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TOPICS OF THE WEEK

IT was but to be expected that Mr. Trevelyan's motion to reduce the India Office vote in protest against Lord Reading's action in certifying the salt tax would be rejected, but one had hoped for a larger minority than 74. Even on the Princes Protection Act as many as 120 votes were recorded against the Government, although India's cause was espoused on that occasion exclusively by the Labour party, both fragments of the Liberal party having ranged themselves against it. On the present motion also, it would appear that the Wee Frees gave India only their moral support and cast their votes in favour of the Government, in dread that an adverse vote would be followed by the Viceroy's resignation, while the National Liberals placed both their voice and vote at the service of the Government. Even the moral support of the Independent Liberals was more halting than had been anticipated, the difference between their attitude and that of Labour being well illustrated by the difference in the utterances of Messrs. Hope Simpson and Ramsay MacDonald, the former of whom said that the Viceroy's action was "politically wrong and economically right" and the latter that it was "financially unnecessary and politically bad." As a matter of fact, on this issue one might have reasonably hoped that even moderately progressive Conservatives would have sided with India, and would have joined with the others in asking for a specific assurance that if the power of certification could not be annulled, it should be used only in a case of real emergency. As it is, even the Labour party did apparently not give as much support as was expected of it.

Special Session of the Congress

The All-India Congress Committee which met this week at Nagpur decided on Monday last to hold a special session of the Congress some time before the end of next month. This decision must evidently have been arrived at with the object of achieving unity between the pro-Council and anti-Council sections of the Congress. But a special session can effect unity only if the contending parties agree in advance to abide by its decision. The Das party is not, however, prepared to give any such undertaking; on the contrary, it is clear as noon-day sun that it will contest the elections even if the special session reaffirms, as is but too likely to do, the resolutions of the Gaya Congress putting an interdict upon Council elections. The August session of the Congress is therefore bound to prove infructuous, but it will make it more difficult for the Dasites, who still wish to remain within the Congress, to fly in the face of the Congress decision reached at two successive sessions. It is for this very reason that Mr. Das strongly opposed the proposal for the convening of a special session. In Bombay it was a great gain for him to have persuaded a section of anti-Council Congressmen to adopt a policy of benevolent neutrality towards his followers and he was not going to be done out of it by these tactics if he could help it. But his opposition was overruled, and the net result is that the pro-Council party will forfeit the sympathy of some people belonging to the Centre party in the Congress, which will perhaps lead to the Dasites going out of the Congress.

* * *

Wanted Infusion of New Blood.

NOW that the Swaraj party is busy nominating its candidates for the provincial and central legislatures, the *Indian Social Reformer* has felt it necessary to utter a warning that the strength of the party will be determined not by the number of candidates it puts forward, but by the quality of the men who seek the suffrages of the electors in its interest. And the difficulty which the Swaraj party is experiencing in running candidates with any claim to competence is attributed by our contemporary to the reluctance felt by many able and independent publicists who are said to be in general sympathy with the party officially to join it. This reluctance, again, is due, we are told, to the fact that the Swaraj party

has elected to be a party within the Congress and its members are recruited only from those who already are, or desire to become, members of the Congress. In point of fact, the reason for their unwillingness lies deeper. If people are disinclined to be in the Congress, it is mainly because it gives rise to a presumption in the public mind that they have embraced the non-co-operation creed of which in reality they disapprove, though, strictly speaking, one can be a Congressman and yet oppose non-co-operation. The Swaraj party, however, has definitely committed each individual constituent of itself to non-co-operation, as the Congress has not. In this particular matter it has outstripped the Congress. If therefore people shrink from joining the Congress, for the reason that such an act on their part may lend itself to an inference as to their political opinions, which has no basis in fact, they would positively object to joining the Swaraj party, which actually requires of them a declaration of faith to which they cannot honestly subscribe.

How can it be
Obtained?

IT will not be sufficient, therefore, in order to extricate the Swaraj party from its present difficulties, merely to relax the rule which makes membership of the Congress a prerequisite of membership of the Swaraj party. The entanglements of the latter position are infinitely greater than those of the former. What is necessary is to scrap the manifesto, issued on the occasion of the formation of the party, which proclaimed non-co-operation to be the governing principle of its policy. This done, it is relatively indifferent to the fortunes of the party whether it remains within or goes outside the Congress. But, without cancelling the manifesto, it is vain to look for any accession of strength (in quality), of which the party, on the *Social Reformer's* own showing, stands in such desperate need. When the party is once relieved from the necessity, under which it labours at present, of harmonising at every step the measures it takes with the principle of non-co-operation, it will no longer be reduced, first to advocating the line of indiscriminate and wholesale obstruction which few in the party at heart approve, and then to seeking out assiduously all possible means of retreat from that irrational course to the path of honest, orthodox constitutionalism, opposing where opposition is demanded and supporting where support is justifiable. It would of course be possible for some of these new-style Swarajists to remain in the party, pledged all the time to non-co-operation, and yet to follow a policy totally incompatible with that principle. But we are now considering the case of those who are differently constituted, who do not give a pledge unless they mean to redeem it, and, having given it, promptly set to work to carry it into execution. Such men will never join the Swaraj party till it has dropped non-co-operation and wholesale obstruction, which is a logical and necessary consequence of non-co-operation.

Defections.

WHILE the Swaraj party is eagerly casting about for reinforcements, already very serious defections have taken place in its ranks in Bombay. Messrs. Natarajan and Jayakar have resigned from that body, owing largely to the temperamental differences between two or three prominent personalities in that party, which have now come to a head. Apart from the gulf fixed between the two sections by the personal idiosyncracies of their leaders, they are also divided by a wide diversity of outlook, or, as the seceders put it, they are "fundamentally and irrevocably separated in principles and methods." We have not yet been vouchsafed information as to the principles and methods in dispute, but one can give a pretty sure guess about it. The predominant section is for carrying out, in the letter and in the spirit, the principle of non-co-operation to which the party has pledged itself and for the creation of deadlocks which is a direct outcome of the adoption of non-co-operation. The section that has now withdrawn is opposed to both. If the party has split on this fundamental difference, the breach could not possibly have been avoided. On the contrary, one may ask why the seceders ever joined a body which had openly mortgaged its future to non-co-operation. If the sheep and the goats are now separated for good, it will be found that a predominantly large section of the party in every province (and in the Central Provinces and the Deccan to a man) is against non-co-operation and obstruction and only a handful in favour of them. It remains to be seen whether, without the aggravating cause of personal differences which operated in Bombay, the cleavage will be repeated elsewhere, but if a similar sorting-out took place everywhere, it would tend to clear up the issues. If however the seceders now desire to found a new party, would they not be hard put to it to differentiate their principles from those to which the Liberals have along given their adhesion?

The Social
Evil.

THE report of the Bombay Prostitution Committee was published many months ago and yet no action has been taken to give legislative effect to its recommendations. Meanwhile Calcutta, which neither appointed a Committee nor slept over its recommendations, is having the benefit of a Suppression of Immoral Traffic Bill which was referred to a Select Committee last week without a dissentient voice being raised in the Council. The object of the Bill is to penalise certain classes of persons who get a pecuniary benefit by the immorality of others: *gariwallas* and *rickshawallas* who abet solicitation, landlords who let out houses for brothels and pimps and procurers. The Bill has provided for the deportation of the last class. Though the main principles of the bill have been acceptable to all sections of the Legislative Council, we must naturally expect opposition to the increased powers which the Bill confers on the police for carrying out the objects of this Bill.

The police in India unfortunately do not enjoy public confidence and therefore the public have reason for their reluctance to endow them with additional power. But the question is, can a better authority be thought of? According to the Chairman of the Calcutta Corporation, there are no less than 38,000 prostitutes in Calcutta and as many as 1,200 young girls are brought into the city every year from outside. Is this evil to go on unchecked for fear the police might abuse the additional powers given under the Bill?

* * *

The Native Delegation.

WE are sorry to note that the deputation of native Africans which was announced some time ago to visit England is not allowed to go there. In reply to a question in Parliament Major Ormsby-Gore said that their interests were sufficiently represented by the missionary, Dr. Arthur, and that:

"The application for a native delegation to be received did not come from any authoritative body in the Colony and the Colonial Secretary had not been able to approve of such a delegation. Native interests were not in danger of being overlooked."

As Dr. Arthur has completely identified himself with the white settlers, we cannot at all admit that he satisfactorily represents the native interests. How could an authoritative body to represent the natives be expected in the Colony when they are in such a backward condition? In not approving the proposed delegation, the Colonial Secretary has obviously played into the hands of the white settlers who must naturally be wishful that at this juncture no spokesmen of the natives should be given an opportunity to lay bare to the British public all the cruelties and injustices to which they have been subjected by the white settlers and the Colonial Government, which is notoriously subservient to the white settlers. So long as the natives are not given an opportunity to plead their own cause, we must take it that their feelings are accurately reflected in the cablegram sent by a section of them to Mr. Andrews: they are friendly to the Indian and entirely hostile to the European claims.

* * *

Tariff Board.

WE felt constrained recently to take a somewhat strong exception to the personnel of the Tariff Board, especially to the appointment of a civilian as its president. The Board, however, has now been improved by the inclusion as second member of the Hon'ble Mr. V. G. Kale of the Fergusson College, Poona. It may not be claimed for him that he enjoys an international reputation, as is desirable that those who have to decide fiscal questions should do, but it cannot be denied that he is a noted Indian economist. It goes without saying that he represents expert knowledge on the Board. But it is equally certain that he will view the questions coming before the Board with a mind which is not unduly biased in favour of capitalists. On the eve of his departure to Simla to undertake his new duties, he reminded his friends of the Deccan Sabha that he was a disciple of Ranade and Gokhale and that his endeavour would be to walk in their footsteps. None would wish for the Tariff Board anything better than that Mr. Kale would succeed in this endeavour.

THE ALLIANCE BANK FAILURE.

THE Alliance Bank of Simla, Ltd., one of the oldest and biggest of the joint stock banks in this country, suspended payment on the 28th April last. That the bank was in great difficulties had been known for some time, particularly in London. Sir Basil Blackett told the Assembly that personally he had known it a year before he came out to India as Finance Member and that it was common knowledge in the City then. In August 1922 the Alliance Bank was in serious difficulties and approached the Imperial Bank of India for financial help. The Imperial Bank investigated the position of the affairs of the Alliance Bank and agreed to lend a sum not exceeding two and a half crores of rupees to the latter on the security of its assets and of the title-deeds of 47 properties. Whether under the Act constituting the Imperial Bank such lending of money on the security of immovable properties was within or beyond the powers of the Bank is a question which is yet to be discussed and decided in the Bombay High Court. The only object of mentioning the fact here is that eight months before the actual failure of the Alliance Bank, its position had been investigated by the Imperial Bank and the latter Bank had stated the limits within which it could offer help. Then the Alliance Bank carried on certain negotiations in England. In reply to Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer, Sir Basil Blackett stated in the Assembly on the 5th July, that for several weeks before the date of failure the Government of India knew that if the negotiations of the Bank in England did not lead to a successful result, the failure of the Bank was probable. "It was not until the 26th April that they learnt that the failure was inevitable." On the 27th April the Financial Secretary to the Government of India wrote to the managing Governors of the Imperial Bank of India authorizing them to repay 50 p. c. of the amounts due to depositors in the Alliance Bank and conveying the guarantee of the Government of India to make good to the Imperial Bank of India any losses incurred in making such payments. These deposits amounted to 8½ crores, so the now Imperial Bank was to undertake to pay 4¼ crores instead of the 2½ crores which it had offered to advance at the most in August 1922 on the security of the assets and properties of the Alliance Bank. On the 28th April the Alliance Bank suspended payments. Soon came the announcement by the Imperial Bank of its readiness to pay 50 p.c. of the deposited amounts to the depositors of the Alliance Bank.

It was apparently not intended that the fact that the Government was substantially at the back of the Imperial Bank in this matter should be publicly known. The Indian Merchant's Chamber which made enquiries on the point with the Financial Secretary on 22nd May was told that it was a public-spirited act of the Imperial Bank. The Imperial Bank, too, acted up to the understanding by heading the new account in its ledger as "Alli-

ance Bank of Simla Creditors Loan a/c." It was when a suit was brought in the Bombay High Court against the Imperial Bank and an injunction was sought to restrain it from making further payments to the depositors of the Alliance Bank that the part which the Government had played in the affair first came to light. Since then the Government have sought to take credit for having by their action averted a possible financial crisis in the country and maintained the credit of India in the London money market. The Government say that they acted on their own initiative. When pressed to state whether the Secretary of State had urged them to take the initiative, Sir Basil humorously remarked that he thought the initiative came from both ends. Anyway the promptitude with which the Government acted was commendable because they moved in the matter even before the Alliance Bank suspended payment. One wonders why they wanted to keep it a secret when they were guarding the supreme financial interests of the country, why they wanted to let it appear to the public that the Imperial Bank moved of itself in the matter out of a high sense of its duty as a Central Bank. The fly in the ointment lies in the fact that in August last year the Imperial Bank would not lend more than 2½ crores on the assets and properties of the Alliance Bank whereas in May the same Bank offers to advance 4¼ crores because the Government of India guarantees it against loss. That there is going to be no direct profit out of the transaction is admitted. The shareholders of the Imperial Bank may, however, look for a prospect of the probable growth of business of their bank because of the cessation of the activities of the Alliance Bank. As regards possible loss, the shareholders need not worry in the least as the Government of the country has guaranteed their Bank against any losses arising out of this transaction. The only people who may have some cause for anxiety are the taxpayers in British India who will have to bear the loss if any. The Government are hopeful that there will be no loss. They investigated the whole position before they gave the guarantee. Well, let us hope that their hope will be realised.

With regard to the liquidation of the Alliance Bank, there has been a fairly general expression of opinion, at least on this side of India, for the appointment or association of some Indian firm of repute like that of Mr. S. B. Billimoria as liquidators in order that the Indian creditors' interests may be safeguarded, in order also that all the delinquents, high or low, who may be proved to have misbehaved, should be properly exposed. It is a pity that the racial issue should have obtruded itself on this occasion too, but it is a sign of the times. When the Government were questioned in the Assembly on this point they stated that it was a matter for the shareholders concerned and refused to interfere with the arrangements made by the Imperial Bank in that connection. This attitude is not quite explainable in view of

the fact that if there results any loss in this affair it is not the Imperial Bank but the Government who have to bear it. So they have a right to interfere if they are so inclined. There is a suspicion in many minds that perhaps an attempt will be made during the liquidation proceedings to shield the guilty parties and that the elucidation of facts of that character for which the Government desire to wait before they move in the matter, e. g. by appointing a Committee of enquiry into the causes of the failure, may deliberately not be made. It would have been better for Government to remove grounds for such suspicion by getting someone like Mr. S. B. Billimoria associated with the liquidators.

When the great promptitude and solicitude for the interests of the business world and incidentally for those of the Alliance Bank depositors, displayed by Government on this occasion, came to light through the legal proceedings in the Bombay High Court, probably every Indian interested in public affairs in this country thought at once of the contrast in the attitude of the Central Government and the Imperial Bank towards the Alliance Bank failure in 1923 and of the attitude of the Provincial Governments and of the Presidency Boards towards the failures of the People's Bank of India and of the Indian Specie Bank in 1913. Some people probably also wondered to themselves whether the attitude taken towards the Alliance Bank in 1923 would also have been taken had it been a case of an Indian-managed joint stock bank. The Alliance Bank failure has at least had one important educative effect on public opinion in India. It has taught many people what it is possible for a sympathetic Central Bank and Government to do to help an important financial institution or to arrest possible demoralisation of credit on a large scale in the country. Too little importance perhaps was attached to this aspect of the question when people thought about the bank failures in India in 1913.

THE SIMLA SESSION.

(FROM OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.)

SIMLA, 8TH JULY.

THE thing that struck me most, during the course of the four sittings of the Assembly that have so far taken place, was the considerable weakening in the position of non-official members and the consequent strengthening of the Government side. The reasons for this deplorable and disheartening change are two: the absence of a very large number of non-official members and the growing disorganisation of the non-official parties in the House. The Assembly began its work with only half its strength, i. e., 70. Since then it has been able to secure an addition of about a dozen members. To a superficial observer this attendance of 82 or so may not appear small or disappointing. But an examination of the absentee list shows that out of about 58 absentees, only one or two are officials, about six are nominated non-officials,

while as many as 50 are from the ranks of the elected non-officials! I wish our electorates were sufficiently educated and bold to demand from their representatives who are absent an explanation for this gross, I had almost said criminal, neglect of their public duties. The ranks of the non-officials were, I am afraid, never so thin as they are to-day.

The disorganised condition of the non-official parties was openly admitted in the House the other day by Mr. Shahani, himself a prominent member of the Democratic party. The voting lists are another testimony on the point. They show that the members have voted as they liked without any regard to their parties. This lack of discipline and disregard for concerted action were clearly seen at the meeting of the non-official members that was held here on the 1st inst. to consider what steps they should take to show their resentment at the Viceroy's certification of the salt tax. I am not free to disclose what transpired at the meeting. But I may say this much that there were some influential people who were of the opinion that they had in March last opposed the enhancement of salt duty and sufficiently shown their resentment at the Viceroy's certification and that any more action on their part to show once again their resentment would not serve any useful purpose and, further, that the adoption of the obstructionist tactics, instead of doing any good to the country, would do positive harm to it and, therefore, it would be their sad duty to oppose them if adopted; while there were others, equally influential and numerically stronger, who thought that in order to register once more their emphatic protest against the certification, they should give one more battle to Government on some definite issue, such as the supplementary grants or a money bill and defeat them heavily. There were also some other minor views advocated at the meetings into which I need not go here. On account of this sharp difference of opinion and some resultant bitterness of feeling, the meeting ended as it began without coming to any decision. This disagreement has weakened the non-official strength as was seen on the very first day of the Assembly's session, and to that extent fortified the position of Government.

Another thing that struck me forcibly was that the process of not heeding, and even defying, the wishes of the Assembly that began a year or so ago, was now almost complete. The anxious desire on the part of Government to meet the Assembly as far as possible, which was frequently in evidence during the earlier sessions of the Assembly, is now absent. Whether on the bill to repeal the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908, or on other non-official bills, or whether on the military policy of the Government of India, or on Dr. Nand Lal's resolution to amend section 67 B of the Government of India Act, a policy of uniform hostility was resorted to. Government never seemed to try for a moment to find out a *via*

media. At question time also, their replies to some of the most important questions were decidedly curt and breathed a spirit of opposition. The position, therefore, as it stands at present, between the Government and the Assembly is extremely deplorable.

Under these circumstances, the Assembly embarked upon its last session on Monday last. A ripple of satisfaction and amusement was caused by Messrs. Harchandrai Vishindas, Shahani and Neogy of the salt tax fame, now again re-elected, when they took their oaths of office amidst loud cheers and smiles from all quarters. Nearly 150 questions were answered during the course of the four sittings. Many of them related to Military and Railway matters and the failure of the Alliance Bank and elicited useful, though at times disappointing, replies. Quite a volley of supplementary questions was showered on the Finance Member when the question regarding the Alliance Bank was answered. But the President came to his rescue and stopped these passages-at-arms by observing that the proceedings were degenerating into a debate. Sir Basil Blackett answered all the questions with remarkable frankness, but on one occasion he chose to give an evasive reply. Asked as to whether the initiative of asking the Imperial Bank to pay 50 p. c. to the creditors of the Alliance Bank came from the Government themselves or from the Secretary of State, he replied amidst laughter that it came from both ends. Great concern was shown by the Assembly when the question about the health and release of Lala Lajpat Rai was answered. The Home Member gave detailed information about the Lalaji's present state of health, but refrained from making any statement regarding his release except that the matter rested with the Punjab Government.

The 2nd and the 5th of July being days of official business, Government introduced a number of unimportant and minor bills on the first day and got some of them passed by the Assembly on the second day without resorting to the lengthy process of referring the bills to Select Committees. The most important motion on the first day was that made by Sir Basil Blackett to refer the bill further to amend the Indian Stamp Act for raising the duty on certain non-judicial stamps to a Select Committee. Being a money bill, some members decided to oppose it as a protest against the Viceroy's certification without pausing for a moment to reckon their strength and without realising what the effect of their defeat would be, which was foreseen. After the motion was formally made, no non-official member got up to speak against it. This confused the matter still further. When the voting took place, some of the members (mostly belonging to the Democratic party) went into the opposite lobby, with the result that the motion was carried by 38 votes to 27. It was a triumph for Government. And I shall not be surprised if the Press in England and the Anglo-Indian Press in this country will take this vote as a vote of confidence

in Government. The opposition offered by the non-officials was hasty and ill-considered, though right in itself, because they failed to take stock of the whole situation and did not measure their strength before they rushed into the opposite lobby. To my mind, the Assembly committed a blunder on this occasion and there are not a few who share this view.

Tuesday, the 3rd July, witnessed heavy "casualties" among the non-official bills set down for discussion. With the solitary exception of the passage of Dr. Gour's bill further to amend the Code of Civil Procedure, so as to do away with imprisonment as a penalty applicable to the defendant in a suit for the restitution of conjugal rights, not one bill was able to get the support of the House. Lala Girdharilal Agarwalla's bill to repeal the Criminal Law Amendment Act was heavily defeated by 40 votes to 20 after a severe indictment from the Home Member. Dr. Gour's bill to raise the age of consent met the same fate but on a different ground. The House threw it out obviously because it could not be proceeded with during this session on account of the fact that a similar measure containing substantially the same matter had been discussed at Delhi.

The most important day during the week was the 4th July when the non-official resolutions were discussed. There were five resolutions on the agenda paper, out of which the Assembly could dispose of only one and the debate on the second resolution which lasted over full three hours was adjourned owing to the lateness of the hour. In this connection, the following comments of an Anglo-Indian correspondent will be read with interest:—

No one seems to have shed even a perfunctory tear over the fact that the inability of the Assembly to dispose of two motions definitely put out of court the last and only constructive proposal (of Mr. N. M. Joshi regarding the prohibition of employment of women before and after child-birth and the provision of maternity allowance) on the list. Mr. Joshi must have cherished cynical thoughts as he listened to ineffectual hair-splitting over alleged constitution issues, while his motion for the introduction of legislative dealing with the regulation of the employment of women before and after child-birth, receded into the background as a phantom of unattainability and as a grim commentary on the alleged solicitude of the Assembly for the social advancement of the workers of this country.

Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer urged Government in a resolution to press on the British Cabinet the necessity for promptly giving effect to the Assembly's resolutions of the 28th March 1921, calling for the admission of Indians to all arms of His Majesty's Forces in India, for the granting to Indians not less than 25% of the King's Commissions annually awarded, for the provision of an Indian Sandhurst and for adequate facilities in the preliminary training of Indians for the present Sandhurst and for the encouragement of the Indian Territorial Force and the grant to officers in that force of King's Commissions. It may be recalled here that these resolutions were passed with the

full support of the Government of India. The reasons, therefore, for not giving effect to them must be found somewhere else. Mr. Burdon, the Army Secretary, did not long keep us in suspense. He announced that the Home Government 'did not accept these proposals' They are of the opinion that "they are finally responsible for the security of India from dangers without and within" and "taking a serious view of the high responsibility which rests upon them," they "are not prepared to risk the efficiency and traditional reputation of the Indian Army by embarking upon any large and revolutionary change such as would be involved by immediately replacing British Officers in large numbers by Indian Officers without having the proof of some well-chosen experiment that the risk will not be unduly great." Fearing another slash from the Home Government if he committed himself once more to such a resolution involving "large and revolutionary" changes, Mr. Burdon moved an amendment which, in the words of Sir Sivaswamy, "was vague, indefinite and amounted to postponing the questions to the Greek Kalends". Instead of being called upon to urge the necessity of promptness on the Home Government, Mr. Burdon wanted to be allowed to take the first favourable opportunity of making further representations to the Home Government on the desirability of giving effect, as soon as circumstances rendered it practicable and advisable, to those provisions of the Assembly's recommendations which had not yet been carried out. Mr. Burdon's speech, though lucid, was unconvincing and lacked weight of argument. H. E. the Commander-in-Chief, who spoke last, was pathetic to a degree and implored the House to vote for the amendment; otherwise, he said, the House would make his task of sending more representations to the Home authorities more difficult. This piteous appeal did not prevail. The amendment was defeated by 30 votes to 53 and the original resolution was carried amid non-official applause.

Then came Dr. Nand Lal's resolution for the cancellation of the special powers of the Viceroy in so far as they could overrule the decisions of the Assembly. But more of it when the debate on it is complete.

INTER-COMMUNAL RELATIONS IN THE PUNJAB.—I.

A SERIES of three articles has appeared in the SERVANT OF INDIA by "Bhishma." While there is a good deal in these ably written articles with which I agree, there are points which seem to me to be unwarranted assumptions vitiating the conclusions at which the able writer has arrived. "Bhishma" is right in saying that until 1916 the normal relation between Hindu and Muslim communities was not one of unity but of enmity. This was due to the fact that the two communities quarrelled over the loaves and fishes of office and

those quarrels were accentuated, wherever in the domain of local self-government representative institutions were given and elections were held. As far back as the eighties, general elections to Municipal Committees were not infrequently accompanied by riots, and Hindu-Muslim relations were more than ever strained. It was for this reason that Muslims were not willing to accept an arrangement which would multiply occasions for Hindu-Muslim conflicts wherever joint elections were held, and it was really for this reason that separate communal representation was resorted to. Take the case of Amritsar where from 1916 to 1922, for full six years, Hindu-Muslim amity was of the highest and most striking order. There for 30 years and more in municipal elections the principle of communal representation was in force. It similarly was in force in Lahore. Surely therefore "Bhishma" is not right when he says that it was by the Minto-Morley Reforms in 1909 that communal representation was granted to the Muhammadans and in consequence by the Congress. Communal representation in the Punjab was introduced in order to remove the bitterness of feeling which joint elections invariably engendered, because those elections were being run on communal lines. One can safely go so far as to say that in all places where electorates are joint elections are really run on communal lines and the community which has the larger number of voters in a constituency succeeds in returning its candidate. Therefore, whether communal representation is introduced as such or not, it does in practice prevail everywhere, even in such an enlightened constituency as the University. Therefore for "Bhishma" to urge that the Congress, in conceding the principle of communal representation, did something likely to injure the cause of Indian nationality is hardly justified. On the other hand, it seems pretty clear that the grant of communal representation reduces the chances of the two communities running their elections on purely communal lines and thus rendering them more or less a farce. Wherever communal representation prevails, a number of candidates contest a seat and one of them gets it. Where communal representation does not prevail, each seat is contested as a rule by one Hindu and by one Muhammadan, and the one whose co-religionists preponderate on the electoral roll of the constituency gets it. The efforts of each candidate are directed towards encouraging candidates belonging to the other community to come into the field and thus reduce the chances of success of his adversary.

One would like to examine critically the points that are urged against communal representation. They are :

- (1) The voters are deprived of the right of selecting the best possible representative, because their choice is limited to their own co-religionists;
- (2) Because the voters are separated on a religious basis, therefore they do not get into the

habit of thinking nationally, and

(3) It deprives voters of different communities of the chances of coming together and discussing their joint problems in a national manner.

The first objection applies, whether the seat is on a Municipal Committee or a District Board or for the matter of that on the Legislative Council, but can it be seriously urged that the voters have the means of accurately measuring the capacity of the candidate and in practice voting strictly on the merits of a candidate and that communal representation deprives them of the chance of electing a person outside their community. In practice even where joint electorates prevail, as has been said above, elections are run communally. Therefore the objection is more theoretical than practical.

As regards the second objection, the observations made above apply to it equally.

As regards the third, in practice no force is found in it, and when we take into account a hundred and one measures adopted by each community to strengthen its isolation from other communities, the objection loses much of its force, and this applies with greater force to the Hindu community than to others. We are in favour of denominational colleges and denominational schools; we insist upon giving religious education to each community in our schools and colleges; we go so far as to have a Hindu University and a Muslim University; we encourage communal modes of dress; and in modes of life the same separation exists. In the face of all these factors, which go to constitute these communities into separate entities, to say that if these separate communities go to separate polls once in 3 or 5 years, the process of nation-building is thereby hindered, amounts to this that you are prepared to swallow the elephant but not the gnat. Granting separate communal electorates in representative institutions, is it not still possible to have a nation able to manage its own affairs, if the relations between various communities are duly regulated by well-understood rules and conventions. We will have to depend upon a rational settlement of differences rather than upon sentimental appeals. The improvement of inter-communal relations in the Punjab therefore depends upon a well-considered, fair and just settlement of the rights and obligations of various communities.

SYED MOHD. HUSAIN.

A LETTER FROM LONDON.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

LONDON, JUNE 21.

STONE-THROWING FOR SALT DUTY.

WHO would have thought that when Lord Reading certified the Salt Duty, stones would be thrown in this country? Yet that has metaphorically happened. A well-dressed lady, named Norah Richards, described as an artist, was bound over at Marlborough Street on Tuesday, charged with wilfully damaging with a hammer the glass

front of an advertisement frame at the Philharmonic Hall, Great Portland Street, where Mr. Thomas's film, *Romantic India*, is being shown to such audiences as are interested in seeing something of India from one point of view or another. The film has attracted a great deal of attention and not a little criticism from friends of India, since it is accompanied by a sort of running comment from Mr. Thomas, who seems to think that it is his duty, after a cursory inspection of the country, to assure his hearers that India ought to continue to be devoutly thankful that she is still in the charge of this country and to recollect that it will be long before she is fit for anything else. However, that is not the burden of this story. It appears that the lady who adopted the old suffragist method of drawing attention to grievances, wished to bring to the notice of the public her objection to the imposition of the Salt Duty in India. She had offered a vocal protest at the film performance, but was turned out, and feeling that she still had a duty to her conscience, if not to India, she took a hammer and smashed the glass in the picture frame, in order to add emphasis to her protest. She was ordered to pay five shillings for the damage. But why will these extraordinarily nice women think that they are going to mend things by breaking other things? The incident was at once humorous and pathetic, but it shows that some people here take their politics seriously, and that is something to the good. I am afraid, however, that the best of this hammer has made no impression upon the stony determination of the India Office.

INDIAN PROPAGANDA.

The salt duty and other Indian grievances are being kept before the public in various parts of the country by the British Auxiliary of the Indian National Conference. On May 30th, Messrs. Sastri, Jamnadas Dwarkadas, B.S. Kamat, C. Jinarajadasa, and Sir Montagu Webb addressed a considerable audience at the Kensington Town Hall on "India's March to Dominion Home Rule." Mr. Jinarajadasa addressed another London audience, at the Central Hall Westminster, on "India and the Empire—a Spiritual Factor", on June 7. On the 13th, at Birmingham, Messrs. Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Kamat, and Jinarajadasa spoke on "Britain and India—Apart or Together?" On the 14th, Mr. Jinarajadasa spoke at the Houldsworth Hall, Manchester, to an audience of a thousand people. Messrs. Jamnadas, Kamat, and Jinarajadasa also spoke on the 19th at Bradford, and they are to speak in July at Cardiff, Glasgow, and Edinburgh. I am afraid that it will not be possible for Mr. Sastri to take part in any of these demonstrations, acting under doctor's orders. He will leave the Nursing Home, temporarily, at any rate, this week-end, in order to participate in the Kenya delegation work, which is likely to come to a head in the not distant future, but he will have to go slow, and it is not yet certain whether he will be allowed to participate in the great Queen's Hall

Demonstration to be held, with Mr. Ramsay MacDonald in the chair, on Tuesday next, the 26th.

At the Shakespeare Hut, too, where arrangements are being made to enter into permanent quarters next August, there have been a series of interesting addresses to the students and others by Messrs. Jamnadas, Kamat, and Jinnah. The last, who spoke last night, Col. Josiah Wedgwood presiding, announced his intention of standing for the Assembly at the next elections, and declared that the nationalists would be driven to consolidate and place their demands definitely before the Government in the usual constitutional way. If the Government turned a deaf ear, the only alternative that would be left to them would be to hamper the Government at every turn by the process of deadlock.

THE COMMONS DEBATE ON THE SALT TAX.

The debate in the House of Commons last week was a very jejune and unsatisfactory affair, as your readers will realise upon perusing the Hansard report of the proceedings. They were cut short by the intervention of a debate on a matter of domestic importance, which left no time for the resumption of the debate. This is, indeed, highly problematical, since it will depend, not upon the grant of another day of supply, of which none is available, but upon time being found upon one of the few days still available, when all kinds of other matters are likely to come up for discussion. Mr. Charles Roberts had a legitimate grievance at finding himself suddenly cut off from his contribution, which I have reason to believe would probably have been a very useful one. As it was, though Mr. Trevelyan made an excellent display in launching the attack, Col. Wedgwood did not seem to be able to pull his full weight in reply to Lord Winterton, and Dr. Fisher, too, was disappointing. I suppose that everyone felt that he was talking against time, since Lord Winterton's speech took virtually half of the time available. One's impression is that the India Office was mainly concerned in drawing as many red-herrings across the trail of debate as possible, and that the members who got up to oppose the action of the Government did not quite see the line that was being officially taken, nor were they as fully informed of Indian conditions as is necessary for those who are making Indian affairs a speciality. It is a great pity that the only Indian member of the House should be not merely a member of the Labour party, which, in itself, would not be to his disadvantage, but should be an avowed Communist, who is not regarded even by his own Party as an orthodox exponent of its policy. I say this without casting any reflexion whatever upon Mr. Saklatvala, who has told me frankly that, apart altogether from his own personal views on Indian affairs, he desires to serve his country by acting as the spokesman of his countrymen regardless of party. I do not intend to write in detail about the proceedings in last Thursday's discussion that ended so infructuously, for your readers will be able to read them

in full elsewhere. One gets, however, a feeling of sadness that such debates should be so unreal and superficial, leaving main issues untouched very often, and as often merely giving reactionaries the opportunity of placing the Government apparently in the right, because, relatively, the official spokesmen are less reactionary than they, and less extreme than the Opposition. It is always easy to ride away upon the specious argument that, satisfying neither set of opponents, one is probably reaching the happy mean, and all is therefore well.

I hear a rumour, and repeat it for what it is worth, that the Duke of Devonshire is cast for the office of Viceroy at an early date, being replaced at the Colonial Office by Mr. Austen Chamberlain. If so, the prophecies and decencies will alike be affronted, for it is not so long since Lord Peel told a London audience that all the stories of Lord Reading's approaching retirement were the talk of irresponsible folk and could be safely set aside. To drive the Duke from Whitehall to Delhi, in order to find a place in the Government for Mr. Chamberlain might be too much for even this Government to contemplate. However, there it is, and time will show whether the rumour has anything of substance in it.

Mr. Sastri has a striking letter in the *Times* on the Kenya question, and Lord Amptill has another in the *Morning Post*, but of quite a different character.

REVIEW.

WILL SOCIALIZED INDUSTRY WORK ?

HOBSON. J. B. : INCENTIVES IN THE NEW INDUSTRIAL ORDER. London. 1922. 7½ x 5. pp. 160. (Parsons. 4s. 6d.)

EVEN in India, one would fain hope, the sturdy Victorian belief in the Old Industrial Order as one eminently satisfactory, sensible and adequate, has by this time given way to a general uneasy feeling, that it is neither—that the Capitalistic system, whatever it may achieve for the individual capitalist, is prone to lead socially to rather deplorable results, that its implications are at times somewhat confusing, and that it is developing an alarming tendency to stultify itself. Outside India, the most industrialized countries of Europe certainly have by this time lost all the faith they ever had in Capitalism and the agreement is fairly general there that the old system is pretty rotten. Disagreement begins, when an attempt is made to substitute another for the old industrial order. That theoretically such new economic systems can be worked out, that their advantages seem obvious and their plausibility considerable, is freely admitted : the real difficulty for most people thinking about the subject lies in the haunting fear that, however bad the old system is, at least it does work, however badly ; and that, however fair the new system looks,

there is no guarantee that it would work at all, in a world such as it is and with a human material which, frankly, on the average is pretty poor stuff.

For "the Industrial System is a highly complex structure of human activities, proceeding from individuals and groups, who contribute inventive power, enterprise, capital, organization, and a variety of intellectual and physical activities to the shaping, moving, and marketing of commodities and the instruments of production, and a corresponding but much simpler set of intellectual and physical activities expressed in the effective demand for these commodities." (p. 33). But all human activities depend on "incentives," i. e. psychological stimuli, without which no human action can be evoked ; hence the immediacy of the problem with which all would-be reformers of the present system of industrial activities are confronted : to wit, whether incentives would naturally be forthcoming to evoke and maintain the operation of all these producing and consuming activities in their due places and proportions ? It is on this point, and on this more than on any other, that "the New Order is challenged by defenders of the old as impracticable" : and just because "the workability of reforms cannot be taken for granted" (p. 6), it is that Mr. Hobson's book fills such a real want ; although he would have us look upon it merely as an informal introduction to a scientific psychology of industry. Be that as it may, the book before us, though certainly only whetting one's appetite for a systematic treatise on the Psychology of Economics, does at all events succeed in clearing up the issue, i. e. whether the New Industrial Order, which is actually emerging out of the old, is based on incentives which can be depended upon both for effectiveness and for permanence.

Mr. Hobson selects four crucial matters of incentive, on which above all others the new order of producing for service, instead of for profits, is constantly being challenged :

- (1) "Will a sufficient amount of saving take place when some of the most profitable fields of investment are removed from private enterprise and when a more equal distribution of net incomes reduces those great funds of wealth which automatically accumulate as capital after their possessors have spent all they desire to spend ?"
- (2) "Will great inventive and organizing talent, foresight, initiative, audacity and enterprise, be available for the promotion of industrial progress ?"
- (3) "Will expert knowledge of business and technology, with the qualities of application, responsibility, tact, and judgment, which go so far towards competent management, be forthcoming under national ownership and representative control ?"
- (4) "Will the employees under the new Industrial Order give out a sufficient quantity of productive energy and care, and will they submit to efficient workshop discipline ?" (p. 141.)

As regards the first problem, chapter III is entirely devoted to it ; and starting with the fact that past "economists have generally held that the unequal distribution of a given national income favours sav-

ing" (p. 46), our author counters that assertion with the, to one's own mind unanswerable, proposition that "a wasteful utilisation of income involves a wasteful utilization of capital" (p. 49). "For a large proportion of the present saving is unproductively employed from the social standpoint: in socially wasteful forms of competition; in enterprises only profitable to those who floated them upon the more gullible class of investor" (p. 61); and by far the socially worst form of all, in the production of capital goods and luxuries, instead of in standard commodities for the masses (cf. p. 138). The real fact of the matter is that there are two fallacies in the old economic theory, which overlooks that it is "the insufficiency and insecurity of livelihood which are deterrents of saving" (p. 56) and secondly, that industry and commerce will cease to be risky, the moment "full obligatory publication of accounts make the position of all firms common knowledge" (p. 69). Raise the standard wage and you will raise the normal standard of consumption; depend on the savings of the consumers for your capital, and you will definitely link investment and consumption (p. 61)—instead of the present "speculative investment, which is not only a wasteful but a demoralizing aspect of modern business, encouraging a gambling spirit among investors and dishonesty among financiers" (p. 59).

As regards the enterprising spirit, so necessary for industrial progress, what incentives in the new order will evoke it? The old economics assume that the springs of enterprise dry up, the moment enterprise does no longer "pay": an amazing assumption in the face of "the most laborious and dangerous sports, for whose devotees the sense of prowess and achievement is a sufficient incentive" (p. 71); and in the face of that "large class of public servants who combine the strongest sense of public duty with the greatest energy and capacity for initiative—the Army and Navy" (p. 84). We have already seen that a great deal of evil "initiative and enterprise (victories over competitors, establishment of monopolies, financial *coups*) has no rightful place in socialized industry at all" (p. 99); whilst, on the other hand, the right sort of spirit of enterprise and adventure will be bound to be forthcoming in industry, as it to-day in the Navy, &c., if service in the former is made as proud a position, as sure of public recognition and honour, as it is already in the latter (p. 86).

The third objection usually raised is based on the assumption, "that public ownership precludes any form of effective management", (p. 102) as if, forsooth, the old system (which depends on the submissiveness of labour) was actually effective! The real point is not, whether "workshop self-government will yield perfect discipline, but whether a good deal of loss of time and energy is not at present due to resentment of the domineering ways of foremen and others in autocratic authority" (p. 125).

But in addition, our author postulates "the formation of consumers' associations in order to furnish an essential factor of industrial self-government" (p. 133), and reminds us that e.g. "railway users and coal consumers have already shown some capacity of local organisation for the protection of their interests" (p. 136). Thus the organised consumer would in the new order watch his interests and interpose his veto, "where wasteful, obsolete, or expensive methods of technique or administration were practised for the convenience or advantage of one or other of the factors of production, and where combined action of producing firms was oppressive to consumers in price, or qualities of goods, or services" (p. 137).

There remains the last question—whether in the new order, labour would have any incentive "to work hard." Would "men work better for themselves, their fellows, and the community, than they have lately worked for their masters" (p. 113); or would a "socialised industry lead to slack discipline, the Government stroke, reduced productivity, increased cost"? (p. 100). The answer to this is threefold. First of all, let it be remembered that at present, hard work and high productivity in one means inevitably unemployment for another. "Ca' canny," so far from being laziness in a worker, is an expression of workers' solidarity and fellowship: hence security of employment all round would in the new order do away at once with this present motive to inefficiency. Secondly, the new system would evoke all "those interests of craftsmanship which are withheld and wasted under the present system" (p. 115) and, "making work appreciably more interesting and attractive", could but result in greater productivity. Finally, there is the great factor of representative government in the new Industrial Order. And let us here be quite clear about it, that, in the West at least, "autocracy has failed in industry as it has failed in politics. The democratic institutions which have displaced it in the latter sphere have plenty of faults. But nobody seriously regards it as practicable to return to the autocratic State. Absolute government did work in industry, it may continue to work in some countries [how much longer?—Reviewer.] and in some industries. But it has broken down in the larger departments of great capitalism, and must be replaced by methods better adjusted to the psychology of the new situation" (p. 116). And this representative government in the factory will work, because it will be the decentralized government of small workshop groups linked up, but possessing full "local government" powers. Fellow workers in groups of a dozen or less will rule themselves but will have every incentive towards efficiency and productivity, from which they will benefit directly and immediately, as will the factory as a whole indirectly and mediately. "Representative government looks to group opinion and interest for its potency" (p. 119), positively, just as "the new

status of the worker, negatively, will get rid of the resentment against masterhood and profiteering" (p. 122) which so powerfully restricts output in the old industrial order.

Such, in short outline, is the reply our author gives as to what incentives can be relied upon, to evoke and maintain industrial productivity and progress in the new order of socialized industry. One fervently hopes that all people in this country, who are or ought to be interested in these problems, will study this book carefully and weigh the evidence against the cheap sneer that "socialism is against human nature."

The trouble is, few people realize even to-day "the quantity of slack or waste in the running of the present capitalist system" (p. 53). Of these, our author gives plenty of telling instances, for which we must refer our readers to his book: and we are confident that no fair-minded person can read these pages, without realizing that "the productive utility of the capitalist oligarchy that governs business under the modern system of profit-making enterprise is continually diminishing" (p. 24) and that the day is near when the capitalist system will have tumbled over into the very pit, which—all unwittingly—it has been so busy digging for itself all these years.

Z.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE REFORM OF MUTTS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—May I be permitted to make a brief reply to a point raised in your very kind note (in your issue of June 7) on my pamphlet on Mutt Reform? You object to the suggestion "that H. H. the Maharaja (of Mysore) should take the initiative in the matter" (of Sringeri Mutt reform), on the ground that it "would create a very bad precedent of a secular ruler's interference in purely spiritual affairs." I venture to think that this objection could not have been raised if no confusion had been made as to the existence of two distinct parts in the Sringeri question and as to "spiritual affairs" not coming into it at all. The two parts of the question are: (1) the health of the Swami and (2) the proper management of the Jahgir of Sringeri and other worldly possessions of the Mutt. It is clear that neither of these two matters can be properly styled a "spiritual affair." In Kolhapur, whose case you cite, the issue was distinctly a "spiritual" or ecclesiastical one, if my information is correct. The dispute between the Ruler and the Swami there was as to the former's eligibility for Vedic rites. It was part of the great Brahman vs. Non-Brahman struggle. But in Mysore no one wants the Ruler to force the hands of the Guru in behalf of any measure of social or sacerdotal reform. Therefore the case of Kolhapur is not relevant to Mysore. Now, as to the first part of the Sringeri question, namely the Swami's health, the desire has been expressed, not merely by the present writer, but by the almost entire public of the State, that His Highness should, acting altogether in his personal capacity as a Sishya, arrange for His Holiness's medical treatment, etc. As for the other side of the Sringeri question, namely, the administration of the Mutt's secular concerns, the only authority competent to act is H. H. the Maharaja of Mysore. This is clear from the provisions of the Mysore Muzrai Regulation (which is about ten years older than the Madras Religious Endowments Bill), as well as from long-standing custom. And what is his action to be? Just to bring a machinery of administration into being in the place of the one that has now become invalid owing to the unfortunate mental condition of the Swami. There has been wide-spread dissatisfaction about the present management of the Mutt; and as the Swami in his present con-

dition is unable to adopt remedial measures, the quantum of power vested in the Government by the Muzrai Regulation must come into operation.—Yours, etc.

BANGALORE,
June 12.

D. V. GUNDAPPA.

[With the object, now made perfectly clear by Mr. Gundappa, we are in complete sympathy. Our readers doubtless recognise that this has always been our position.—Ed.]

MISCELLANEA.

INDIANS IN KENYA.

THE following is the letter that appeared in the *Times* in the mail week, to which our London correspondent makes reference elsewhere:—

Sir,—In your issue of the 12th instant appears a letter from Lord Francis Scott, in which, among other things, he says:

"May I explain that our ultimate object is to become a self-governing colony, but we are not asking for that at the present time, as we realize that various stages must be passed through first?"

Lord Delamere, in an interview, has said:

There is not a settler in Kenya who is not there on the understanding that Kenya is advancing along the lines of self-government. Every settler who is there has made home there on that understanding, and Mr. Winston Churchill gave us an undertaking that we should have self-government. If the Indian claims are allowed, all this will go by the board.

It is somewhat strange how the European settlers shift their ground from time to time, from undertakings alleged to have been given by Mr. Churchill to pledges attributed to Lord Milner, and *vice versa*. It would be interesting to know what proportion of the European settlers who went to Kenya before the end of the war did so on any such understanding as Lord Delamere alleges.

As in the case of the Highlands, the European settlers have indulged in expectations and called them pledges without due warrant. Where is the pledge to be found guaranteeing them the exclusive occupation of the Highlands in perpetuity? Where is the undertaking of Mr. Churchill or other statesmen that the European settlers should have responsible government in Kenya?

It is clear that by "self-government" is meant "European settler government." This form of government has always meant government, not on behalf of, but to the prejudice of the native population. Even as early as 1837 this was recognized and in a report on the treatment of aboriginal tribes in Africa presented to Parliament at the time appear the following words:

The settlers in almost every colony having either disputes to adjust with the natives or claims to urge against them, the representative body is virtually a party, and, therefore, ought not to be judge in such controversies.

I note with satisfaction that Lord Francis Scott is willing that native affairs should be a "reserved" subject, but, in view of the history of Kenya, a stronger guarantee than that is needed, and something more certain. At present, in spite of the official majority, the Kenya Legislative Council and the Governor himself have again and again been dictated to by the European settlers, and have given way in such vital matters as "forced labour" ordinances, hut and poll taxes, and registration of natives, with records kept of all "desertions" from plantations. The Indian question has come at a critical and opportune moment to show the British public what is really happening, and what is really being aimed at in Kenya. There is needed a reversal to something far nearer to direct Imperial administration if the native interests are to be paramount above those of European and Indian settlers.—Yours, &c.,

V. S. SRINIVASASASTRI.

St. James's Court, Buckingham Gate,

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