

THE Servant of India

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TOPICS OF THE WEEK

The Impotence of Power.

THE indecent haste, with which the French have rejected the last German offer, almost before it was made, proves—as if further proof were needed!—that France is not in the Ruhr for the sake of reparations, but for the sake of finally annihilating Germany. Yet annihilation still tarries. Even with the Ruhr, Germany's industrial heart, completely paralyzed, this astonishing country still manages to carry on her economic existence. Politically too the Republic refuses to die or to be provoked into suicide by four months' calculated frightfulness. Women have been horsewhipped, workmen shot, cities fined, citizens imprisoned, buildings wrecked, treasuries looted, officials expelled, police forces disbanded. Still there has been no rising. Nor civil war. Communist disturbances have been few and speedily suppressed. The latest conspiracy of the super-Nationalists has been exposed in time and scotched. What next? The French militarists still say they can hold out longest : which is just the silly fatuity a militarist would profess. For what lesser evil can Germany choose, than this passive resistance? Pay what France demands? That would be bleeding to death and starvation for all. Armed revolt? That would mean still more losses in life and property. So what better alternative is there? To be sure the Westphalians, whom the French have struck in this adventure, are the most independent, sturdy and obstinate of the German races : but even so and with all one's admiration for the silent heroism and unbroken will of this self-disciplined people—the fact is, that Germany has got her back to the wall, with nothing further to lose and nothing to hope from anybody but from her own endurance. Frightfulness only succeeds, where people still have something to fear ; but once that

point is passed, force of necessity fails and there is finally demonstrated in all its nakedness—the impotence of power.

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The U. P.
Ministers.

NO one can rise from the perusal of the notes exchanged between the Hon'ble Mr. Chintamani and Sir William Marris in regard to the de la Fosse affair without feeling sincere admiration for the spirited action of the former in resigning his office of Minister in protest against the latter's settling matters pertaining to the Minister of Education without reference to him. Whether Sir Claude de la Fosse should have been given permission to launch a criminal prosecution against Pt. Gurtu and others, or whether an attempt should first have been made to settle the dispute out of court, is irrelevant to the question in hand. The thing that matters is that Sir Claude, whose services have been lent to the Allahabad University and who is subject to the rules governing the conduct of Government servants, failed to make an application, as is necessary under the rules, for Government's sanction before instituting proceedings in Court. The Governor, who as Chancellor was directly approached in this connexion, also seemed to ignore the point, and when the matter was brought to his notice by Mr. Chintamani, repaired the mistake by informing the Vice-Chancellor that he must take the permission of the Local Government. The Vice-Chancellor then did make an application to the Chief Secretary, who, ignorant of the notes* that had passed between the Minister and the head of the Government, telegraphed to the Vice-Chancellor that no permission was necessary ! The Minister, finding no application come in, suggested to the Governor that Sir Claude de la Fosse be called upon to explain. In the meanwhile the Governor changed his mind and came to the conclusion that though, strictly speaking, an application could be insisted upon, in this particular case it was hardly necessary, and that the omission on the part of the Vice-Chancellor, if a fault, is a mere technical one and therefore venial. In the course of the correspondence the Governor also made certain reflections on the Minister's impartiality, which no self-respecting person could let pass unchallenged. Mr. Chintamani's conduct is entirely praiseworthy, and even more so that of Pandit Jagat Narain, who resigned purely out of his desire to assert the principle of collective responsibility. Fortunately the services of these gentlemen are not lost to the country by their reversion to unofficial life.

**Communal Strife
in the Punjab.**

IT is a great pity that greater success did not attend the efforts of the Congress leaders to restore peace between the Hindus and Mohammadans of the Punjab, who are now virtually in two hostile camps. The causes influencing the masses are different from those influencing the educated classes, but the representatives of neither section of the two communities are yet prepared for a compromise. Though thus the mission of the leaders failed in its main purpose, it succeeded in bringing together the representatives of the press of different communities whose highly coloured accounts of events and reckless expression of views had considerably increased the heat of communal strife. These journalists have now formed themselves into an Association and agreed to take steps, in consultation with the Provincial Congress and Khilafat Committees, to verify all sensational communal news before publishing them and to approach all communal questions in a dignified and conciliatory spirit. This is certainly a matter for congratulation and we fully share the Congress leaders' hope that the Association will justify expectations and one of the most serious causes for communal differences will thereby be removed.

A Conspiracy?

IT is a matter of common experience that when a country suffers defeat in a military engagement on which it builds high hopes, it often encounters a general cry for the head of the commander, whom it has to sacrifice to a popular clamour. We fear that something similar is going to happen to Mr. C. Rajagopalachar, against whom a savage outcry is being raised by the *Bombay Chronicle* because of the failure of the country to complete preparations for civil disobedience before the appointed time. If the country has failed, it is not because of, but in spite of, the feverish activities of Mr. Rajagopalachar to avert failure. One can but imagine how much poorer would have been the final outcome but for the raging, tearing agitation carried on by him throughout the country. It is not his fault if he does not carry the same influence as Mahatma Gandhi, but there is no one among the leaders of non-co-operation who can hold the candle to him in the spiritual qualities which we associate with Gandhiji. If he is successfully intrigued out of leadership, then morally the movement would be an even greater fiasco than it is now politically. Though with the politics of the movement we are in sharp conflict, we devoutly hope that its ethics, the high tone of which we have always appreciated, will not be allowed to degenerate as a result of the conspiracy which is evidently being hatched in Bombay.

**The Ratnagiri
Conference.**

NEGOTIATIONS are still on foot to bring about a reconciliation between the two wings of the Non-Co-operation party, but the pro-changers have become impatient to enter the Councils and are unlikely to listen to any proposals for compromise. A conference of the Maharashtra section of the Das party, was held in Ratnagiri last week, amongst the most notable resolutions being those which formally declared the lifting of the ban on all the things that have been tabooed since the inauguration of the non-co-operation movement—schools, law-courts and Councils. As to the Councils it is worthy of remark that the pro-changers do not pledge themselves to a policy of indiscriminate obstruction, which alone was declared by Mr. Das

and Pandit Nehru to be consistent with the principle of non-co-operation—a principle to which even these dissidents profess to bear allegiance. What seems so utterly ludicrous with the Das party is that while it has taken every care to eliminate non-co-operation from its active programme—there is not a vestige of it remaining anywhere—in outward appearance it swears by it even more fervently than the no-changers do. The Congress regulates the whole of its policy by the doctrine of non-co-operation; still it has not barred the door against those who do not believe in that doctrine. Such persons will be in a minority in the Congress, but can at least gain admission into it if they want to. Membership of the Das party, however, is strictly confined to those who declare their faith in non-co-operation. But having declared their faith at the time of admission, members are required to throw the principle of non-co-operation on the scrap heap for the rest of their lives. Evidently the Das party is constrained to make up in profession what it lacks in practice!

THE following Remonstrance has been cabled to the Rt. Hon. the Secretary of State for India and to Colonel Josiah Wedgwood, D. S. O., M. P. In the latter cable the words are prefixed: "Please communicate the following cable to leaders parliamentary parties, Montagu and press." It then runs:

From Mahajana Sabha, South Indian Chamber Commerce, Servants India Society, Ryotwari and Landholders Association, National Home Rule League, Andhra Congress Swarajya Party, Tamil Nadu Congress Swarajya party. At meeting of representatives of associations named above and other Madras leaders following resolution was passed, and myself ordered to transmit to Indian Secretary [and yourself]: That this Presidency being mainly agricultural in its population is sorely and seriously affected by doubling of duty on salt, a necessity for men and cattle.

That this meeting remonstrates most emphatically against the action of Government of India in resorting to this ultimate source of revenue against thrice expressed will of Legislative Assembly and also against the policy hitherto pursued and without exhausting other sources such as surcharge on customs and income tax, the deficit being merely temporary, pending retrenchment to be effected. That it most emphatically repudiates that it ever could have been intention of Reforms that the will of a single individual, however exalted, should be superimposed on will of Nation on such vital issue as taxation of necessities of life and that without any real danger to interests of British India and without state of emergency. That it further urges that unless this action of the Governor-General is disallowed by His Majesty the King-Emperor, people of this land are bound to conclude that autocracy is still supreme and that august assurances to contrary are merely illusory.

(By Order) ANNIE BESANT.

**The Liberal
Conference.**

THE second Bombay Liberal Conference will, it is finally decided, be held in Karad (in Satara district) on the 19th and 20th instant, under the presidentship of Mr. Chunilal M. Gandhi of Surat. The organisers of the Conference have done much propaganda work in the district on the salt tax and the Liberal policy and expect a large contingent to attend the Conference. It is the duty of all Liberals to second their efforts by attending the Conference in as large numbers as possible to participate in its discussions. At this critical period in its history, the Liberal party must review its position and decide its future policy in relation to the questions that lie ahead.

LIAISON BETWEEN ASSEMBLY AND COMMONS.

THE only satisfactory remedy for the evils attendant on the partial self-government that obtains in India at present is, of course, full self-government, but while we must not relax our efforts to win complete Home Rule, we must not, like practical men, also omit to devise some interim measures for minimising the effect of the over-riding powers vested in the Secretary of State, the Governor General, or the Governors, so long as the existing imperfect constitution remains in force. In respect of these reserved powers, Parliament is the final arbiter; all legislation, whether initiated in the Local or the Central Legislature, to obtain which the executive Government has to resort to special powers, has to be laid before both Houses of Parliament. It is therefore obvious that, in order to ensure that these extraordinary powers will not be called into exercise on any but the most extraordinary occasions, Indians must take steps to keep opinion in Parliament informed on Indian affairs. It is idle to think that, without a systematic endeavour on our part to enlighten members on the state of things in India, Liberal and even Radical opinion will of its own accord always side with us. The note of hesitancy struck by such an advanced journal as the *Nation and the Atheneum* on the salt tax or by the *New Statesman* on the Indian grievances in Kenya shows conclusively that there is ample field for conducting a propaganda on right lines at the centre of affairs. And Parliament having provided a constitutional machinery in the Joint Standing Committee for a frequent review of Indian affairs and regular opportunities for challenging the exercise of the special powers by the heads of the executive in India, it would be criminal neglect on our part not to place all the information in our possession of Indian conditions and Indian feeling at the disposal of members of Parliament.

To do this efficiently, it is necessary, in our view, to set up a special Indian agency for the purpose. The Liberal Federation has a committee of its own in England, and Dr. Annie Besant has her own Committee which she has recently revived. In addition to these two, a third Committee has just been formed with Col. Wedgwood as chairman and Mr. E. D. Morel as whip for the purpose of making the reforms a success. But all these Committees suffer more or less from the want of a vivifying touch with India. To supply this defect, we would propose for the consideration of the non-official members of the Central Legislature that the Legislative Assembly should depute every session one of its members to England for the express purpose of acquainting the members of the Standing Committee in particular and all the members of Parliament in general with events in India as they appear to Indians. His business would be to supply the Indian brief to all who are likely to

take up the cause, and therefore he must be among the topmost half a dozen members of the Lower House, able to put India's case with vigour and yet with judgment. As a member, and an influential member, of the Supreme Legislature in the land, he will command an attentive and respectful hearing in all circles interested in Indian affairs, and, given an adequate establishment, he will be able to keep in close touch with all who are at all likely to be of help in the Houses of Parliament. He must be charged with bringing to the notice of the legislators in England instances of the exercise of the Governor's prerogative in the provincial Councils also and the provincial Councils must therefore undertake to keep him *au fait* with all such happenings. There is an advantage in changing such a referee on Indian affairs every session of Parliament, for in the first place, no member in the front ranks in the Assembly will consent to live in England for the whole term of the Assembly, imperilling his chances with his constituency. Secondly, things are moving so fast in India at present that a man out off from public life of India for three continuous years is apt to become stale; thirdly, there is a great advantage in having in our midst a number of men who have come into personal touch with British Parliamentarians and British Parliamentary practice and who have been able to watch English politics both in and out of Parliament at close quarters.

Fortunately, no differences have arisen as yet among the different parties or groups in the Central Legislature in respect of the use of the extraordinary powers by the Governor-General. The Assembly can therefore select every session a member to represent it in England, irrespective of parties. As the Assembly, and following the Assembly the provincial Legislatures, take up an attitude of determined opposition, as they inevitably will have to do, the need for keeping in England one who can authoritatively explain matters, will be the more keenly felt. Such an impressive gesture of protest as the resignation of members, e. g., or the rejection of all financial proposals, as is now being considered by the leading politicians in this country, is easily capable of being distorted into a manifestation of Gandhian non-co-operation which all of them unite in condemning and into a mark of irresponsibility in the Legislature. Sure enough, the future progress of reforms will be marked frequently by deadlocks as time goes on, but such deadlocks produced to mark the Legislature's disapproval of a line of policy adopted by the Government on any particular occasion are different from the deadlocks produced as a result of indiscriminate opposition which the Das-Nehru party advocates (or at any rate advocated at one time). These deadlocks will accelerate the pace of Swaraj only if we succeed in enlisting the moral support of disinterested observers; and for the purpose of mobilising all opinion likely to be of

effective help to us, it is of the utmost importance, in our opinion, to have at least one accredited Indian parliamentarian at the seat of the Empire. The suggestion is made here only in brief outline and will have to be worked out in detail, if it recommends itself to the judgment of the public in India. All that we ask for now is that it will receive consideration.

MALABAR RELIEF.

THERE is always one aspect of a calamity which is pleasing to contemplate. It is the efforts of society to repair the damage done by the calamity and to ameliorate the sufferings of its victims. The rebellion of the Moplahs was one of the direst calamities that ever befell Malabar, affecting an area of nearly 2000 sq. miles and a population of nearly 2 million souls. The fanatical Moplahs committed on their more numerous neighbours every kind of conceivable atrocity. Relief on an extensive scale was needed for a comparatively long period and the manner in which the people of the west coast in particular and of the country in general rose to the occasion is highly creditable to the self-governing capacity of India, the more so because the relief was organized and administered, adequately and efficiently, solely by non-officials, all the energies of the Government and its local officials being required for putting down the rebellion. As soon as the outbreak occurred, those who had friends and relatives in the unaffected taluks of Malabar and in Cochin and Travancore fled to them and found shelter there. These were generally people of the better classes. But the panic-stricken destitute masses had no friends to go to and flocked in thousands to the few towns which were considered comparatively safe. The task of finding food and shelter for them taxed the resources of the local people to the utmost. Both private and organized charity was keenly stimulated. The richer landlords individually looked after hundreds of refugees. One of the most conspicuous of them supported unaided nearly a thousand refugees for several months. Local committees were formed to collect money and grain and to administer relief. One of the greatest difficulties in the early days was lack of transport facilities. The rebels had destroyed the bridges, felled trees across the roads and made them quite impassable by lying in ambush at strategical points. It was therefore quite heroic on the part of some citizens of Calicut to have carried grain in those days to centres which had exhausted their stores. But the number of refugees rose rapidly beyond local capacity and an urgent appeal was made to the country at large — which was nobly responded to. A Sheriff's meeting was convened at Madras and a committee, appointed thereat, took steps for the collection of funds in the whole presidency. The Servants of India Society, the Y. M. C. A. and other bodies that exist for service offered workers for organisa-

tion and administration of relief and for the collection of funds. Bombay, that generous supporter of all good Indian causes, formed an influential committee which took energetic steps to collect funds from all other parts of India except Madras, for which a separate committee was already in existence. The local committee of Calicut was converted into a Central Relief Committee for looking after the administration of relief in Calicut and other centres. Money came from all parts of India and from distant places like Baghdad, Basra, England and Australia. Municipalities, local boards and co-operative societies of Madras presidency contributed their mite. The mill-owners of Bombay, Ahmedabad, Sholapur, Nagpur and other places sent bales of new cloth, while old clothes were collected in addition to money by ladies and students in many places. Medicines and condensed milk were supplied free by importing firms. Lady Willingdon organised a Fete in Madras which brought in a considerable amount of money. Indian ladies from Bombay and Poona visited Malabar and organised the local ladies to look after the needs and comforts of the women and children refugees. The health of the refugees was efficiently looked after by men and women doctors and Ayurvedic physicians, the Government, private bodies and independent practitioners heartily co-operating. The Congress Committee for political reasons organised relief independently of the Central Relief Committee. The non-sectarian relief given by these two bodies was supplemented by that organized by the Arya Samaj and the Jamait-ul-Ulema for Hindus and Moplahs respectively. When it is remembered that all this was done at a time of political distraction through the like of which the country has not passed within three-quarters of a century, there is certainly ample reason for being gratified at the growth of public spirit in the country.

The report of the work done by the Central Relief Committee, which has now been published, gives an idea of the scale on which relief was needed and how efficiently it was administered. Of the several agencies, the Central Committee was the best organised and commanded the largest resources. The collections made by the influential committees of Bombay and Madras and by various other bodies in other places were placed at its disposal for administration. It thus obtained nearly Rs. 2,70,000, of which the Bombay committee alone supplied more than Rs. 1,40,000 and the Madras committee nearly Rs. 70,000. It had a large body of local workers among whom different castes and creeds were well represented. The Servants of India Society, the Y. M. C. A., the South Indian United Church of Malabar, and the Seva Sadan of Poona placed their workers at its disposal. The local committees that were in existence gladly affiliated themselves to it and, except in one or two cases, sought financial help from it as their own resources had been nearly exhausted. As funds permitted the Central Committee organisa-

ed new centres of relief and put them in charge of local committees. From the middle of October when the Committee came into existence to the end of February when the rebellion may be said to have been fully quelled, relief was given to refugees in a number of camps at Calicut and in the mofussil. There were six of them in Calicut and fourteen in the mofussil. The number of refugees in each of them varied from day to day, as those from crowded camps had to be moved to others and as towards the end of the period there was a general fall in all the camps. The general average strength of the camps however may be put at 1000 each, the mofussil camps having somewhat more and the Calicut camps less than the average. The larger camps had on some days two to three thousand souls. Such large concentrations of men, women and children created their own problems. Only the plainest food could be given: two meals of rice with a little salt, dhal and vegetable. To children and suckling mothers a little tinned milk was allowed. The medical and sanitary needs became urgent. A number of maternity cases had to be attended to. The food, crudely prepared for the whole camp, naturally disagreed with delicate children and caused dysentery, diarrhoea and other troubles. This and insufficient protection against wintry weather still further enhanced the rate of mortality which is already always high among our children. Special hospitals were organized for women and children and for cases of contagious disease in Calicut and one or two mofussil centres. These hospitals were in charge of lady doctors and nurses supplied by Christian Missions and the Seva Sadan of Poona. This was of course in addition to the usual medical aid given in every camp by qualified doctors (or vaidas as the patients desired) who volunteered attendance. An attempt was made to find employment for men and women so that they might have something to start life with on going back to their homes. Those who were carpenters and weavers were given tools and materials for making furniture and cloth. Others were given employment in industrial concerns in and outside Calicut and others still in vegetable gardens. The charka too was tried in one or two camps. The women were employed in making and twisting cocoanut fibre which is an important cottage industry in Malabar and also in pounding rice. But it is not an easy task to find employment for a large floating population even in a commercial and industrial town like Calicut. Only a small percentage of the population in the camps could therefore be found profitable occupations. Schools were started in every camp to keep the children engaged, the teachers being found among local volunteers or refugees in the camps. Entertainment and instruction were provided by means of gramophones, *kirtans* and magic lantern lectures, the local staff of the Agricultural Department using the opportunity very well. As the rebellion was quelled and the villages became safe enough for occupation

by the end of February, the camps were closed and the inmates sent home with a valedictory cash dole—except one camp which was continued for the benefit of those who had been forcibly made Muhammadans and who feared violence from fanatical Moplahs for having gone back to Hinduism.

By this time Government had begun giving loans to the Hindu victims of the rebellion and much distress was reported among numerous Moplah families in the interior whose male members had been either killed or imprisoned for being involved in the rebellion. They were too ignorant or afraid of the police to seek help in the camps and so arrangements had to be made for taking relief to them where they were. Workers were sent into the interior who, after making careful enquiries and taking the help of local committees of Hindus and Moplahs, gave money doles of Rs. 10 to Rs. 20 per deserving family to enable them to repair huts and houses damaged in the military operations and to provide sustenance for a few weeks. By this time the monsoon was in sight, but the landlords being still away and much unemployment prevalent, the Central Relief Committee were persuaded to open cheap grain shops at several centres so as to keep down the price of grain in the bazaar and also to give gratuitous relief to destitute families. These grain shops were kept open during the whole of the rainy season, but it must be admitted that there was practically no demand for cheap grain and the grain stocked in the shops was ultimately used for gratuitous relief. With the month of October the Committee closed its operations and the balance of money was converted into a Reconstruction Fund, named after Mr. G. K. Devadhar of the Servants of India Society, to whom the Committee felt particularly grateful, to be used for promoting amity between Hindus and Moplahs, and for starting co-operative societies, schools for panchamas and community centres. The good work begun in a calamity is thus continued.

THE KALIPARAJ MOVEMENT.

THE great Kaliparaj movement, which swept a part of Gujarat during the last six months, is now on its trial, having come up, as it was bound to sooner or later, against the combined forces of State authorities and the upper layers of society. The movement owed its origin to certain *Devis* or *Matas* who travelled about from one village to another in Mahuva, Vyara and Songad talukas of the Gaekwar's territory and in Bardoli and Mandvi talukas of the British district of Surat, exhorting the Kaliparaj people to live a clean life—*i. e.* to bathe daily, to have clean and healthy surroundings, to be swadeshi in their scant dress, and above all to abstain from alcohol and flesh. Drunkenness is the besetting sin of these aboriginal tribes which lands whole masses of them in utter moral and material ruin. Whatever one may think of

the pretensions of the *Matas* to anything like a divine inspiration, they have undoubtedly exerted a tremendous influence for good on the simple mind of the Kaliparaj and have practically weaned him, though of course temporarily, from drink. So great is his new-born aversion from drink and yet so keen is his apprehension lest he should once more relapse into his former evil habits, that he has now taken, in some places, to the cutting down of all toddy trees on his proprietary land. He wishes to burn his boats, so to say, in order to make a future retreat impossible. He also avoids all contact with the liquor shopkeepers, fearing that if he went near them a glass of the hated drink would be forced down his throat and he would be coerced into tapping toddy trees. To such lengths has he carried his campaign against liquor that he has in many cases given up the cultivation of lands of such of his landlords as deal in liquor. His logic is simple enough: if drink is evil, so are they who batten on its sale. The methods employed by the Kaliparajs to rid themselves of the curse of drunkenness may not recommend themselves to everyone, but if these methods are excessively drastic, they will at least convince the reader of the intensity of the Kaliparajs' determination to turn over a new leaf.

Naturally the Kaliparajs (or the dusky race) have incurred by this movement the opposition of the *Ujli varans* (or the bright coloured), and the question has assumed the form of the aboriginal tribes *versus* their oppressors, of whatever caste or creed. But the movement has excited chiefly the animosity of the Parsi community, from whom are mostly drawn the liquor contractors in the area. They also form a large proportion of the landed proprietors, moneylenders and the police patels of the district. Till a few months ago every Kaliparaj was to all intents and purposes a serf, in economic bondage to his superiors. He was systematically forced into labour, even when his own field required his close personal attention, and was offered the ridiculous wage of an anna or at the most two annas a day. This insufficient wage was however supplemented by a glass of liquor, which helped to buttress wage-slavery by liquor-slavery. The zemindar had only to send round a Pathan, a Bhaiya, or (if the zemindar happened to be a police patel) the village servant of the Dhed class, with instructions to throw an anna piece into the huts of the Kaliparajs, and the next morning every man or woman who had received the call of the lord was bound to go and work the whole day in his field. And for the pair of bullocks and plough that he had to carry with him he obtained the ludicrously low hire of four annas a day. And all this for no other reason than that he is a Kaliparaj or belonged to one of the early races in occupation of the soil. Fired by the new movement, however, the Kaliparaj now refuses to work under the old conditions and regards himself a free man just as much as any of the *Ujli varans*. If the Parsis or the Gujarati and Marwari Banias, who-

ever they be, agree to do away with compulsory labour, give their labourers the wage current in the district, do not make the insulting offer of a glass of liquor in lieu of a part of their wages, and do not lure them to drink, by fair means or foul, the Kaliparajs will raise the boycott and follow their peaceful avocation. Nobody can accuse the Kaliparajs of defiance of law; they are thoroughly law-abiding, peaceful, simple and docile. But now that they realise the harm drink does to them, they wish to keep it at arm's length at all costs. I asked some of those who have given up the lands which they were cultivating, as to how long they can thus pull on. Their companions broke in with alacrity: "We have lands of our own, on which we pay an assessment of Rs. 25 to Rs 100. We will sublet bits of our lands to such landless people, but we will not let them go near the devil again." No doubt there have been some apostates; they have fallen a prey to the allurements of the liquor-sellers' agents. But such cases are few and far between, and on the whole they have stuck to their reformed ways and are firm in their determination to break the fetters of economic thralldom, which have bound their feet for generations past.

The most noteworthy feature of this movement is that it is entirely spontaneous. The Kaliparajs have derived very little assistance, if any, from outside. No one heard of the movement till the *Matas* had done their work of freeing the Kaliparajs from the evil of drunkenness; and even when outsiders at last awoke to the immensity of the task accomplished, they did nothing further than to express sympathy with the movement in two mass meetings. The Baroda Temperance Association was asked in March last to review the work so far done, and a Committee appointed for the purpose has now completed its enquiry and submitted a report, which I was privileged to see in advance but which has not yet been released. When it is published, it will throw a flood of light on the numerous disabilities under which the Kaliparajs labour and the difficulties thrown in their path by those who stand to suffer a pecuniary loss by the abolition of drink among the Kaliparajs. At the end of last month an Association was formed at Navasari with a view to helping them in their unequal fight with landlords and liquor-sellers, and giving them the right lead so that friction with the official class and the Parsis may as far as possible be avoided. So far as the impending conflict with the officials is concerned, the contrast between the attitude of the British authorities towards this movement and that of the Baroda State is very marked. The Bombay Government in the transferred departments has marked its appreciation for the temperance campaign of the Kaliparajs by closing down 18 liquor shops in Maudvi taluka and if the people in the other talukas show an equally strong determination to abstain from drink, there is no doubt that the Bombay Government will close more shops. In

Baroda territory, on the other hand, not only is no liquor shop closed, but the State is actually persecuting the movement on the pretext that "some agitators harass poor people... and cause a loss of revenue to the State, taking advantage of people's ignorance. There is absolutely no foundation in fact for this pretext. The "agitators", such as they are, appeared on the scene only after the unseen influence of the *Matas* had done the work, and even afterwards they carried on very little "agitation." But the State authorities have now forbidden school teachers to take any part in movements like that of the Kaliparajs. The Gaekwar has provided splendid boarding schools for the Kaliparajs, and some of them are in existence for thirty or even forty years. But the officials of the State apparently do not intend to allow the work done by the schools to bear its desired fruit. The State revenue will no doubt suffer if this movement is allowed to go forward, but any such loss will be compensated for a hundred-fold by the increased prosperity of the Kaliparajs owing to their greater thrift and industry. It remains to be seen if this movement which deserves to be encouraged in every way and ought to be kept from drifting into wrong channels will survive the combined opposition of the officials and the higher classes.

A. V. THAKKAR.

MALAYA.*

BEING a Socialist, I can hardly be expected to wax enthusiastic about any form of capitalistic enterprise: and before I proceed further let me state at once that by socialism I mean the theory that service should be the immediate aim of all production; and by capitalism that profits should be that aim. But to be a Socialist is not necessarily to be a fanatic who refuses to admit degrees of wrong. Capitalism was the basis of the English factory system of a hundred years ago, with all its unspeakable horrors; capitalism is the basis in the famous Rowntree cocoa works in Yorkshire to-day; yet is there yet not a fundamental difference between the two? Similarly I feel constrained to distinguish between the methods of collecting rubber in the Congo under King Leopold II and the methods of modern rubber plantations; and again, in considering the question of plantations, I cannot fail to recognise a fundamental difference between, say, the plantations of Fiji and of Malaya.

Malaya, it should be remembered at the outset, was until 1867 part and parcel of India and, although technically therefore the agricultural labourer who today sets sail from Madras for Penang is going "abroad" whilst his brother sailing from Madras to Rangoon is but passing from one Indian province to another: substantially *emigration* to Malaya falls into the same category as *migration* to Burma, Assam, etc. In fact, if migration to Assam was considered in its effects on the labourer it should clearly be ranked with emigration to such distant colonies as Mauritius and Guiana; for in all these three cases the odds are against the newcomer's ever seeing his native place again. As a result of this fact, Mauritius and British Guiana to-day have a domiciled population of which

locally born Indians form the over-whelming majority; sufficient proof for the immobility of Indian immigrants, once they reach those countries.

In Malaya, however, the Indian immigrant is predominantly a seasonal worker. He comes to the country for a spell of work, which before the war used to be two years and now-a-days is three years; he then returns to his native place for a rest and a change; and once more he may "emigrate" back to Malaya. Under such conditions it is obviously altogether fallacious to draw similar conclusions from what seem similar premises in other Colonies. One knows from Mr. Andrews' visit what sex disparity in Fiji, for instance, means: yet the fact that the sex proportion of Indians working on Malayan Estates is as 2:1 does by no means imply necessarily the same interpretation; for whilst a labourer in Fiji is "in for it" for life, an immigrant in Malaya keeps up his relations with his native place, where he has left his family or whither he returns after a couple of years, to seek a wife. In the one case a man is altogether uprooted and thrown down in novel surroundings without any support from public opinion which hitherto had ruled all his actions; in the other, the old conventions and standards are continued by the sojourner just because he knows that he is only a sojourner and that, very soon, he will return to the old environment, in which he was born and in which he expects to die.

In this respect, the Indian in Malaya is not singular. On the contrary, apart from the Malays, almost 90 p. c. of the immigrant races only go to Malaya as sojourners, i.e. to make a competence and then to retire to their native land. This attitude and mentality is familiar to all of us in the case of Europeans in India; but in Malaya that attitude is not the characteristic of the European alone, but is shared by the Indian, the Chinese, the Eurasian, who in their turn long to return to their homes in South India, South China, or Ceylon, as soon as they can profitably do so. For Malaya happens to be a prodigiously rich country; probably the only country of its size, the mineral wealth of which equals its agricultural potentialities. Of the one it is enough to state that *two thirds* of all the tin mined in the world comes from Malaya; of the other that more than *half* of all the rubber produced in the world comes from that "Golden Chersonese". As a consequence Malaya has, ever since its resources have been developed, attracted people from all surrounding countries; but unfortunately for Malaya, its very wealth has prevented the people so attracted from settling down there for good. According to the last census only 54% of the inhabitants were born in Malaya; but even that fact discloses not the full truth, seeing that 50% of the total population are Malays. Going into the birth-place statistics of the other races, one finds that of Chinese 78% were born outside of Malaya and of Indians 88%. That being so, it follows that the bulk of the population takes no interest in the permanent welfare of the country, being merely concerned in clearing out as soon as possible. As a consequence there is remarkably little public life and public spirit, for, naturally, where people's sole aim is their work and the desire to make or save money and begone, there can be no leisured class, and when a man there reaches maturity, i.e. the very time when his services to the country in general would be most valuable, he withdraws himself altogether to spend the rest of his life on his cabbage patch in China, or India or

* Being the English original of an article written for the "Indian Overseas" Edition of the *Maryada*.

England, where, ten to one, he has no opportunity of utilising his Malayan experiences.

That being the situation, it is not to be wondered that the Government of the country has hitherto been left almost entirely in the hands of a bureaucracy of professional administrators. Politically Malaya is divided into British territory (comprised in the Colony of the Straits Settlements) and into the "Protectorates" over nominally Malay States. Of the latter there are again the "Federated Malay States," which are as much like the Colony of the Straits Settlements as any two peas, and the "unfederated Malay States."

In the latter the Malay population largely predominates (88 lakhs of Malays out of a total population of 115 lacs), but in the S. S. and F. M. S. they are in a very definite minority (77 lakhs Malays out of total of 221 lakhs); it is necessary however to bear in mind that the "Unfederated Malay States" are the backward portion of Malaya and that the bulk of the Malayan industries are centred in the Federated Malay States, as all commerce is in the Straits Settlements. Leaving out the Unfederated States as of little consequence to our purpose, the Malaya of the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States is governed by the Secretary of State in Downing Street through his agent in Singapore who there enjoys the title of Governor of the Straits Settlements and High Commissioner of the Federated Malay States. This official has under him a Colonial Secretary for the S. S. and a Chief Secretary for the F. M. S. and under them again there is a hierarchy of officials in their various departments; all of whom however are interchangeable and form one single whole, whether for the time they serve in the colony or in the protectorate. The higher services are restricted to persons who are of European descent on both sides (!), whilst the subordinate services happen to be very largely staffed by Ceylon-domiciled Tamils. As will have been noted, there is no "nonsense of democracy" about the whole scheme of things; a fact further illustrated by the composition of the legislature, which has a permanent official majority and whose minority is naturally not selected according to their likelihood of giving the Governor the greatest amount of trouble. Besides, the very size of the "Legislative Council" in Singapore and of the "Federal Council" in Kuala Lumpur is such, as to be capable of being comfortably accommodated round the dinner table at Government House and it would therefore betray little wisdom of the world to expect amongst that company of very worthy and amiable and well meaning gentlemen any "tribunes of the people." Perhaps it is necessary for me to add that even so Europeans predominate; though there are quite a number of tame Malays, a few Chinese millionaires and latterly, one Indian on these two Councils. If I add that of universities there is nothing and even of secondary education nothing very great, it will be apparent, that, if there are any men of Asiatic stock—be they a very Buddha or Confucius, be they even merely a Lord Fisher—who are looking for high adventure and wider opportunities in a new country where to found a new home for themselves and their descendents, they will be singularly ill-advised to emigrate to a country like Malaya, which offers them no future at all and a present of at the best mere material ease. But the fact is, that the emigrant from India does not go to Malaya with any such ideas; and that he only absents himself from India for a comparatively short period, because he believes that during that period he will be materially better off than if he remained at

home. Seeing that during the decade 1911-21 90 lakhs of Indians went to Malaya and that 56 lakhs returned, it may be safely presumed that this belief is grounded on fact and that, on the whole it pays our labourers from Madras to work on Malayan plantations. Should the sum total of benefits accruing to them there seem to an outside enquirer rather small, the only conclusion to draw is that in India itself it would have been still smaller. From recent enquiries made in Malaya it would seem that the cost of living per adult labourer averages \$ 9 (Rs. 15-10-0) per month (\$ 15=Rs. 28 for a married couple), equal to a minimum daily wage of 36 cents for 300 working days if single, or of 64 cents, if married. The actual wages seem to average about 40 cents per diem; but that the margin between earnings and cost of living is growing unattractively small is proved by the fact that a Malaya Labour Commission in 1920 recommended a minimum wage of 50 cents per male and of 40 cents per female for each working day, if immigration from India into Malaya was not to decrease materially. For it is obvious, always provided that labour is quite free to go and come, that the moment the sum total of advantages Malaya offers drops below that of India, immigration will automatically stop: and obviously too the labourer himself is the best judge of that, provided he is free and not deceived as to whether or not it is advantageous for him to emigrate. The question now is, is there real freedom of labour?

The plantation industry of Malaya is mainly derived from the early efforts of Coffee planters from Ceylon, who were attracted to the Peninsula in the eighties and nineties by the abundance of cheap land untouched by man hitherto, but of a fertility which surpasses even that of Ceylon. These men brought with them their system of running estates, and it so happened that this system did not include indenture. In the main therefore the Malayan plantation industry has from the very start been free from the odious system of indentures. But simultaneously with this Ceylon influx there came a very much smaller body of sugar planters trained in British Guiana who started a sugar industry in the Northern Districts of the Peninsula on the basis of indentured labour. The Coffee planters employed exclusively Indians and the sugar planters also largely depended on India. But the sugar district being well away from the other planting districts there was little contact between the two. The Ceylon planter remembering the evil of the tundu system which in Ceylon placed the employer helplessly in the hands of the Kangany, tried his best to start in Malaya without it; but debts for recruiting expenses, passage and advances were incurred and recovered for quite a long time. The Government of Malaya originally only concerned itself about indentured labourers; but in 1905 the labour department was put in charge of all free Indian labour as well. As a consequence, and since the department carried with it the best planting opinion, the total abolition of every kind of debt recovery became merely a question of time, and in fact, this much needed reform was finally introduced in 1909. The old coffee plantations had long been turned into rubber and more and more land was opened up under that crop; but all of it without indentured labour, which the Malayan planter (except for his northern confrere in sugar) abhorred as thoroughly bad from even a mere business point of view. The small minority in the north had eventually to give in and since

1910 the recruiting of indentured labour for Malaya has been illegal. Simultaneously a system was evolved whereby the recruiting of free Indian labour was vested in a semi-Government Immigration Committee which levied a cess on employers for every Indian employee and out of this money paid all expenses connected with bringing Indian labour into Malaya. The actual recruiting was (and is) in the hands of labourers who have worked on Malayan plantations and who have obtained a license from the Malayan labour department to bring back friends with them. The department's aim is to eliminate all professional recruiting and that it is successful in this endeavour, is proved by the fact that the average number of labourers recruited per license is between six and eight only and that each Kangani on an average only once obtains a license.

Until a year ago the Malay Labour Code contained clauses which made certain labour offences a criminal offence, but these have now been repealed. Thus the freedom of immigrant labour in Malaya to-day is as real as any law can make it; and that being so, labour conditions naturally have to adjust themselves to the mutual satisfaction of employer and employed, if an employer is not to lose his labour force. Never having had the degrading experience of indentured labour, the Malayan planter on the whole is not a bad employer; and while there are not wanting numbers of men who genuinely feel themselves to be the *Mabap* of their labourers, the cases of men who are callous, mean or brutal are remarkably small. This in itself speaks volumes for the system and tradition of free labour and shows how (once you do away with any contract to labour for a longer period than one month and with any liability for debts) you raise, not merely the status of the employed, but equally that of the employer. In addition it is well to bear in mind that the Malayan labour department watches really anxiously over the health, the housing and the rights of the labourer. Still, to say that the Millenium had arrived on Malayan rubber estates, would of course be absurd; as would be any idea that there is no further room for improvement. But this much should in justice be conceded by all—that the labour system of Malaya is so far the best for plantation labour the world over; and that it has proved again and again that not only the labourer, not only the employer, but that also the shareholder has only to gain from the elimination of slavery in any shape or form.

It is just because absolutely free plantation labour has been such a success in Malaya that I consider that this Malayan system ought to be insisted upon as a minimum standard, wherever Indian labour is found. I am only sorry for this: that this insistence would not merely in that case have to extend to Indians abroad, but even to Indians in India. Unfortunately, there is no lack of Indians working on large estates in India itself whose conditions are in every respect worse than those of Indians abroad. Of them little is heard in India; least of all from the capitalists concerned, who may be extremely vocal when conditions of Indians abroad are discussed, but who maintain complete silence on the state of affairs nearer home. Emigration of course is not in the interest of Indian capitalists, the cheapness of whose labour is destroyed by counter attractions from abroad; and Indian labour itself is indeed only too often ill served by the general public in India which so frequently allows itself to be led away by the specious pleas of interested parties who

talk of patriotism when all they are concerned about is their pockets. To them and to all who desire to make emigration from India impossible, I would say that the best method of doing so is to raise labour conditions in India so much above those found anywhere abroad, that Indian labourers—who are no fools!—would no longer dream of going abroad.

My remedy is infallible: but will it be tried?

H. C. E. ZACHARIAS.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE.

A Fishy Tale of Empire. WHEN the Kingdom of Ireland became the Irish Free State, the status of the new Dominion was defined by reference to Canada. And with good reason: for no part of the British Empire has achieved as much international status as an autonomous State, as Canada. Being the first Dominion to appoint a separate Minister accredited to a foreign power, Canada has now just concluded a treaty of her own with a foreign power, the U.S.A.—negotiating it and signing it on her own, without any reference to the British Foreign Office or to the British Ambassador at Washington. There are consequently a good many flutters in several devocotes. The Liberal Government in power at Montreal obviously thought of this demonstration of Canada's absolute freedom in the diplomatic field as a fine gesture, to be counted unto them for righteousness in the constituencies. In itself the treaty dealing with halibut fishing in North American waters is of purely local import; but the principle at stake is of course really a challenge to the whole present conception of "Empire". The issue has been brought to a head by the action of the U. S. Senate, who have only ratified the treaty after adding a clause, under which the treaty applies not only to Canadian, but to all British halibut fishers. The Senate of course resents the idea of "God's own country" having to acknowledge as an equal the mere Colony of an effete European power and therefore has tried to put the latter into its proper place by treating Mr. Lapointe, the Canadian Minister of Fisheries who signed the treaty, as a plenipotentiary, not of Canada, but of the British Empire. It's a fine slap in the face of Canada and the King Ministry's effort of playing to the electoral gallery has disastrously miscarried. Did somebody in Downing Street smile, we wonder?

Chronology and Politics. THE news that Greece has just introduced the Gregorian calendar marks the breaking down of another and very inconvenient barrier in international life. As is generally known, the calendar hitherto used by the people of Eastern Europe is about a fortnight behind that of Western Europe; so that, leaving London on the 1st inst you arrive in Moscow on the 20th ultimo! This old Julian calendar, was introduced by Julius Cæsar, who, having had enough of the vagaries of a lunar year, as used

at his time, introduced a purely solar year ; i.e. he divided the time from one spring equinox to another into 365 days (and some years 366 days), quite irrespective of the phases of the moon. At his time that solar period was computed to consist of $365\frac{1}{4}$ days : but as a matter of fact the exact figure is 365 days 5 hours 48 minutes 46 seconds. In the course of the centuries this apparently insignificant shortage accumulated and the equinox, which Julius Cæsar expected to fall on March 25th had receded to March 21st in 325 A. D. and to March 11th in 1582 A.D. In the latter year Pope Gregory XIII ordered ten days to be dropped, so as to bring the Spring Equinox back to March 21st, as it was in the year 325 when a Council of the Church had fixed the date of Easter. Pope Gregory also arranged for the incidence of leap years on such an improved scale, as to make future retrocessions of the equinox impossible. This calendar, after its author called Gregorian, was legally introduced in the year named in Italy, Spain, France, Portugal and Catholic Germany : but having a Pope for its author, the Protestant States spurned it and stubbornly clung to the Julian Calendar. Protestant Germany and Scandinavia held out until 1700 and England actually until 1750, before legalizing an astronomical fact, because forsooth a Pope had sanctioned its application !

*Calendars and
Cathedrals.*

THE "Eastern Churches" with their extraordinary conservatism and tenacity have adhered to the Julian calendar to our very days, and when the Soviet Government of Russia a year or two ago introduced the Gregorian calendar (not, we may well believe, because it was authorized by a Pope, but because it was the calendar in use throughout the world), the then Patriarch of Moscow Tikhon denounced such Bolshevik "impiety" and refused to sanction its use for ecclesiastical use. Even worse, in Finland, an altogether anti-Bolshevik country, the Members of the Eastern Church, having adopted by their Church Assembly the universal Western calendar, already legalized in civil matters by the Finnish Parliament, could not obtain Patriarch Tikhon's concurrence either in this matter. But then in Eastern Europe at least religious fanaticism seems to be the prerogative of no single denomination. If a further illustration was needed, one would find it ready at hand in the recent order of the Polish Parliament, to raze the Russian Cathedral in Warsaw to the ground. The facts are that Poles are Roman Catholics and Russians—at least were—Eastern Orthodox. When Russia under the Tsars tried to russify Poland, one of its many methods was to proselytize and draw Poles from the Papal into the Russian State Church ; and as part of that policy, the Russian Government built in one of the most prominent parts of Poland's capital a Russian Cathedral, which for beauty and grandeur surpassed all other Varsovian buildings. And so to celebrate their newly-gained independence, these Poles can now think

of nothing better than the demolition of an architectural masterpiece, and they have solemnly decreed the 3rd inst.—their national holiday—to be the day on which this piece of vandalism is to be commenced !

*The Polish
Third of May.*

WHEN religious people can display such childishness, as Patriarch Tikhon over the calendar, or such vindictiveness, as the Poles over the Russian cathedral—is it a wonder that irreligious people, like the rulers of Russia to-day, should exhibit a similar mentality ? In Russia, the atheists of to-day are but the devotees of yesterday : scratch either, and you will soon enough discover the proverbial Tartar. The Poles of course thank God, that they are not as these Russians are, but Westerners—as witness their membership in the Western Church. How little Western however their mentality in fact is, is luridly shown up by the popular canonization of the assassin of Poland's first Constitutional President. The unfortunate man, Narutowicz, was a distinguished scientist and of stainless character : elected President on December 8th of last year, he was assassinated on the 16th by a neurotic third-rate politician, Niewiadomski, who in turn was executed on January 31st. The only reason given for the murder is that of the two candidates for the Presidency, one a territorial magnate and reactionary of the worst type, the other a peasant candidate (Narutowicz), the successful one had been voted for by the Jews ! This "crime" prompted the wretched madman to "avenge the pure Nationalist soul of Poland" by shooting a President so elected ; and for so "awakening the spirit of the nation" the upper and middle classes of Poland are now in the grip of a perfect delirium of politico-religious fervour, which manifests itself in a regular cult of the assassin, for whom masses are said, attended by thousands, for whose grave wreathes are being subscribed for in every school, in honour of whose *requiems* shops in whole quarters are being compelled to close. . . . Has the madness of Nationalism ever been demonstrated more starkly ?

*The Chinese
Fourth of May.*

WHILST the Poles are in this typically Polish fashion celebrating their third of May—assisted this time significantly by Marshal Foch !—the Chinese are keeping their own fourth of May National Holiday in their own way. With them the day connotes the anniversary of the great students' demonstration in 1919 against "China's disgrace." For the day is also the anniversary of China's acceptance of the notorious "21 Demands" made by Japan during the War, when all the Powers who might otherwise have protected Chinese independence were far too busy elsewhere, making the world fit for heroes to live in. The revolution of 1911 had indeed substituted a national (Chinese) modern republic for a foreign (Manchu) antiquated monarchy, but so far from the Chinese having gained

the complete democratic self-determination the revolution had aimed at, they soon found that they had merely exchanged subjection to a strong Japanese rule for subjection to a weak Manchu rule. When finally it was discovered that not only had the Chinese Cabinet sold the country to Japan, but that the Versailles Treaty would but seal their fate for ever, the student youth of Peking arose as one man, organized public opinion, boycotted all things Japanese, courted imprisonment and carried the day finally, by refusing to leave prison, until all their demands had been granted! This is the Fourth of May which is now observed by the Chinese as a National Holiday: a first gesture, and a pledge, that China means to be free yet.

CORRESPONDENCE.

KANARA FOREST GRIEVANCES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—My attention has been drawn to an article headed "Kanara Forest Grievances" which appeared in your issue of April 12th.

The writer of the article complains in the first place that Government failed to appoint the Committee that was promised. It is true that the Committee was never appointed; but that was not the fault of Government. As the Hon'ble Mr. Mehta stated in the Legislative Council on March 16, 1922, "the gentlemen who were asked and agreed to serve on the Committee subsequently declined; and the efforts of the Hon'ble Member for Kanara also proved unavailing." But a further attempt was made to secure non-official assistance. A suggestion was made to me by a non-official gentleman resident in Kanara, who has for some time past interested himself in Forest matters especially as affecting the coastal talukas, that a conference of officials and non-officials should be held to discuss the question. Government welcomed this suggestion. By this time Mr. Collins, the Forest Settlement Officer, had completed his general survey of the coastal tracts, and Government agreed that if a conference could be arranged, his proposals should be placed before it and discussed in detail. Unfortunately the efforts made by the gentleman above referred to to find non-official representatives to attend the conference failed, and after some months he informed me that the idea would have to be dropped.

It must not be supposed however that the Forest Settlement Officer did his work alone. The attempt to boycott him very speedily collapsed, and in almost every village he was accompanied, in his tour of inspection, by large numbers of rayats who pointed out to him the areas in which they wished to graze their cattle and to exercise other privileges.

The next point raised by the writer of the article is that the area assigned as minor forest is inadequate. Completely ignoring the fact that conditions in different parts of Kanara vary very greatly, he argues that as there are 22 lakhs of forest in Kanara it would have been easy to make assignments on the scale of 2 acres of forest to one of rice land. To any one who has any real acquaintance with the local conditions the argument is absurd. The question is purely one of topography. As has been pointed out in the Press Note of April 6, the principal question to be dealt with was the extension of minor forest in the coastal tract of Ankola, Kumta and Honavar talukas and Bhatkal Petha. Mr. Warty writes as though there were an unlimited area of forest available in that tract. Such however is not the case. In the majority of the villages of the coastal tract, where cultivation is most extensive, and where the demand for forest privileges is greatest, the amount of forest is very small. The people are therefore compelled to resort to the forests inland. Under the scheme now

sanctioned all forest which is accessible from the coast has been assigned for the exercise of privileges. In fixing the Eastern boundary, all the area which is penetrated or is likely to be penetrated by the coast people has been taken in including a convenient area on each bank up the large rivers. Does Mr. Warty suppose that any useful object will be served by assigning forests so distant that the people cannot reach them? If he can point out to me any forest in these talukas within reasonable distance of the coast whose assignment as minor forest the people have demanded and which has been denied, I invite him to do so.

Out of the 33,000 acres now added, no less than 27,000 have been taken from well-stocked forest actually under working plans. The sacrifice of potential revenue is considerable. These forests could be exploited for fuel for the Bombay market and replanted with teak. In future however they will not be exploited for the purpose of producing revenue to Government.

Mr. Warty next observes "that the Press Note mentions that the minor forest is to be retained under the control of the Forest Department only, on the very curious ground that it is ultimately to be handed over to village panchayats". The Press Note says nothing of the kind. It states definitely that the question of placing the old and new minor forests (which will be treated alike) in the hands of the Revenue Department is under consideration. The matter is now actually under discussion. But if Mr. Warty will read again the paragraph of the Press Note headed "Disforestation" he will find that it has been decided, not to disforests certain areas originally proposed for disforestation, but to convert them into village forests if panchayat can be formed to manage them. Special provision for this is made under Section 27 of the Forest Act. The Forest Department will have nothing to do with the management of these Village Forests.

As regards the larger areas of minor forests, control by village committees is out of the question. No committee could be found willing to be responsible for the proper management of forests situated at a distance of several miles from the village, in which the people of several villages exercise privileges. But advisory committees, if they can be formed, can be of very great use in explaining to the rayats what their privileges are, where they can be exercised, and above all how they can be exercised in such a way as to avoid denudation. Mr. Warty observes that the people "want to avoid all those things that would harm their agriculture". An inspection of the minor forests tells a very different tale. The felling of mature trees at breast height, the ruthless hacking of branches, the cutting of young trees and saplings; in a word reckless and indiscriminate exploitation, have already gone far to denude the forests near the coast. Government have now set apart for the needs of the people a large area of well-stocked forest. Its conservation for the use of future generations of agriculturists depends on the willingness of the people to co-operate with the officers of Government in enforcing proper methods of regulated exploitation.—Yours, etc.

P. B. HAIGH,
Collector of Kanara.

Camp via Sirsi,
May 1.

THE LIBERAL CONFERENCE. SOME SUGGESTIONS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—Kindly allow me to make a few suggestions through your columns to the Liberal Conference to be held this month. The Conference is expected to voice the feelings of the public throughout the Presidency and I trust my suggestions will be accepted.

The immediate question before Bombay Presidency is the coming elections to the Council which are likely to be held in November next. The electoral rules are, it is understood,

now being revised and the Conference must declare its opinion on them and suggest modifications. It is well known that the residential restriction in the case of a candidate for election has been kept in the case of Bombay only, though Bombay is reputed to be an advanced province. The Conference must now demand that this restriction be removed. When originally the rules were framed, protests and representations on this question were made, but they were of no avail then. We may hope that now at least Government will do justice to the Bombay Presidency.

Another suggestion that I have to make is as regards the Liberal propaganda. It is necessary that there must be at least one well-conducted weekly or bi-weekly vernacular paper in each district and there should be one Liberal English daily in Bombay conducted on the lines of the Allahabad *Leader*. Attempts in this direction should be made by the local leaders with the assistance of the central organisation. It should be also arranged that leaders of one district go on lecturing tours to other districts so that an intensive Liberal propaganda may be carried on and local grievances may also be studied. The Liberals can hope to inspire confidence in the minds of the people regarding themselves only by moving among them, by understanding them, and by studying and ventilating their grievances. It is not meant that the passing of a resolution to this effect will at once give rise to activity, but it may at least stimulate interest.

Let me also make a third suggestion, in which, being a Kanara man, I am naturally most actively interested. Kanara forest grievances have now reached a hopeless stage. The recent Government press-note is most disappointing. If the question is not tackled early enough, it will soon create a difficult situation and even danger. The situation is already acute, and is aggravated by the fact that officials in Kanara are sending rosy reports to the Head-quarters in Bombay. If there is agitation, it is said to be engineered. If there is no agitation, the people are reported to be contented. Such is the kind of perverse logic resorted to by Government which has been showing, even under the so-called reformed administration, a systematic indifference to the people's interests. Kanara indeed affords the worst example of the blighting effects of British rule in India. It behoves the Liberal Conference to take up this question in earnest and urge upon the Government the necessity of doing immediate justice to Kanara. I trust my suggestions will be accepted by the Conference.—Yours, etc.

S. G. W.

Bombay, 3rd May.

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