solution of the wider problem of reforming the management of Sikh shrines. Why? For the simple reason that unless the Sikhs were put in a temper to utilise the legislation in the matter, the Act, however beneficent, would remain a dead letter. The Guru-ka-Bagh affair being once got out of the way, there was no justification in policy to prolong the confinement of the agitators who, however mistaken their methods, had generally refrained from vio-

lence. The longer they remained in gaol, the more was the pacificatory policy imperilled. And now to ask for a condition of the nature the Punjab Government is demanding will, without giving any reliable security to the Government, only add to the existing bitterness. If the Government only allows conciliation to do its work, it will have a far better guarantee of its citizens' good behaviour than any number of formal pledges can give.

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OWING to the bad acoustic properties of the Town Hall, where the Bombay Legislative Council is having its sessions at present, the Council proceedings are very imperfectly reported in the daily press, which makes it difficult to pass any reasoned criticisms on them. The Excise Minister, Mr. C. V. Mehta, is reported to have announced, in demanding a grant for his department, his decision to continue the policy of rationing the supply of liquor which he initiated last year. It will be remembered that last year he reduced the total supply of country spirit by 10% in Bombay City and 5% in the mofussil. It is not clear, however, from the report, though we hope it is the fact, that, in continuing this policy, he will this year reduce the supply still further by a like proportion. The policy of rationing that was adopted last year did not promise a continuous reduction every year by 10% and 5% respectively, but was only a stop-gap arrangement pending the conclusions of the Excise Committee. The Excise Committee not having yet completed its investigation, it is possible that the Minister intends to carry his tentative policy a step further and curtail the supply of intoxicating liquor once again by the percentage by which he curtailed it last year. A clear statement of what is proposed to be done is therefore necessary. There would be no justification for not reducing the ration this year, the system of indirectly checking the consumption of alcohol through the operation of enhanced prices having, on the Minister's own showing, failed; but there would be some justification for the Minister if he were to content himself with this small step towards temperance in view of the fact that he is entitled to receive guidance from the Committee appointed by him before embarking on a bolder policy. He assumed, by the way, that the Council was not prepared to impose the additional taxation that would be necessitated by a policy leading by a few quick steps to a cessation of alcoholic

A Pledge of Good Behaviour.

indulgence. For this assumption there is no foundation. And anyhow it does not relieve him from the duty of taking his chance with the Council and attempting to carry out that policy, if he approves of it.

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A Useless Office.

It can hardly be said to redound to the credit of non-official members of the Bombay Legislative Council that they failed to carry the motion for the abolition of the Director of Information—or rather his office; for the pay of the Director is made this year, contrary to the practice of the last two years, a non-votable item! If there is any information bureau maintained under the wings of Government which has not the least justification for its existence, it surely is this one in Bombay. We are in course of our professional duties often brought in contact with several of these provincial bureaux, and we confess to a feeling of genuine regret that financial stringency drove Local Governments to put an end to some of them—notably that in Madras which was very ably conducted by a civilian who since his retirement acted as the special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* and in that capacity performed a most valuable service to India. But no one would shed a tear if the corresponding officer in Bombay were to disappear. He ought to go—and stand not on the order of his going. We do not remember any more useful work done by this officer than that he often sends to the Press typescript copies of some of the most inept speeches made by the Governor in his tour. The members of the Bombay Council evidently think that if he acted as Private Secretary not merely to the Governor but to themselves by reporting their speeches as well, he would demonstrate his utility. That is not our conception of the duties of Directors of Information. To be useful, they must confine themselves to the sole function of supplying information asked for, leaving it to those who seek it to draw what inference they can from it. Instead they regard themselves as apologists for Government and in doing so deprive themselves of the capacity of being useful. These officers can also of their own motion diffuse useful information on public questions, but the Director of Information in Bombay does very little indeed to inform public opinion.

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The Age of Consent again.

In our last issue we referred to the Women and Children Protection Bill and it will be remembered that we then drew attention to the fact that the Home Member had not moved that the Bill be passed on that occasion. This has now been done: but when Sir Malcolm Hailey rose on the 9th in the Assembly to do so, he made it clear that the Government would not accept their defeat over the raising of the age of consent to 18 years, without making another stand. Sir Malcolm explained that he had not moved the passing of the Bill the week before, because he wished to consider further the consequences arising out of there being now an inconsistency in the Penal Code, some parallel sections of which will now have an age limit of 16, others of 18. Though he moved the Bill on that day to be passed, he admitted that he did so, only because

he was going to move in the Council of State the addition of a Commencement Clause. In plain words this asks for the power of making the offending section inoperative by purely administrative action. The Home Member's plea is, that he wishes to gain time to put the issue clearly before Local Governments and public bodies, as to whether the age limit is to be raised to 18 throughout the Penal Code. If that opinion is clearly opposed to the amendment carried by the Assembly, the Government claim justification for not giving effect to that clause; should the opinion, however, uphold the Assembly's view, the Home Member promised to come back to the House with a further Bill, to raise in all sections the age to 18. It therefore now rests with public opinion at large to declare itself and we hope sincerely that all bodies concerned with the welfare of women will be up and doing, and will throughout the country organize public meetings to strengthen the hands of our progressive legislators.

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Emigration to Mauritius.

THE Assembly having on the 9th approved the terms on which emigration for the purpose of unskilled work shall be lawful to Mauritius, it is interesting to compare these terms with the parallel ones in the Notifications, previously agreed to, in respect of emigration to Malaya and Ceylon. The bulk of the provisions is the same for all the three countries and the only new ones are those referring to repatriation and wages. As regards repatriation, an emigrant to Ceylon or Malaya can only claim this on the ground of ill-health, unsuitable occupation, unjust treatment, &c. and even so only within a year of his arrival abroad. In the case of Mauritius the latter period is extended to two years and there is added to the grounds of claiming repatriation "inability of obtaining a wage, providing the cost of living for a man with a wife and three children, and also a reasonable margin for savings"; and in addition to that a clause is inserted allowing an emigrant to claim repatriation without giving any reason whatever, provided he has been in Mauritius for two years. As regards the wages in question, the actual amount is to be determined from time to time by consultation between the Governments of India and Mauritius; and until the first "determination" of this nature has been made, emigration is not to commence. Even then, permission is only granted for one year and for a strictly limited number of emigrants, viz. 1500.

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It will thus be seen that the conditions are very much more onerous for Mauritius than for Ceylon and Malaya—as is only natural, considering the relative facilities for intercommunications between these Colonies and India. Mr. Rangachariar moved an amendment calling for further enquiries being made, particularly as to the effect the influx of fresh labour would have on the wages current in Mauritius; but after Mr. Sarma had given an undertaking that the appointment of a Consular Agent for India in Mauritius would be made, he agreed that this person would be better able to judge and report on these effects, than any officer (or Committee, *pace* Mr. Agnihotri) sent there *ad hoc*, and withdrew his amendment, whereupon the Notification was unanimously approved of. The matter is of more than local importance, since it for the first time concedes the right of a labourer to a living wage for himself, wife and three children, plus a margin for sickness and old age. And now that India has shown Mauritius the way, what about our applying the same principle in India itself?

THE CRISIS IN KENYA.

IT was not a minute too soon that Mr. Sastri moved his resolution in the Council of State regarding the Indian situation in Kenya. The resolution, it is true, did not break any new ground. It only asked that the views of the Government and the people of India, already well-known to His Majesty's Government, be once more communicated to them by telegram. But such reiteration is absolutely necessary; for, in this workaday world it is not sufficient to base your case on justice, particularly when the odds are not on your side. You have to be as active, persevering, and determined as your opponent—if possible more, but never less. And who can doubt the necessity of such agitation when, as our Parliamentary correspondent says elsewhere, all the European members of the Council of State, official and non-official, with a solitary exception, quietly slipped out of the House when the resolution was put to vote? But it is not sufficient that the Council of State has passed the resolution. All public bodies, irrespective of party, should pass similar resolutions, preferably by holding public meetings, and strengthen the hands of the India Office as well as of the Colonial Office, which under Mr. Ormsby-Gore's influence is doing its level best to do justice to the Indian cause and thereby preserve the solidarity of the Empire.

Sir Robert Coryndon has been a very great disappointment to the Indian community. When he was called to the Governorship of Kenya he enjoyed a reputation for fairness and firmness, and it must be acknowledged that for some time he did keep himself above parties, as becomes the head of an administration. But now he appears to have fallen a victim to the threats of the European community and betrayed the trust reposed in him of protecting the interests of the Indian community. Who would have expected him to open the Convention of European Associations at Nairobi on Feb. 26th, disclose confidentially certain information which was favourable to them, and announce his intention of going to England at the earliest opportunity, taking with him a European deputation to discuss matters afresh with the Secretary of State for the Colonies? Who would have expected a Governor, alive to the responsibilities that devolve on him, so to identify himself with one community? In spite of this act of glaring partiality on the part of the Governor who has taken the Europeans under his wings, the Indian case will not go unrepresented in London, but if the odds against the Indians are to be lessened all possible pressure from India should be exerted on their side.

The European community in Kenya claims to be following the example of Ulster. Britain has had to pay very dearly for allowing Ulsterites to arm themselves. Will she commit a similar mistake in other parts of the Empire and undermine its very foundations which rest on constitutionalism and equal justice to all the peoples

of the Empire? But there is no analogy between Ulster and Kenya except in threats of violence. All that the Ulsterites wanted was that they should not be merged with the rest of Ireland, while the Europeans in Kenya, though a mere handful, wish to be rulers in perpetuity on account of their race. Forgetting that Kenya is a Crown Colony, forgetting what a small minority they are in the population, they want to be what the whites are in the self-governing Dominions and speak of East Africa as a white man's colony. For the moment they have overawed the local Government, but it would be an evil day for the Empire if their voice should prevail in London. Before Sir Robert Coryndon so ignominiously surrendered himself to the white settlers, they sent him an intimation refusing even to discuss the latest proposals of the Secretary of State for the Colonies unless an Ordinance was passed forthwith to control immigration in an adequate manner, and, very obligingly, supplied the following terms for the Ordinance:

That any person or class of persons deemed by the Governor in Council, on economic grounds, or on account of standards or habits of life, to be unsuited to the requirements of the country shall be excluded as an undesirable immigrant.

That the amount of money to be deposited by an immigrant shall be the same for all classes and races (with the exception of the indigenous Natives of Africa) and shall be a sum of not less than 1,000s.

That an educational test shall be applied to all immigrants except the indigenous Natives of Africa, and that such test shall consist in being able to read and write a passage in an European language to be selected by the Immigration Officer.

The Governor was apparently overwhelmed by this intimation and practically accepted this "preliminary condition" of further negotiations by which Indian rights were to be filched away. Nay, he went further—he opened their Convention and thoroughly identified himself with them. Mr. Sastri quoted in the Council of State a telegram from the General Secretary of the East African (Indian) Congress to the effect that "the Governor of Kenya had reconsidered his previous decision and decided to impose some restrictions in regard to immigration, such as combined education and property tests."

The white settlers have a strange logic. At the meeting of the Convention already referred to they passed a resolution of loyalty and at the same time declared their readiness to break His Majesty's peace—that is, wage war—if the Ministers refused to accept the policy dictated to them by the Convention, intimating further that the entire blame for such a calamity would rest with the Ministers. With equally strange logic they are interpreting the Imperial Conference Resolution of 1921 as permitting any Colony to restrict immigration as it likes. The Imperial Conference recognised the right of only the self-governing parts of the British Commonwealth to do so. There is nothing in that Resolution which countenances the idea of res-

stricting the immigration of non-Europeans to Crown Colonies. The Resolution was as follows :

The Conference, while reaffirming the Resolution of the Imperial War Conference of 1918, that each community of the British Commonwealth should enjoy complete control of the composition of its own population by means of restrictions on immigration from any of the other communities, recognises that there is an incongruity between the position of India as an equal member of the British Empire and the existence of disabilities upon British Indians lawfully domiciled in some other parts of the Empire. The Conference accordingly is of the opinion that in the interests of the solidarity of the British Commonwealth, it is desirable that the rights of such Indians to citizenship should be recognised.

The white settlers of East Africa are obviously of the opinion that they are a "community of the British Commonwealth" entitled to control completely the immigration of others into Kenya. Apart from the fact that the whites in Kenya have no claim whatever to exercise, in the name of the Colony, the right, should such a right be conferred upon it, of regulating the composition of its population, Kenya does not possess that right in virtue of any Resolution of the Imperial Conference. The Resolution quoted above merely reaffirms the Resolution of the Imperial War Conference of 1918 in regard to this matter, and this latter Resolution has been described in the official report of the proceedings [Cd. 9177, p. 8] as relating to "Reciprocity of Treatment between India and the Dominions" and has no manner of application to any of the Crown Colonies. While, therefore, the part of the Resolution of the Imperial Conference of 1921 dealing with restrictions on immigration is thus limited in its scope and applies to India in her relations with the Dominions alone, the other part of the Resolution which promises the removal of all disabilities upon Indians is wider in its scope, extending to Crown Colonies as well as the Dominions, as is clear from the terms of the Resolution which speaks of "disabilities upon British Indians lawfully domiciled in some other parts of the Empire." That the promise of equal treatment contained in this Resolution is intended to hold good in Kenya is proved to demonstration by the fact that Mr. Churchill had at first proposed to exclude Kenya from its operation, as South Africa was eventually excluded, but the protests of the Indian representatives prevailed at last and Kenya was thus left in. In other words, if India has surrendered the right of unrestricted emigration to the Dominions, she has by the 1921 Resolution secured a pledge for the redress of all existing disabilities throughout the British Empire. It was thus not without strong reason that Mr. Sastri declared that, in regard to Crown Colonies, India has not agreed to abate by one jot to restrict her emigration.

We hope it is not necessary to dilate at any great length on the very serious reactions the mishandling of this question is sure to have on the political situation in this country. The *Daily News* rightly calls it the touchstone of the Empire; it is the acid test of the professions of British

statesmen that the Imperial policy is dictated solely by a scrupulous regard to justice, without distinction of race or class.

INTERFERENCE FROM WHITEHALL.

WITHIN the limits of the present Constitution there is probably no pathway to further advance which is more promising than that Whitehall shall cease to interfere with the Government of India's decisions when the latter meet with the approval of the Legislature. Such non-intervention has in fact been enjoined on the Secretary of State by the Select Committee on the Government of India Bill. We notice, however, a tendency in some quarters unfriendly to reform to limit unduly the scope of this recommendation, and this tendency has recently found definite expression in a communication to the *Morning Post* by its Calcutta correspondent. Speaking of the censure motion adopted by the Legislative Assembly on the question of the Services Commission, the correspondent said :—

Attention is also drawn to the fact that speakers yesterday treated as incontrovertible their assertion that the Select Committee had deprecated interference by the Secretary of State whenever the Indian Government and the Assembly are of one mind, although the Select Committee's recommendation referred only to tariff questions. As the *Morning Post* may be said to represent the views of the present Cabinet more nearly than any other English journal, it is worth while, by quoting chapter and verse, to make good the Indian claim that the reforms have divested the Secretary of State of the power of interference in all matters on which the Government of India and its Legislature agree.

The genesis of this "Hands off" policy is that the Crewe Committee which reported on the "Home Administration of Indian Affairs" made the following recommendation :—

Where the Government of India are in agreement with a majority of the non-official members of the Legislative Assembly, either in regard to legislation or in regard to resolutions on the Budget or on matters of general administration, assent to their joint decision should only be withheld in cases in which the Secretary of State feels that his responsibility to Parliament for the peace, order and good government of India, or paramount considerations of Imperial policy, require him to secure reconsideration of the matter at issue by the Legislative Assembly.

The reform scheme which was submitted to the Crewe Committee for investigation provided for a predominant popular element only in the Lower House, and therefore the Committee mentions only the Assembly as a body whose agreement with the Executive should rule out interference by the Secretary of State. But the Select Committee which subsequently considered the reform proposals called for the popularisation of the Council of State also. In confirming the Crewe Committee's recommendation, therefore, relating to non-intervention, the Select Committee generally laid down that in all matters on which the Indian Government and the Indian Legislature (that is to say, either House of it) were of one accord, the Home authorities should desist from any kind of interfer-

ence, save in a certain exceptional class of cases. The terms of their recommendations were as under:—

In the exercise of his responsibility to Parliament, which he cannot delegate to any one else, the Secretary of State may reasonably consider that only in exceptional circumstances should he be called upon to intervene in matters of purely Indian interest where the Government and the Legislature of India are in agreement.

That the *Morning Post* correspondent's circumscribed interpretation of this recommendation is flatly contrary to the intentions of the Committee is proved by the very next sentence: "This examination of the general position leads inevitably to the consideration of one special case of non-intervention," and then they proceed to speak of non-intervention in tariff matters, which secures to India her fiscal autonomy.

This principle of non-intervention cannot, however, have full effect until the system of previous consultation by the Government of India with the Secretary of State is also done away with. If on every important matter the India Government has to consult with the Imperial authorities before taking any action and after such consultation to give public expression only to the views which the latter have foisted upon it, and take action only in accordance with these views, then clearly the Legislature can have no chance whatever of benefiting by the convention of non-interference prescribed by the Select Committee. On the question of the Services Commission, *e.g.*, it is common knowledge that the Government of India agreed with the Legislature as to the inexpediency of appointing a Royal Commission on this subject. But the practice of prior reference to the Secretary of State which is rigidly enforced prevented the Government of India from giving expression to its views. Although, perhaps, in its confidential correspondence with the Secretary of State it attacked his idea and sided with the popular view, still this agreement between the Government and the Legislature of India availed nothing against the contrary view held by the Secretary of State. It is, therefore, plain that if India is at all to profit by the very wholesome convention of non-intervention; if a joint opinion of the Government of India and its Legislature the Secretary of State is not ordinarily to be allowed to override, the Government of India must be in a position to express its real opinion on any matter without let or hindrance, and this can only be possible when prior consultation with the Secretary of State is not required of it. When once consultation takes place, the Government has by its position naturally to acquiesce in the view put forward by the Government. As Professor Keith says in his Minority Report, "the advice of the Secretary of State in the ultimate issue, if it is pressed, is indistinguishable from a command; no Secretary of State could accept responsibility for his statutory duties towards India if he could not rely on the Governor-General deferring in the ultimate issue to his opinion as the

representative of His Majesty's Government." Mr. Keith, therefore, recommended in his report that this system of prior consultation should be put a stop to in legislation, administration and finance and if in the matter of taxation proposals he is in favour of retaining this system, it is only in order that these proposals may be considered "from the broad standpoint of Imperial and international relations." Sir J. B. Brunyate, another member of the Crews Committee, did not go so far, but he also foresaw that the principle of deference to a joint decision of the Indian Government and the Legislature must conflict with that of prior reference to the Secretary of State, and, therefore, suggested that the area should be delimited in which previous consultation would be insisted upon, marking off "controlled" from "popular" subjects, somewhat after the manner in which "reserved" are separated from "transferred" subjects in Local Governments. But Mr. Keith's proposals can well be adopted without any detriment of Imperial interests and with great advantage to Indian interests. It will secure to the people's representatives very considerable power; for a Government living under the constant pressure from an active Legislature cannot continue for long unless somehow or other it brings its views in consonance with the views of the Legislature.

THE DELHI SESSION.

(FROM OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.)

DELHI, 10th MARCH.

GENERAL DISCUSSION ON THE BUDGET.

THE week ended has naturally stood under the sign of the Budget—nor can that influence be expected to wane for another week or two. Sir Basil Blackett having made his budget speech on the 1st, the Assembly entered upon the first stage of their labours in connection with it on Monday, the 5th, when the "General Discussion" of the budget was commenced. It continued the whole of the next day, at the end of which it was closed by another speech of Sir Basil's. The Council of State then took up the tale and had their General Discussion on Wednesday, the 7th. Details will be attacked next week, the whole of it (12th to 17th) being set aside for voting on the demands for expenditure, whilst the revenue side of the budget is to come up on the 19th and 20th. But to revert to the "General Discussion." On the side of the critics I should single out as the best speeches those made by Mr. Ginwala, Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer, Mr. Seshagiri Ayyar and Sir Gordon Frazer, whilst on the Treasury side, Mr. Bray's and Sir Basil Blackett's to my mind stood out similarly. As regards Sir Basil indeed, nobody can, I think, hear him, without being impressed by his perfect mastery of the subject which he has made his own, and without being delighted by the easy and somewhat homely, good-natured and almost boyish manner, with which he carries his hearers through the intricacies and technicalities of public service.

without once making them feel what a clever expert he is. But then, he has not been very long in India, has he?

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RICH MAN'S BUDGET.

Mr. Ginwala put his finger on the *punctum saliens* of Indian Public Finance when he complained about the incidence of taxation in this country, and characterized this budget, as all its predecessors, as rich men's budgets. What else can be expected, as long as income is taxed according to its source, and the tiller of the soil has to produce land revenue, whatever his income may be? Indeed one cannot listen for long to Treasury bench speeches on Indian finance, without feeling that the speakers do not in the least realize what the actual state of poverty on the part of the vast masses of the people amounts to. Investigations like Dr. Mann's in the Deccan have shown that in such selected, but typical, cases the people are on an average permanently 25% underfed; and if the Government refuses to generalize from such studies all the more reason for the Finance Department to get the data as to the real prosperity of the people, before it can expect to lay the essential foundation of all sound finance—a just incidence of all taxation. Mr. Shahani was not far wrong when he said that the majority of the people in India were leading a sub-human life and Mr. Choudhari Shahabuddin that it is the hard working people on the land who have got to do all the paying, and the money-lending classes who do all the receiving. Mr. Joshi similarly invited the Government to institute an enquiry, before they acted on the assumption that the poor are not yet sufficiently taxed. The Finance Member was, of course, right, when he said that land revenue and death duties were provincial subjects: the fact remains that the income-tax is not, and that an universal income-tax with an exemption limit of all incomes at a definite minimum, fixed irrespective of the source of income, should form the backbone of all revenue. In stead of which our so-called "income-tax" is only meant to meet 14% of the public expenditure budgeted for next year, and has only 14% of it this year, and 13% the year before.

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THE RIGHT KIND OF RETRENCHMENT.

Mr. Ginwala was right once more when he said that one source of revenue ought to have been eliminated altogether long ago—viz. that of opium—and that mere reduction of expenditure was no substitute for failure to raise an adequate and equitably distributed revenue. His simile of the Irishman's horse which was being trained to live without food, by having its food out down day by day, but which unfortunately died, just when the experiment was proving successful, brought home to all the very real danger of making retrenchment a fetish. Mr. Seshagiri Ayyar declared the reductions in the nation-building services to be indefensible, as indeed they are—reductions, which as a wag has put it, are nothing but reductions

ad absurdum! The Inchoape Committee's work I would, of course, be the last to belittle and Dr. Gour did well to "rub it in" now, when its praises are being sung high and low, that its origin is entirely due to last year's Assembly which in the teeth of Government opposition then carried a resolution which has now eventuated in the Inchoape Committee and its "axing" of 19½ crores. Mr. Kale reminded the Council of State that only a year ago they, as amateur critics, had been told at every turn that this retrenchment was impossible, this other one undesirable and this third one unthinkable: but as a matter of fact here were Government to-day priding themselves on their retrenchments, which just showed what could be done. Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas neatly put it when he said that these Inchoape retrenchments obviously had proved somewhat of an eye-opener to our professional, expert administrators, who should, however, therefore not imagine that their own surprise was shared by the Legislature. But the point should not be lost sight of, in the flood of mutual congratulations now so fashionable, that retrenchment *per se* is no panacea and that economy does not consist in not spending, but in not spending unprofitably.

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MILITARY BURDEN.

It is by this criterion that the much discussed military expenditure too should be judged. War being the object of all military training, and war being also essentially unproductive and aiming at waste, it would indeed be remarkable if economy was a virtue commonly understood by the military, who seem rather prone—to quote Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas's experience—to employ a motor lorry to carry a couple of bottles. The same member complained that the Commander-in-Chief's concessions seemed to him rather grudging: an impression only heightened when one listened to Lord Rawlinson's *non possumus* regarding future reductions of that expenditure to fifty crores; or to his reference to the Retrenchment Committee as "the Inchoape Inquisition." The latter expression indeed to me seems to shed a flood of light on the military mentality, galled and resentful beyond words at having to submit to the scrutiny of mere quill-drivers and counter-jumpers; though as regards Lord Rawlinson himself, I gladly pay tribute to his recognition that a balanced budget is India's first need and that military risks have to be taken, if the only alternative is financial disaster. The trouble is to agree on what constitutes a "risk": and a layman has not much else to guide him, but such considerations as the generally accepted rule, quoted by Dr. Gour, that no nation can afford to spend more than 20% of its income on the military services. Sir M. Webb indeed rightly pointed out that provincial income must in that case be taken into account, and that therefore India's military expenditure did not amount to the apparent 50%, but only to 33% of the total: to me however that would merely prove that military expenditure is still capable of a reduc-

tion 13% of the total Indian revenues—i.e. 30 crores!—if the general rule quoted by Dr. Gour is accepted for India. On the other hand I, with Mr. Abdul Rahim Khan, by no means agree with the facile optimism of those who would wave aside the N. W. Frontier problem with some amiable platitudes about our improved foreign relations. Mr. Bray lucidly explained the problem of the Durand line, which left Waziristan outside Afghanistan, but inside India, although not British India; and how Waziristan was both India's scourge and India's responsibility. One only regrets that he contented himself, as regards the Indus line policy, with a rhetorical outburst of "What India has, let India hold!"

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A FREE DINNER TABLE.

But that there are practical methods of getting the military expenditure still further down, was evidenced by Mr. Burdon's administration that Dr. Gour's suggestion (of handing over the maintenance of internal security to the police) was being considered; and Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer's protest against England charging India £25 by way of capitation grant for every soldier she sends here, is too well founded in fact not to have formed already the substance of remonstrance from the Government of India to the Secretary of State. Again, Mr. Harchandrai suggested the reduction of the number of Army commands from 4 to 2—but Sir Dinsha Wacha of course went to the heart of the whole question—when he said that there was no hope of any permanent military retrenchment, until there was parliamentary control. Anyhow, no small gratification is felt on all sides that at least a beginning has been made in bringing down the once sacrosanct military expenditure and nothing indeed proves better the great pressure which the Legislature can exert, even on this of all reserved subjects. That being so, one fails to understand why Government should still cling to the proposal of doubling the salt tax, when it is superabundantly clear, that the Assembly will refuse to sanction it. This question is indeed, as Dr. Gour put it, a *res judicata* for India and the only advocates of the proposal were some European unofficials who, in the same breath though, denounced the import duty on tinned food-stuffs as a tax on food! The same gentlemen lamented the heavy import duty on motor cars: but if their plea is true that motoring is not a luxury but a necessity, one fails to understand their indignation that the tax should have stimulated the import of cheap American cars, to the detriment of the more expensive English cars. On the other hand the proposed reduction of the export duty on hides to 5% seemed to provoke no enthusiastic response anywhere.

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CONSTRUCTIVE PROPOSALS.

What then were the positive proposals put forward, to take the place of the obnoxious salt tax? Petrol was a strong favourite, until Mr.

Innes extinguished all hope in that direction by an exposition of the inner workings of the world's oil magnates. Mr. Spence proposed a tax on silver, as did Sir M. Webb, but Sir B. Blackett showed that it was in itself undesirable and even so would only bring in one crore. Sir Gordon Frazer was the only member who put in a novel suggestion—viz. to resort to a surtax of $\frac{1}{2}$ anna per rupee of all amounts collected by way of income-tax and customs receipts: a method which, as he explained, would enable every taxpayer to contribute to the wiping out of the otherwise threatening deficit, and one which quite evidently found favour in the eyes of the Finance Member. The same cannot be said of the many suggestions of getting rid of expenditure by stowing it away under capital account: an easy manipulation of accounts, which, however, would only increase the unproductive debt, as Sir Basil drily remarked, without providing any means for paying it off. The "commercial accounts", advocated by Sir Dinsha Wacha, Sir M. Webb and others for Forests, Railways, Post and Telegraph, &c. are indeed a great *desideratum*: but I must agree with the Finance Member, who is convinced that if these were strictly adopted and businesslike sinking funds provided, the deficit, so far from being wiped off, would but be increased. All the more reason, to my mind, why next year at least the recasting of these accounts should be undertaken on the lines advocated, so that at last we may know, how we really stand. Indeed I personally feel very much, with Mr. A. V. V. Aiyar, that the present budget, if anything, gives a false sense of security, rather than that the threatening deficit constitutes a false alarm. I think the optimism of some members who, like Choudhri, started the discussion with a belief in untold crores up the sleeves of Sir B. Blackett and Mr. Innes, must have evaporated completely as the days wore on: and the universal puzzle now is merely, what exactly Government will substitute, when the salt tax is voted down. Or will it give effect to all the cuts in the grant for the army which are so earnestly pressed upon it by the Incheape Committee? But for that we must "wait and see."

* * * * *

CRISIS IN KENYA.

Whilst the Assembly debated the Budget, the Council of State on the 5th passed the useful little Bill of Mr. Kamat's on married women's property which had got through the Assembly a couple of weeks previously. With Mr. Latthe's Bill dead, Mr. Kamat has thus won and emerges as the first legislator to carry a private bill on social reform. On the same day Mr. Sastri moved a resolution about Kenya, much on the lines of the one previously adopted in the Lower House, except that it added a conviction that no restrictions on new emigration from India will be acceptable to public opinion here—and will it be believed that, because of this addition, the Government refused to accept the Resolution? They certainly did not

vote against it—but it was a sorry spectacle to see the motion put in a House from which every single European and member of Government had withdrawn, with the exception of Mr. Crerar who was wanted to pilot the immediately following business. The Reduction of Racial Distinctions Bill, which the Council of State on the 1st had improved by a number of drafting amendments moved by the Government, was on the 9th accepted in that form by the Assembly and therefore will presently become law. The same holds good of the Cotton Cess Bill (described by Mr. Sarma as "a genuine piece of swadeshi legislation"), which the Council of State passed on the 8th, as sent up to it by the Assembly; and of the Official Secrets Bill, which had a similar fate on the same date, notwithstanding the questionings raised on clause after clause by Mr. Ayyangar, whom either Sir M. Hailey or Mr. Crerar would with monotonous regularity invite to read the clause again as the best reply to the point raised (or missed) by the once vocal member. Which effort safely accomplished, the Elder Statesmen gave themselves a week-end holiday from Thursday to Monday. So, goodbye for the present!

MANAGEMENT OF INDIAN RAILWAYS.

NO railway question has been so exhaustively discussed both on the platform and in the Press during the last ten years or so—and never more than during the last 16 months—as the question of State *versus* company management of Indian railways. The fact which emerged most prominently as a result of this discussion was that the material available was wholly insufficient on which to base any definite conclusion as to the best form of management for Indian railways. The experience of other countries with regard to either form of management was itself conflicting. But even if it were not so conflicting, the form and composition of the Government in India, and the general conditions which actually obtain in India or are likely to obtain for a long long time, are so radically different that the experience of other countries was no sure guide to a definite conclusion on the general question. All that this experience would warrant us in concluding is that a reasonable period of cautious experiment must precede a final decision on the general question. The fact of the whole matter is that in the special circumstances of India there is no common ground for real comparisons, and from this point of view the only question to be decided was which form of management should be given a trial in India. It was, therefore, in the fitness of things that during the debate that took place in the Legislative Assembly on February 27 on the general question, immediately after Mr. Neogy had moved his amendment recommending direct State management for all railways in India, Dr. Gour asked the House to confine itself to the immediate question of what should be done in the case of the East Indian and

the Great Indian Peninsula guaranteed railway companies, whose contracts are terminable in 1924 and 1925 respectively, and urged that the two railways should, on expiry of the contracts, be taken over for management by the State. The Hon'ble Mr. Innes expressed his willingness to accept the recommendation with a qualification authorizing Government "to concert measures with the object of handing over one or the other of the two railways, after such grouping as may be necessary, to an indigenous company calculated to give India the benefit of real company management." Dr. Gour had no difficulty in showing that this qualified acceptance amounted almost to entire negation of his proposals and in inducing the House to reject the rider by 56 to 42 votes. An analysis of the voting shews that, excluding the Government *bloc*, the only supporters of the rider were 12 out of a total of 68 Indians, while of course all the Europeans and Anglo-Indians voted solid in favour of Mr. Innes's rider.

Mr. Innes's rider having been lost, Dr. Gour's amendment was put and carried without being pressed to a division. Indians are weary of company management and the moment a renewal of this form of management is suggested, they naturally associate with it a renewal of the bitter experiences they have had. Company management in any shape or form is, and must for a long time to come be, unacceptable to them, even if as much as 90% of the directorate were to be Indians of real independent character. The Indian public is not likely to be placated by the mere top-gilding of an Indian directorate without the prospect of a sufficiency of the supply of Indian executive and administrative officers through whom to carry out its will. We congratulate the Assembly on its wise and fair decision to try State management. We have no doubt in our mind that State management will succeed in India at least as well as, if not actually better than, any company management that can be devised. If, however, the experiment does fail even after a fair chance is given to it, the alternative experiment can begin at once, whereas if the experiment of company management is taken up first and found to be unsuccessful or undesirable, the alternative experiment will have to await the expiry of the company's lease covering a long term of years. Simultaneous experiments on two different lines with either system of management can have no value for purposes of comparison. For a proper comparison both the forms must be tried on the same railway one after another. We hope, although in view of the change which has come over the India Office it would be risky to do so, that Government will be equally wise and fair in their choice out of the two courses now left open to them, by acting up to the recommendation of the Assembly and refraining from overriding it partially or wholly.

The decision taken by the Assembly, if and when accepted by Government, will throw

special responsibilities on that body. The company management such as we now have is practically State management in all but name. The disadvantages of both have had their full play in this hybrid system, and yet even under these uncongenial conditions the railways in India have, on the whole, proved a solvent concern. With the East Indian and the Great Indian Peninsula railways under direct State management the disadvantages of the existing pseudo-company management should automatically disappear and to that extent their solvency and remunerativeness should, so far from diminishing, actually improve. If, however, these two properties lapse under State management into administrative and economic inefficiency, it will be due entirely to slackness, first on the part of the executive, and secondly on the part of the Government and the Assembly. The machinery of control which was created by Government for running their railways on commercial lines became in course of time absorbed into that bureaucratic stronghold, viz., the Government of India. The Railway Board has become such an integral part of that elevated fraternity that when it is praised the Government of India take the praise to themselves and when it is attacked the Government of India feel that they are on their defence. There is not that detachment or independence of judgment which is necessary for efficient supervision. The Government of India will, therefore, have to cultivate the habit of this detachment and independence and any organisation that may be set up must take account of this vital necessity. We have already drawn attention to this defect once before, viz., in our article on "The Indian Railway Committee" which appeared in the issue of this paper dated the 2nd February, 1922. The strong strictures passed by the Inchaape Committee on the unbusinesslike management of Indian railways are also traceable to this defect and we once again invite attention to it in view of the importance and necessity of giving State management a fair trial. The Assembly on its part must take greater interest in railway affairs, make a closer and deeper study of railway problems and apply a discriminating but sustained scrutiny and criticism to questions of railway administration and economics by a judicious exercise of the valuable rights, which the Reforms have conferred on them, of interpellation, of moving resolutions and of voting supplies.

ECONOMY.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE.

Mauritius. MAURITIUS, which has lately swum into the orbit of Indian politics, is an island smaller than many an Indian taluq, yet having a public revenue of two crores! And seeing that 44% of the cultivated land is owned by Indians, one may well bespeak some further interest in this remarkable little Colony, which *de facto*, if not yet *de jure*, is an Indian Colony.

Emigration from India started in 1834 and it is interesting to compare the last census (1921) figures with those of 1851; viz. :—

	1851	1921
Indians	77,996	2,65,524
Non-Indians	1,02,827	1,10,961
Total	1,80,823	3,76,485

At the 1911 census, which returned the total population at 3,70,393, out of 2,57,887 Indians there were only 35,526 not born in Mauritius, and seeing that emigration from India to the island had completely ceased for the past 13 years, it is obvious that the disproportion must to-day have become still further accentuated. The density of the population is 500 to the square mile—a prodigious figure indeed, but equalled by the output of sugar per square mile which in the case of Mauritius amounts to 278 tons, whilst Hawaii can produce only 72 tons, Cuba 30 and Java 24 tons of sugar per square mile! The maximum exports of sugar from Mauritius are 2,52,770, which was reached in 1918, but the yield in recent years has never dropped below two lakhs of tons anyhow. The cost of living is high, compared with India: in 1914 the necessaries of life for a man, his wife and three children cost Rs. 19; in 1921 that figure had risen to Rs. 38, whilst at present it has dropped again to Rs. 28. Wages of unskilled labour in town in 1914 were Rs. 6·4 per week of 49 hours and in 1921 Rs. 8; but agricultural day labourers are said to have earned Rs. 30 and Rs. 82 respectively in these years—indicative of a good deal of overtime, we imagine. A remarkable little colony in more ways than one; and with a population already 70% Indian, one feels that the complete Indianization of the island can only be a question of time; and the sooner it is detached from the Colonial Office, surely the better.

Church and State. THE assassination, recently cabled, of the Orthodox Archbishop of Poland throws a lurid light on the political nature of the "Orthodox Churches", as that part of Christendom is called which is in ecclesiastical communion with the Patriarch of Constantinople. Only in the December issue of the *Christian East* we read the protest of a Russian Council of Bishops against the proposal of forming the Orthodox congregations in Poland into an autocephalous (independent) Orthodox Church of Poland: their argument being that "neither common sense nor our holy canons could sanction the granting of autocephaly to the Orthodox of *different* nationalities" who even so would form "within the boundaries of the Polish State a national and religious minority"—the Poles themselves being almost to a man Roman Catholics. From which it is evident that even to-day these representatives of Eastern Christendom cannot conceive of a separation of Church and State. Nationality and Religion are to them merely two aspects of one and the same thing; and therefore, if Russian minorities in what

were formerly Russian districts, but are now independent Border States (such as Poland, Finland, Esthonia, &c.), wish to retain their natural characteristics, they must maintain their spiritual subordination under the Patriarch of Moscow as well! And now this kind of ecclesiastical theory has ended in another political murder. And yet there are still people who believe Kemalism to be anti-Christian merely because it wishes to deprive the Oecumenical Patriarchate at Constantinople of all political status!

The Filibusters. READERS of this paper will remember that the Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill passed the United States House of Representatives some time last year—rather to the surprise of many. However, the Bill had not thereby got out of the wood by a long way, there being still the Senate to negotiate: and the Senate duly did what was expected from it, *i. e.* killed it. The party in power and in a majority in both Houses at present is the Republican Party, which is reputedly Negrophil: though personally we should rather say that the Democratic Party, which incorporates the "Solid White South," is merely the more Negrophobe of the two. For both parties are White Man's parties, and though the Republicans have always tried to catch Negro votes, they no less than the Democrats are fully imbued with the fierce race pride common to all white Americans. The Republicans therefore looked upon the Bill little more favourably than the Democrats; but since they had to nurse their Negro voters, they could not afford to oppose the Bill openly. Hence the passage of the Bill through the House of Representatives. What about the Senate? The solution of an embarrassing situation was found in a convenient "filibuster" of the Democrats, who started talking, the moment the session began, as to whether or not the Chaplain's prayer should be printed in the records of the Senate's debates. They kept on talking on this subject for a few days, since no Standing Rule exists to the contrary, and they threatened to go on talking on that engrossing subject throughout the whole session—thus frustrating all legislation—unless the Dyer Bill was dropped. The Republicans, thanking their stars for the happy escape, jumped at the offer; the Dyer Bill was dropped, and the discussion of the Chaplain's prayer came to an end.

Killed for their Complexion. THE collusion in this matter between the two white parties in the U. S. A. indeed seems patent; although to an outsider it must sound incredible that a law merely to suppress mob violence cannot be passed in a country which pretends to be civilized. Think of it that in the United States a crowd may gather, catch some person and burn him at the stake—in the open market square, in the middle of the day, without any interference of the police: and not only so, but that public opinion in the country is not yet ripe for allowing

that kind of lawlessness in a State to be stopped by Federal authority! For of course, if American public opinion had been sufficiently strong on the point, such a thing as the "filibustering" of the Dyer Bill would have been impossible. And lynching in the United States, or at least in the dozen Southern States of the Union, is part of ordinary life. During 1922 alone 60 human beings were killed by frenzied mobs hanging them, or shooting them or burning them, or drowning them, or clubbing them, or otherwise torturing them to death. To think of the mentality engendered by participation in such a man-hunt or by the witnessing of the gruesome end of the victims, is enough to make one realize the utter degradation which the white race has reached in the Southern States of America: but that a modest Bill, which only intended to end the setting at naught of all law and order, like the Dyer Bill, should have been so easily got rid of shows just how far the effects of that sort of racial poison extend. True, the Negro citizens of that "Land of the Free" live and die in a spirit-choking atmosphere; but who can deny that the evil that so done to them does not recoil in double measure upon their oppressors?

Illustive Safeguards. THAT the Government of a free Republic is unable or unwilling to prevent lynching, is an impressive testimony to the fact that a democracy can be as cruel and inhuman as any bureaucracy or autocracy, and further, that any number of constitutional guarantees for the fundamental rights of citizenship—and more stringent guarantees than those provided in the cast-iron Constitution of U. S. A. it passes the wit of man to devise—are found unavailing to secure citizens in those rights. A fresh illustration of the proneness of a Republic to infringe popular rights is afforded by the embargo put upon the *Morning Post* by the Irish Free State on the same pretext on which the bureaucracy in India banned the *Daily Herald*, *viz.* that the circulation of the paper is injurious to public safety. There is no journal with whose politics we are in such flat disagreement as the *Morning Post*, but we can say that nothing has appeared therein which can at all be colourably interpreted as tending even remotely to imperil the safety of the Irish Free State. In India even in the days of the Press Act newspapers could and did indulge in freer criticism, without being shut out, than apparently they can in Free Ireland at the present day. And all this happens when the Constitution of the Irish Free State, drawn up by the people of Ireland themselves, provides specific safeguards against the violation of fundamental liberties. This shows how fallacious the belief of a large section of Indians is, that their liberties cannot be secure till they have constitutional guarantees and that such constitutional guarantees will by themselves insure them against all encroachments!

CORRESPONDENCE.

PROHIBITION: THE ONLY REMEDY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—It is most lamentable that while the rest of India, including the Native States and British territory, is astir about the extermination of the Drink and Drug evil, there should be heard from Cochin echoes of satisfaction over the progress of this baneful liquor traffic. A contributor to the *Indian Social Reformer* of 3rd February last says that "the chief source of revenue in this State is the Excise." It is to be mourned that a progressive State like Cochin should be dependent on the vices of its subjects for the main source of its revenue. Out of a total revenue of nearly 56 lacs of rupees about 23 lacs was realised from the Excise.

While it is gratifying to note that there is a decrease in the consumption of liquor during the year, the attitude of the Cochin Government toward temperance is most scandalous. For instance, when we read a statement in the Official Report like this: "Additional improvements were effected in the distillery to make it better fitted to meet the requirements of the consumers," we cannot but say, "Shame for such a Government." There could be no more demoralising system than the State taking initiative in spreading the vice of drink. The Dewan of Cochin further observes in his report that the decrease in the demand for liquor during the year is "partly due to the activities of the temperance movement which had invaded the State, though only temporarily." Such a statement is much to be deplored. The contributor to the *Reformer* pertinently observes that "the attitude conveyed in characterising the spread of the temperance movement as an invasion is clearly mischievous".

Thus far in the temperance campaign in India Native States are taking the lead. Bhavnagar in Kathiawar adopted total prohibition in 1922. Palitana is another one moving fast toward that goal. Bhopal has just recently proclaimed prohibition and has given a splendid example of "subordination of considerations of revenue to the promotion of temperance." Even Travancore is "in practical sympathy with the central idea of the temperance movement and has even accepted the principle of prohibition as the ultimate goal." Cochin will do well to follow their example.

State control cannot bring about the desired results. The Gothenburg system failed to do it. It was designed to remove from the traffic all incentives to profit and to restrict it rigorously. It originated in Gothenburg, Sweden. But "the control established showed itself to be a sham." As a temperance experiment it completely broke down." It did not eliminate the appeal of gain and private profiteering in the trade went on unchecked. "The system was further restricted by the Bratt system, requiring the issuance of pass books to purchasers and their registration, the placing of drunkards on the 'black list' to be refused all sales, and the refusal of sale to minors. Even with these restrictions the system has proven ineffective and has for the most part been replaced by prohibition." This is a lesson for all working in the temperance cause. Their ultimate goal must be prohibition, for nothing short of that will redeem India or any other country from the curse of drink. Indeed, we must work for it patiently. Local option, Prohibition, Bone-dry Prohibition—that is the panacea. PROHIBITION: THE ONLY REMEDY.—Yours, etc.

MORRIS A. PHILLIPS.

Arrah, March 8.

UNTOUCHABILITY IN SCHOOLS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—The Minister of Education has by a recent circular refused to give countenance to untouchability in any Government or aided schools and thus done a valuable service to the so-called depressed classes. I would humbly appeal to their leaders to concentrate their efforts in the immediate future on consolidating the extensive ground they have now gained and not fritter away their energies by making faint and sporadic

efforts to secure a recognition of their undoubted right to be admitted to public wells, temples, etc. I am myself in favour of an entire abolition of untouchability and removal of all distinctions based on the accident of birth; but I hold that mere words, however high-sounding, about the evil of untouchability being swept at one stroke—and nothing more than words can be expected of the "higher classes" at the present stage—are as nothing when measured against the solid advantages they are sure to obtain by insisting, by a well-organised campaign, say, for the next five years, that full effect be given to the sound principle laid down by Dr. Paranjpye. True, this is only a beginning; but it is a beginning of deeds—and the end of mere words or resolutions.—Yours, etc.

G. R. HINGNEKAR.

409, Sadashiv Peth,
Poona, 12th March.

MISCELLANEA.

REDUCTION OF DRINK.

WE are glad of the action promptly taken by the Minister of Excise in Bombay, as related in the following press communiqué, in regard to the mass movement among the Kali Paraj to which we referred under "Topics of the Week" in our last issue:—

About six months ago a movement in the nature of a religious revival started among the Kali Paraj in Kalwan taluka of Nasik district and quickly spread through other parts of Gujarat. It is the belief of the people that there is a goddess or Mata moving over the country, whose commands for the regeneration of Kali Paraj are revealed through the medium of individuals in the village, who become possessed and prophesy in her name. The commands of the Mata are concerned largely with the betterment of the social and hygienic conditions of the people including the prohibition of liquor and toddy drinking. In some districts the movement was but short-lived but the Chaudras, who form practically the whole population of Eastern Mandvi and Valod talukas in the Surat district, have adhered strictly to the commands of the Mata. The whole area has gone absolutely dry. Practically no liquor or toddy is being sold. The people have enforced prohibition on themselves. This striking change in the habits of the Chaudras, whose drinking habits were notorious and had seriously affected their economic condition, was brought to the notice of Government by the Collector and it was decided that every encouragement should be given to the Chaudras to adhere to their new way of life. Orders were accordingly issued for the immediate closing of 13 shops in Mandvi and 3 in Valod and this policy will be continued unless and until evidence of illicit distilling and general local enquiry shows that the movement has broken down.

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