

THE Servant of India

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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

WE learn from our subscribers that the **SERVANT OF INDIA** has been proscribed in Hyderabad State. We can think of only one reason for having thus incurred the displeasure of His Exalted Highness's Government—our attitude towards the retrocession of Berar. On that question we have held that a State not being property like an estate, the administration of Berar should not revert to the Nizam without the consent of the people of Berar and that the best way for the Nizam of winning that consent is to inaugurate constitutional reforms in Hyderabad. This opinion has been expressed by quite a number of our contemporaries, Anglo-Indian newspapers being not altogether absent among them. We should love to hear that His Exalted Highness, impartial ruler that he no doubt makes himself out to be, has kept out of his territory every organ of public opinion, irrespective of the nationality of its editor or proprietor, that has not ranged itself on his side. His proscription of our paper need not cause any surprise to our readers. Proscription of papers and deportation of persons are the commonest of occurrences in the premier Indian State. Of Indian-edited papers, perhaps as many are proscribed as are permitted to circulate. Any criticism of the administration, any hint that things could be better than they are in Hyderabad, seems to be sufficient ground for proscribing a paper. Has H. E. H. so little confidence in the affection and loyalty of his people that he cannot trust them to read criticisms of his actions? We do not see how the proscription of the **SERVANT OF INDIA**, even from his point of view, can help him in the matter of Berar. It is not the opinion of the people of Hyderabad but of Berar that counts in the matter, and the Nizam cannot save them

from access to this kind of dangerous literature. But from his impatience of criticism and arbitrary rule they know what measure of democratic self-government they will be able to enjoy if they should go back under the Nizam's administration.

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A SPECIAL cable appeared in the *Indian Daily Mail* which represented Mr. Sastri as having written pessimistically in the *Manchester Guardian* on the eve of his departure from England regarding the result of his recent mission. Mr. Sastri neither wrote in the *Guardian* nor gave an interview to any of its correspondents. All that happened was that the London correspondents of that paper mentioned that this was the impression of some people who had heard him. As a matter of fact Mr. Sastri is far from being pessimistic, as is apparent from his interview with the Associated Press given immediately on his landing in Bombay. He admits certainly that India is not yet a plank in any party's platform and that the Labour Government, being only in office and not in power, is unable to give immediate effect to the promises made to us by prominent members of the Labour party on its behalf. But there is nothing disappointing in this, because all this was known to us long ago. What is important is that he does not find our Labour friends, now that they are in office, in any way eager to go back on their former attitude. They are as sympathetic to our aspirations as ever and when they come into real power they will undoubtedly give effect to their promises. A point that we have to bear in mind in this connection is that all members of the present Labour Government do not represent its moral enthusiasm at its best. Mr. Thomas, the Colonial Secretary, for instance, is well known as an imperialist in the narrower sense. But for him the result of the Indian Colonial Committee's recent labours in England might have been better for us. It is not by pessimism, but by putting firm faith in our English friends and by strengthening their hands by action here, that we shall be best serving our cause.

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Gulbarga Riots. THE outburst of Muhammadan fanaticism at Gulbarga in the Nizam's dominions was in many respects much worse than similar recent outbursts in the Punjab and the United Provinces. From such accounts as have appeared in the papers there does not appear to have been any predisposing cause such as communal ill-feeling between Hindus and Muham-

madans owing either to previous disturbances or rabid writing in irresponsible journals. The Hindus gave no special provocation, acted quite law-abidingly and took the assistance of the authorities right through. The atrocities committed by the Muhammadans were unparalleled, almost every Hindu temple in the town, big or small—and they were about fifty—being desecrated and the idols broken, and women and children being assaulted and molested. As a result many women of respectable families have left the town and sought refuge elsewhere. A most remarkable incident was the killing by gun-shot of the Superintendent of Police by the rioters, because he obstructed their entry into a temple to desecrate it. According to one version he was killed by a policeman who had joined the rioters; according to another the rioters themselves were armed with guns and swords. In any case it is a very important point for enquiry and we are glad that H. E. Highness has promptly appointed a Commission of Inquiry which includes the only Hindu Judge of the Hyderabad High Court, in whom the Hindus have unbounded confidence. A special responsibility rests on the Nizam's Government on this occasion, being a Mussalman Government and the Hindus being altogether helpless and woefully backward in Hyderabad State. It will be a long time before the Hindus of Gulbarga can forget these distressing memories and live again on old terms with their Muhammadan townsmen, but the healing process will not start at all unless His Exalted Highness metes out, after the facts are ascertained, exemplary punishment to the *budmashes* who have perpetrated these atrocities and made it impossible for him or others to claim any longer that in Indian States, whether ruled by Hindu or Muhammadan Princes, Hindu-Muslim riots were unknown.

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An Anomalous Disability.

WE congratulate the Indian ladies from different parts of the country residing at Simla, on having met and adopted a resolution demanding the removal of the sex disqualification of candidates for the legislative councils. A feature of the meeting was that Lady Shafi took the chair and quite a number of Muhammadan ladies were present. The meeting further appointed an executive committee with Lady Shafi as Chairman to submit a memorandum to the Reforms Enquiry Committee that is now sitting in Simla and to tender oral evidence if necessary. As pointed out in their memorandum, it is certainly an anomaly that women may not be members of the legislatures in provinces where they are granted the right to vote. They are perfectly right in pointing out that "the right to vote ought to include the right to be a member of the legislatures." In Burma the disqualification of women to be candidates is removable by a resolution of the Legislative Council. There is no reason why a similar provision should not be made in the other provinces. We are bound to go in for a good deal of social legislation in the near future, for which the presence of women members will be extremely valuable. We hope the representation of the Simla ladies will receive favourable consideration at the hands of the Government of India.

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IN his recent speech made at the Swarajists' Policy. Swarajist Conference in Calcutta, Mr. C. R. Das only doctored the i's and crossed the t's of Pandit Motilal Nehru's oration in Poona some three weeks ago. For he only

enforced the lesson which the Pandit tried to inculcate in Poona that if consistency is a virtue, it is the virtue of an ass. And even the most uncharitable critics of the Swaraj Party will have to admit that its leaders have undoubtedly made good their claim not to be classed with this much-abused animal. No one defies consistency in a more non-chalant way than they. Mr. Das in his Calcutta speech hails with much unction the contingency of a revocation of transferred departments. For it shows that the Swarajist policy of creating deadlocks 'so long as the present sham of reforms is continued' has met with unsuspected success. To speak of bringing Government machinery to a dead stop is of course in the usual Swarajist strain; so much so that one is almost tempted to accuse the party of a measure of the ass's virtue. But Mr. Das promptly takes himself out of that category. If it is the avowed object of the Swarajists to produce deadlocks, thus sacrificing smaller good that they may achieve by utilising an imperfect constitution for the greater good of full Swaraj, they would be expected to oppose every measure of Government. But this they won't do. Measures in the interests of capitalists they must support; e. g. the Steel Protection Bill introduced by a Satanic Government; and measures against the interests of the capitalists, like the Rent Act, they must oppose, even by joining hands with Government.

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THE Swarajists' policy is to throw out Budgets whenever they can.

Ass's Virtue. But why should there be this proviso of "whenever they can" if their one aim is to produce deadlocks? They should themselves vote invariably against the Budget and every Government Bill, whatever the result may be. If they are in a majority, their purpose is fulfilled; but even if they are in a minority they have done what lies in their power to do by casting their vote against the Government. But some Swarajists naively ask, why should they oppose even good measures of Government; why should they surrender an advantage which is theirs by adopting an attitude of unreasoning opposition? Well, if smaller good too, is to be conserved, how do they justify their childishly truculent attitude to the impending revocation of transferred subjects? If they cannot sacrifice the ill-gotten profits of landlords in Bombay how do they find it in their heart to sacrifice with equanimity a wholesale closure of schools, dispensaries, &c., &c., which, it is true, does not press hardily upon the wealthy classes, but which brings utter ruination to the poorer people? If, however, the Swarajists really welcome the Government's taking over the transferred departments, it seems but right that other parties should waive their objection to such a proceeding in provinces where the Swarajists have obtained a majority. The Swarajists and Government have for once set their heart on a common object: one party says that the resumption of transferred subjects by Government is a consummation devoutly to be wished for; the other says that it is an inevitable if an unpleasant step. Why should others stand in the way of both? But this defiance of the Government to do its worst to popular interest in respect of education, medical help and other vital matters ill fits in with the Swarajists' anxiety to get small reforms introduced like an amendment of Passport Rules and so forth. But of course Swarajists have no weakness for the donkey's virtue.

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REFORMS COMMITTEE.

ANYONE who is endowed with even a small modicum of political sense will at once realize the need of extracting from the Reforms Inquiry Committee now sitting in Simla the utmost advantage it is capable of yielding. It is true that none of us had bargained for a body with such a circumscribed scope as that of the present Committee. We all wanted either a Commission or a Round Table Conference to pronounce upon India's immediate political destiny but, without prejudice to this demand (and it need not be supposed that the Government of India's Committee necessarily excludes the appointment of a more exalted body with comprehensive terms of reference in the near future), we ought, in the meanwhile to make out to this Committee a quite unanswerable case for a drastic revision of the Government of India Act. We can surely prove, not by histrionics or empty declamation in which the Swarajist leaders are only too apt to indulge, but by cogent reasoning, that we have outgrown the Act and that the interests of peace and good government imperatively require the recasting of the present constitutional machinery in a much more generous mould. The need for undertaking this task is peculiarly great now in view of the fact the Labour party, being in a minority in Parliament, is so circumstanced in the matter of any big steps forward in India, that it must necessarily carry the India Government along with it, if not the whole way, at least a great part of the way. We may be sure that, even if a Round Table conference or a Commission had been appointed, the Labour Government would, in the present circumstances, have been unable to give effect to its recommendations unless these recommendations had also received a measure of support from Lord Reading's Government. This being therefore a pre-requisite of our constitutional advance, it follows that we must, as wise men, utilise even the present unwanted Committee to convince the Government of India of at least one thing, that such a severely restricted inquiry will not meet the needs of the situation; and that if a further inquiry they must have, they ought to have a body of investigation to which it would be competent to consider proposals of far-reaching consequence, for the alternatives that now present themselves are not the maintenance of a *status quo* and one or two small steps in advance in response to popular demands, but administrative chaos and frequent political crises on the one hand and radical measures of constitutional progress on the other.

No one could succeed in making out a case for further reforms better than Mr. Chintamani. He of course has some peculiar advantages in his favour, to which few others can pretend. He assumed Ministerial responsibility after a prolonged career of service in a non-official capacity, and was thus in a position to appreciate the significance of every clause in the Act and in the body

of rules and could detect the slightest deviation from the letter and spirit of law and insist upon every right conceded to Ministers under the constitution. He is also blessed with an exceptionally strong memory, which has stood him in very good stead in drawing up the Memorandum which he has submitted to the Muddiman Committee. In this Memorandum Mr. Chintamani has not put forward the larger considerations upon which we generally rely in urging the conferment upon India of a Dominion status except in respect of certain specified matters. He has enlarged instead upon the practical inconveniences felt by Ministers in administering the departments entrusted to them. In so doing he was naturally influenced by the Government's reference to the Committee, which seemed to rule out the consideration of all but administrative defects experienced in actual administration. Confining himself rigidly to these limits, he has built up a case which seems even more convincing than one can make out by an appeal to all those mouth-filling doctrines of self-determination and others, which will certainly have great weight with members of the Labour party fired by a spirit of idealism, but which will not go very far with the hard-headed members of the Government of India. Starting from such narrow ground, he advances triumphantly to the following conclusion:—

The dyarchical constitution—including in the term both the Act and the Rules—which nobody ever regarded as ideal and which some of us supported only because it was the best we could hope for in the circumstances and as a stepping stone to something better and higher, could only be carried on if worked "by reasonable men in a reasonable spirit" and that the experience of the last three years and a half has indubitably demonstrated that it is not always that this difficult condition is satisfied, that it has not worked well, that for its success we have perhaps to expect more of human nature than human nature is capable of yielding, and that it would be wise and prudent to replace it by unitary, autonomous or responsible governments in the provinces. The preamble of the Act of 1919 stated that "the time and manner of each advance" to the "realization of responsible government" must depend upon the "co-operation received from those on whom new opportunities of service will be reposed in their sense of responsibility." I affirm with confidence that Ministers have abundantly fulfilled this test and Legislative Councils, too, except in the last few months in two of the provinces, that even there the situation that exists for the time being is only a forcible though unwise demonstration of dissatisfaction with the present very defective constitution and of an eager desire for rapid progress towards self-government, and that the effectual remedy lies neither in retrogression

nor in stagnation, but in unflinching and courageous progress onward and upward.

This is a conclusion which appears altogether irresistible after perusal of the unvarnished statement of his own experience and the exposure of the defects inherent in a dyarchical constitution. The long array of facts or arguments marshalled by Mr. Chintamani in leading to this conclusion we cannot possibly hope to summarise here. For them we strongly recommend every serious-minded student of political science in India to go to this Memorandum itself, which may well become a classic in Indian political literature, and treasure up the more important facts mentioned therein. Here is the testimony of one who, without abating one jot or tittle of his rightful claims as a Minister, was prepared to give, with the best of wills in the world, an honest trial to an avowedly imperfect constitution. He has found out that the constitution cannot be worked satisfactorily as it makes too large a draft on one's patience and tolerance on the one hand and a jealous regard for popular rights on the other. It is not possible either for Ministers or for their colleagues in charge of reserved subjects or for Governors, the chiefs of both, always to preserve a balance between these opposing considerations and an equability of temper which is the *sine qua non* of the successful working of this novel constitution. Even this unworkable constitution has proved however, that popular Ministers can administer provincial governments quite efficiently and in a way so as to give a measure of contentment to an exasperated people.

There is only one other point on which we wish to dwell for a moment, viz that the Memorandum, while making out a clear case for full or next door to full self-government, also furnishes a reply to those uncharitable critics who ask: if Ministers were so harassed, why did they continue so long in office; how could they reconcile it with their self-respect to remain in positions where Governors and Executive Councillors could play fast and loose with them? Ministers worked what was recognised to be a defective Act, even as the Swarajists have now decided to move resolutions and introduce Bills under a constitution which they know is full of defects. They no doubt were harassed by Governors, and Executive Councillors and Civilian officers; this is what meets the eye of the critics. But what does not meet the eye of the critics is the obverse of this picture: the Ministers harassed the Governors, and Executive Councillors, and Civilian officers too. Only the method differed. If the Governors, &c., tried to encroach on the authority of Ministers, the latter repelled such attempts and employed all the power given to them by law in checking the exercise of arbitrary authority in the administration of reserved subjects. There is no use to complain against the attempt made by the reserved side to influence the control of the transferred side; nor is there any need for commiseration with the

lot of Ministers. The plain fact is that in the working of dyarchy more friction is produced than human nature can bear for a continuous period and this can only be avoided, as Mr. Chintamani says, by the replacement of dyarchy by unitary and autonomous Governments. But so far as Mr. Chintamani's own case goes, it is plain that he continued in office only so far as he could successfully counter attempts made to invade his sphere; in the first matter of importance in which he was overruled he resigned. We do not know that self-respect requires that people should run away from positions of responsibility because, in discharging the responsibility assumed, they may cross the path of other people or other people may cross their path. But if self-respect requires that a Minister should counter all attempts to trench upon his rights and the popular liberties entrusted to him and should lay down office the moment autocracy gets the upper hand, then we say that its demands are fully met in the case of Mr. Chintamani, who first by accepting office in the midst of much popular opprobrium, then by giving a continuous and square fight to the bureaucracy, and later by resigning office, and now by relating his experiences in such a convincing manner to the people from whom his power was ultimately derived, he has rendered a signal public service, for which the people of India cannot be too grateful to him.

SEPARATE RAILWAY FINANCE.

PRELIMINARY ESSENTIALS.

IT is obvious that the conditions most essential to the introduction of a proper separation of railway finances are:—

- (1) That the railway administration should be in charge of men who have by actual results proved their capacity for working the railways on truly commercial lines and in the interest of the nation;
- (2) That the men in charge of the railway administration should be natives of the country trained for the work;
- (3) That the Legislature should have full control over new railway capital issues, railway tariffs and voting of the entire budget; and
- (4) That the Railway Member should be responsible to and removable by the Legislature.

The past administration proved a failure. The reorganization of the staff at headquarters which has taken place has changed only the form and not the substance. It is only an enlarged edition of the old. All that the reorganization has done is to change the designation of the President of the Railway Board to that of Chief Commissioner for Railways and to restore to him the power of overruling the two other members. The position of the two members is exactly as it was during the years 1908 to 1913. (Page 4 of Volume a

II of the report of the Indian Railway Committee of 1920-21.) They are merely his assistants and advisers. Under these members there is a crowd of no less than 13 officers against only five recommended by the Indian Railway Committee. These are merely office hands with technical training and experience and we doubt whether the ends of efficiency, expedition and freedom from red-tape will be served by this huge addition. The Indian Railway Committee in paragraph 107 of its report gives the number of communications issued from and received by the Board's office as 71,000 per annum. The reign of red-tape is bound to increase. In fact according to the speech of October last by the President of the Indian Railway Conference Association red-tapism is already on the increase. And we do not see any difference between the old and the new organization which would warrant a confident hope of the railways being run on truly business or commercial lines.

As regards the second condition, the headquarters organization of the Railway Department is conspicuous for its non-national personnel. A foreigner has to make a special effort to enter into the feelings and needs of the people in order to be able to appreciate and provide against their difficulties, and however capable such an officer may be the success which he can achieve by this effort can be only partial. It does not come natural or full to him. The Indian Railway Committee of 1920-21 in paragraph 104 of its report suggested that the Member of Council for Railways must be a capable administrator and parliamentarian but need not be a railway expert. It is not difficult to find an Indian with these qualifications and yet the railway portfolio is held by an European. The fact that this European Member is an exceptionally capable officer (and we say this in no conventional sense) does not meet the point or make up the deficiency to which we have invited attention. Going lower down to that part of the headquarters organization which is exclusively and more intimately connected with the administration of railways, there is not a single Indian in a position where he could influence the course of this administration in the interest of his own country. There is no reason why such Indian material as is available should not be used and Indians appointed on the Railway Board not necessarily in place of but in addition to the present European members. This will no doubt mean some extra expense, but from the Indian point of view it will be well worth incurring. The presence of Indians on the Board will give them a closer acquaintance with and a more practical experience in higher administration and enable them to exercise a moral influence in the direction of national management. This suggestion is not in the interest of Indianisation of the service so much as in the interest of nationalization of railway policy.

As regards the third condition, the control which the Indian Legislature can exercise over the

budget under the present constitution is limited to less than half of the total expenditure of the Central Government and even this is more nominal than real on account of the drastic powers of restoration reserved by the Executive and drastically used. Out of the total Capital and Revenue expenditure of the Central Government amounting to Rs. 271 crores no less than Rs. 144 crores is non-votable under the Statute. Of the votable portion amounting to Rs. 147 crores, the Assembly has practically, though not theoretically, lost control over an amount of about Rs. 30 crores by guaranteeing a supply of Rs. 150 crores for railway capital expenditure during the quinquennium ending 31st March 1927, since according to the Railway Member (page 3664 of the Legislative Assembly Debates, Volume III) the Assembly cannot interfere with the expenditure without impairing its 'reputation for political stability.' Under the proposed convention relating to the separation of railway finance, the Assembly is now invited voluntarily to carry towards the 'non-votable' category another Rs. 97 crores, leaving only Rs. 20 crores as purely votable! Another matter in which the Legislature has at present no control is the loans which Government raise every year. All popular legislatures normally possess the right, and it would not at all be unreasonable to require the Government to introduce a bill every year and obtain the approval of the Legislature to the proposed loans.

With reference to rates and fares the Indian Legislature has at present no effective voice in the matter. The necessity for and the right of control by the Legislature are so obvious and natural that Government themselves, in a moment of subconscious existence where constitutional instinct alone rules, thought that the Legislature had not only the moral but also the legal right. When on March 15, 1922, during the discussion on the demand for working expenses of railways, Mr. Neogy raised the question of the proposed increase in passenger fares, the Finance Member suggested that the discussion of the question would be more proper to the Finance Bill than on a motion for the reduction of a grant; when however the question came to be actually raised on March 20, 1922, during the course of the discussion of the Indian Finance Bill it was found that it could not be raised then either (pages 3127, 3465 and 3466 of the Legislative Assembly Debates, Volume II). The ultimate control of tariffs is a right of all representative legislatures, although powers may be delegated to special bodies created for the purpose by a regular statute. There is, no doubt, a proposal for the establishment of a Rates Tribunal; but it is necessary that the right of the Legislature to control rates and fares must first be recognized. It appears from the Hon. Sir Charles Innes' speech at page 1529 of the Legislative Assembly Debates, Volume IV, that the Rates Tribunal is to be created by executive action. There appears no reason why control over rates and fares should not first be vested in

the Legislature who would then authorize the creation of the proposed Rates Tribunal. It is necessary that this Tribunal should at the outset examine the present maximum and minimum rates and submit its report to the Legislative Assembly for consideration and adoption. The revision of the Indian Railways Act can very well come afterwards. Coming to the last condition, it is clear that you must have a whole-time Railway Member on the Executive Council of the Central Government, before you can have a Railway Member responsible to and removable by the Legislature. It has always been a puzzle to the students of railway problems why the railway interests are not represented on that Council by a whole-time and independent Member. Both Sir Thomas Robertson and the Acworth Committee recommended that the railway interests should be so represented on the Council. But the recommendation has so far been simply ignored. If there is one factor which more than another is responsible for the unsuccessful administration of the railways during the last 75 years it is the fact that the administration has been too much in the hands, if not at the mercy, of technical men in whom the capacity for commercial and national points of view was unwarrantably assumed to exist. The domination of the technical man must be broken and reduced, so as to enable the technical side to be subordinated to the commercial and ultimately to the national good. The department charged with the administration of railways looks at the railways from three points of view, each according to its own relative importance. These three are the technical in so far as the manufacture of the commodity called 'railway transport' is concerned, the commercial in so far as the profitable marketing of this commodity is concerned, and the national in so far as the material prosperity of the country is concerned. The failure of the technical side is illustrated by the uneven development of the different parts of the State-owned railway systems; by the lack of balance between the track facilities and the rolling stock provided on each of the different railways or between one class of rolling stock and another. The failure of the commercial side is shown by the fact the railways have never yet given any commercial return on the real capital invested; while the failure of the railway administration on the national side is measured by the large dependence on foreign stores and personnel and by the neglect to encourage home industries by the quotation of low railway rates. There are certain inherent antagonisms between these three sides and it would be greatly unfair to a mere railway official even of the rank of Chief Commissioner, however capable in his own line, to expect him to be able to reconcile them all. He has not the necessary education or training, nor has he the experience of the general administration of the country which would enable him to discharge the responsibilities satisfactorily. The utmost he can be

expected to do is to reconcile the technical with the commercial side of railway administration, and even there there is the danger of commercial working of railways being in effect, though not in intention, influenced by considerations bordering on the venal, where, for instance, the elementary needs of human comfort and convenience are sacrificed in the interests of cold, calculated profit-making. (Cf. the conditions of third class travel and the rates charged therefor.) The problems arising out of the necessity for keeping the commercial working within legitimate bounds and for co-ordinating it with the requirements of the ultimate national good are so great and difficult in their magnitude and variety, as to justify fully a whole-time Railway Member. A part-time Railway Member such as we have at present cannot reasonably be expected to do adequate justice to these problems, if only for the reason that they are beyond the physical capacity of such a Member. We must not allow ourselves to be deluded by the extent of the success achieved by the present Railway Member. This success is due partly, it is true, to the transfer of the Industries portfolio, but is in a large measure accounted for by the personal equation. But then a system cannot be judged by or based on the continuance of the accident of such personal factors; and if the railways are to receive anything approaching adequate attention in the central organization of the country where policies are formulated and from where they are enforced, the process of relief to the Railway Member must be completed by transferring the Commerce portfolio as well. The mere creation, however, of a system favourable to the satisfactory discharge of duties does not by itself ensure their due and efficient performance; it must also be made unfavourable to the continuance in office of a man who fails to perform these duties in a manner satisfactory to the taxpayer. There is no country in the world which has adopted the system of separate railway finance without providing that the Railway Member is responsible to and removable by its Legislature. The intensive bureaucratization of the biggest department of State without the Legislature possessing the ultimate power of removing the Executive is fraught with risks from the national point of view which India cannot afford to take. A removable Executive is necessary not only in the interest of the people but also in the interest of the Government themselves. The population of India is over 300 millions. The number of passengers carried by the railways annually is 573 millions, so that the whole population may be said to be travelling by railway twice a year. There are over 753 thousand railway employees. Every Indian passenger, every Indian merchant and trader and every railway employer who has any unpleasant experience carries home a certain amount of bitterness made more bitter still by the consciousness of his helplessness and it spreads and goes

on deepening. And this bitterness forms the basis of dissatisfaction, if not of disaffection, against Government which we see around us and which lends itself to be played upon by the peripatetic demagogue. There is no other single department of Government which is so largely responsible for the volume of discontent which exists in India and makes the ordinary administration more difficult than it need be. Any measure which is calculated to reduce this helplessness and this dissatisfaction is in the interest of Government themselves and the removability of the Railway Executive is one such measure.

ECONOMY.

CONTINENTAL LETTER.

BRESLAU, JULY 27.

THE London Conference has evidently come to something like a standstill. M. Poincaré laughs in his sleeve. When he had to disappear from the political scene, when M. Millerand, the French President, had to give up his office, it seemed that the bankruptcy of the old system had been declared and that an entirely new one was to take its place. It would be an exaggeration to say that in reality the old firm 'Poincaré and Co.' has merely changed its name and in all other respects lives on as before; there cannot be any doubt, however, that the leading principle of the old firm has been adopted by the new one: 'might above right.' It is true, that the Herriot régime commenced with an act of humanity: it annulled the banishment of many thousands of Germans who had been driven out of their native districts. These people were allowed to return into the occupied territory. This was something. In many cases, however, it only led to new disappointments. For on coming home they found their houses in possession of French or—worse still—separatist elements. As soon as they went to law against the intruders, the occupation authorities turned against them and they could be happy if they escaped the French prison. Moreover, it was only workmen or inferior officials who were repatriated in this way, the leading administrative officials were still forbidden to return, the President of the German Reichstag himself being among the number. It seemed that only a *beau geste* had been intended but not more. The oppression in the occupied district went on as before. New enormous barracks were ordered to be built for the invader, schools were confiscated as before for French purposes, harmless people were sent to prison for singing national songs, court martials did their usual dirty work; in short, it required an optimism little; short of foolishness to believe, that a thorough alteration was at hand. In spite of that, a great part of the world seemed to expect from the London Conference the commencement of a really new era. At the same time it became clear that already before the Conference began, the idea of discuss-

ing the military evacuation of the Ruhr had been abandoned and that only the restitution of the former economic and administrative state of things was at stake. Could it be doubted for a moment, however, that this was the squaring of the circle? For how should the German administration be restituted if the French military remained in the district? The invaders demand "safety"; this safety they declare threatened, if they hear a national song, if they see a national flag, if they read in the papers a word of indignation against France, the French, the French military, French or even Polish politics or the Versailles treaty. So in all these cases and a hundred other ones they will feel justified in interfering with German administration, they will try to do away with those officials that do not show themselves subservient to them; in other words, no matter what their decisions of the Conference will be, the present state of things will continue or return automatically if French garrisons remain in Germany. Besides, nobody in Germany will acquiesce in their existence. For did not M. Poincaré tell all the world on the eleventh of January, 1923, when he invaded the Ruhr district, that the military forces had no other aim but the protection of the French engineers who were sent to exploit the Ruhr industry in order to procure reparations for the French nation? Well, then, the Dawes report procures everything the French demand and expect; why then should they keep garrisons in Germany? It turns out, however, that M. Herriot demands even much more than the continuance of the military occupation of the Ruhr. He endeavours practically to equal M. Poincaré in the art of making peace by illegal interpretation of accepted agreements. For the Dawes report left no doubt that in order to fulfil the enormous financial demands Germany is to be burdened with, she ought to get back her railways in the occupied area. M. Herriot, however, sees no contradiction between his acceptance of the Dawes report and the condition that the French should go on controlling the principal lines for the sake of "safety". Fifteen hundred French and Belgian railway officials, according to his wishes, are to remain in the service of the German railways. This demand, as was to be expected, has been answered by an outcry of indignation from the side of the German railwaymen, who are quite unable to see how they should co-operate peacefully with those people who have ejected them from their houses. Worse still is the French demand as to the decisive position of the notorious Reparation Committee concerning the question as to whether Germany has fulfilled the conditions of the Dawes report or not and also the French demand concerning France's right to inflict "sanctions". If one realises the fact that the whole idea of such sanctions is an invention of the former French government, entirely unknown to the Versailles treaty and never acknowledged by the other Allies, if one remembers moreover that Mr. MacDonald in

former days used to speak with aversion of the Versailles treaty but with disgust of the "sanctions", it makes a curious impression that on this occasion it should have been—not the British premier but—the American bankers who protested against decisions which must needs lead to new entanglements and which would undoubtedly in a short time serve to obstruct the road to final peace. It is quite clear from all this that France is by no means willing to loosen the grip she has on her neighbour's right arm. Her neighbour is to work like a free man. But it is not only a question of work. Before the war, the German government used to astound the neighbours by its absolute disregard of the reaction of her doing on the mentality of the other powers. This was indeed a leading feature of post-Bismarckian policy in Germany. The parts seem to be thoroughly exchanged now. Nobody seems to ask what the result of proceedings like these upon the mentality of Germany will be. It is true that Germany is disarmed. But how short-sighted, to think that a nation of 60 million people can be treated as a *quantité négligeable* because it lacks big guns and aeroplanes! It is exactly the same fault the German militarists made when they considered themselves invincible because of their unparalleled war-machine. The fate of nations is in the end decided by the spirit that pervades them. The Allies, however, have during all these years since the armistice done nothing but vivified all militarist instincts in Germany by their way of treating her. It is not likely that the London Conference will turn out an absolute failure. But to all appearances it will end in destroying all hopes of a new era of peace and good-will in creating a situation that will have the same effect as all former measures on the German mentality. Germany will appear to herself once more cheated and fettered with new chains. The former state of things as to the French occupation will continue, only slightly veiled. There can be little doubt that this will have a very fatal influence on inner politics in Germany. When M. Herriot took over his office he said that it had been the fault of his predecessors to do nothing to encourage democracy in Germany. Quite so! But far from encouraging German democracy, the London Conference threatens to deal the death blow to it.

A LETTER FROM LONDON.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

LONDON, JULY 31.

CROWN COLONIES COMMITTEE.

I CANNOT say anything definite about the results achieved by the Colonies Committee. One hears a great deal that may or may not be true, and it is unwise to predict what will eventually be vouchsafed to the public. I understand, however, that certain recommendations have been made to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and that certain decisions have been taken by the Cabinet.

Whether these are tentative or definite and whether they will be, whatever they are, declared before the rising of Parliament remains to be seen. I have always held that the Committee would have justified its appointment if it could secure the final rejection of the Immigration Bill. It will be remembered that this was the only part of the White Paper in which a conflict of interests between Indians and natives was even remotely suggested. If this part of the White Paper goes, there is nothing left to disguise the fact that the real dispute is between the white settlers and the Indians. If, therefore, the Committee secures a reversal of the White Paper policy in this respect, it will have done a great deal and will deserve the appreciation of the Indian leaders, even though the result may not appear in dramatic terms. Anything further gained will be in the nature of the unexpected having happened. I am inclined to be optimistic, for I have reason to believe that the atmosphere at present prevailing at the Colonial Office is not so completely anti-Indian as it was a year ago. These quiet and careful negotiations at close quarters, without advertisement, ought to bear fruit of a character which, if my hopes are justified, should meet with the recognition of those who realise how delicate such negotiations must of necessity be, in the light of last year's happenings. It is interesting to know that Mr. Ormsby Gore, as chairman, Mr. Linfield, whose quiet work on behalf of subject peoples is well-known, and Major Church are the representatives of the three parties who are going to East Africa in the middle of next month, in order to study administrative and other problems on the spot. They will take evidence on behalf of the permanent Colonial Office Committee here, of which I have already written, and will hear the representations of all parties. I have reason to believe that the Government of India is going to send an official to Kenya, when the sub-Committee arrives there, in order to assist the Indian community to present their case.

Lord Astor's gift to the House of Commons of a picture—it is a big canvas—representing the historic occasion when his wife was introduced to the House, as the first woman member to take the oath, by Mr. Balfour and Mr. Lloyd George, has caused a furore. It appears that he broached the matter to the then Commissioner of Works, Sir John Baird, during the Conservative Administration, who, after consultation with the Speaker but without reference to the House, gave authority for the picture to be hung when painted. The commission has just been completed by Mr. Sims, the artist, and the picture has been hung, at least temporarily, upon the staircase leading to the Grand Committee room. Members of all parties have strongly resented the hanging of a picture of a living subject of the Crown without the express permission of the House, and the Prime Minister has been obliged to defer to the widespread feeling that the matter should come before the House for the expression of its views on the subject. Mean-

while, the picture, it is said, will remain hung to give members an idea of its artistic value, prior to expressing their views on the subject at a later date. One criticism is made, namely that the occasion is not a historic one, as Lady Astor is not the first woman member of Parliament, but the Countess Markievicz, who never, as a Sinn Feiner, took the oath and her seat.

IRAQ MATTERS.

Salyid Talib Pasha tells the story of the circumstances surrounding his kidnapping before the installation of Feisul as King of Iraq and his subsequent deportation to Ceylon. He was Prime Minister, for all practical purposes, before the advent of Feisul. After much persuasion, he had been induced to approve of and assist in the acting up of the National Assembly, before Feisul was at all thought of, with the Naqib of Bagdad as Prime Minister. Sir Percy Cox had assured him very solemnly and repeatedly that no stranger would be brought into Iraq to govern the people of the country. The Pasha had implicitly believed these promises. Then Sir Percy Cox announced that he had been called by Mr. Winston Churchill to Cairo to the famous Conference of Middle Eastern experts. When he came back, it was understood that Feisul was to be made King of Iraq. Though disturbed at the news, the Pasha did nothing. The news spread, however, and a number of Sheiks who had taken part in the rebellion came to see him about the matter, and charged him with conspiring with the British Government to deceive them. To reassure public opinion, he invited a number of prominent persons, including some English journalists, to his house, to whom he explained his belief in the assurances of the British representative and that the enthronement of Feisul would be a grave mistake. He added that if it were to happen he would not be able to answer that the powerful Sheiks would remain quiet. These remarks, of a perfectly honest and straightforward character, were apparently reported to the authorities by some Englishman present. A couple of days later he was invited by Lady Cox to tea. On making his adieu and leaving the gates of the Residency, he found a number of military cars awaiting him. He was bundled into one of these and whirled away into exile in Ceylon, in extreme discomfort and without any of his belongings. He was made an outlaw from his country and family and imprisoned in the Island, and for a further eighteen months he was forbidden to enter either London or Paris or even to visit his two sons at Oxford. During this time he wandered about Italy and Germany. The Pasha is now lying ill in London and is still prohibited from returning to his native land. It is an ugly story, which has some important resemblances to that of the treatment of Zaghloul, who is shortly expected here from France, where he is now undergoing a short cure.

Another interesting story comes here via Paris as to the circumstances in which Major Imbrie, the American Consul at Teheran, met his death. He

was, it will be remembered, accompanied by another American who shared the anger of the mob, but was fortunately not murdered, though he is slowly recovering from some dangerous wounds. It appears that the man, according to the *New York Herald*, was an American prisoner. He was an oil-man and had been found guilty in the Consular Court that had jurisdiction, of manslaughter of a fellow oil-man whom he accidentally killed with a baseball bat. After the inquiry he was handed over to the American Consul for safe custody, and the Consul's first action was to take the prisoner's word of honour that he would not attempt to escape and then build him a shackle in his own compound and make all provision, at his own expense, for his prisoner's comfort. In order the better to fulfil his responsibility, the Consul used personally to accompany the prisoner whenever he went out for exercise, and it is supposed to be on one of these excursions that the tragic event occurred.

The holidays are commencing, and with it comes the annual rush to the seaside and abroad. The Continental mails are crowded to excess and are being run in several parts. To-day, for example, the afternoon Continental mail was run from Victoria station in four trains. It was difficult to get anywhere near friends, owing to the enormous quantities of baggage cumbering the platforms, and it was with the greatest difficulty that I was able to approach the portion of the train carrying the P. and O. passengers who are going East by this mail. Among those returning home are Mr. V. S. Sastri, who is looking in better spirits, in spite of the great overstrain to which he has subjected himself, and Mr. K. C. Roy. Among those at the station to see off the distinguished travellers were Dr. Annie Besant, Lady Emily Lutyens and her daughter, Sir Mahomed Rafique, and Mr. J. Hope Simpson.

REVIEW.

THE LEPER PROBLEM.

OLDRIEVE, FRANK: (SECRETARY, BRITISH EMPIRE RELIEF ASSOCIATION): INDIA'S LEPEERS. (Marshall Bros. and Co., Ltd.) 7 x 4½ pp. 144. 1924.

In the opinion of the hedonist and the materialist all the finer qualities of the human heart, such as love, sympathy and charity can be interpreted to show that the exercise of each of them is a secret form of selfishness. What prompts the well-fed man to throw a crumb to the beggar is not the sympathy for the beggar but a subtle fear that he might also, by some malignant stroke of chance, be reduced to the same wretched condition. It would not have been altogether a bad thing if such an interpretation had been true, for then an intensity of self-love would perhaps have given a certain sense of responsibility to each of us which in the gross would have resulted in social well-being. The higher selfishness or enlightened self-interest would not have

tolerated the amount of unnecessary and preventible human misery that is to be found all around.

The truth of this becomes apparent if one considers the question of leprosy in India. The cleansing of lepers is usually considered as an act of philanthropy and undoubtedly there are persons who undertake such work from a really philanthropic impulse, Mr. Oldrieve himself being one such. But there seems to be little scope for the State or society to feel the complacency of having done a philanthropic act in providing asylums for the lepers or in spending money for curing them. For by doing so the State or society does no more than buy for itself immunity from the disease. To make this immunity complete in all respects it is necessary, it may or may not be virtuous, to segregate the lepers and make the latest treatment available for each of them.

The total number of lepers in India is, according to the last Census (1921), 102,513. Mr. Oldrieve and others who have worked among lepers consider this to be an underestimate and think that the number ought to be put at 250,000 at the least. Let Mr. Oldrieve describe graphically what this number means. "We will imagine a procession of the lepers in India," he says. "They shall march before us, but with what halting steps, some on crutches which they can hardly hold, others crawling along on hands and knees; others, the blind, led by those who can see; we will ask them to pass along at the rate of twelve a minute. On they would come, all types of people, from all parts of India, a sorrowing, suffering, long long line of the sick. We would sit and watch them pass from sunrise to sunset, twelve hours a day, and day after day we would have to sit. How many days would the procession take to pass? About thirty days at twelve hours a day, and twelve lepers hobbling every minute of the time. What a sight; a veritable Via Dolorosa!"

The following table will give an exact idea of the leprosy situation in India:—

Provinces.	No. of lepers, 1921 Census	Total no. of asylums.	Total no. in asylums.	Percentage of lepers in asylum.
Punjab	2727	6	470	17.2
O. P.	8025	9	1373	17.1
Bombay	9709	14	1091	11.2
B. & Orissa	12,269	9	1322	10.7
U. P.	12,647	14	802	6.3
Madras	15,753	11	979	6.2
Burma	9765	4	556	5.8
Bengal	15,897	3	649	4.0
Assam	4464	3	69	1.5
Native States	91,256	73	7311	8.8
Travancore	2058	3	245	11.9
Cochin	466	1	50	10.7
Kashmir	1485	3	157	10.5
Baroda	552	1	51	9.2
Mysore	314	1	27	8.5
Hyderabad	4214	1	253	6.0
Gwalior	418	1	10	2.3
	9507	11	793	8.4

Most of the work among lepers in India to-day

is done under the auspices of the Mission to Lepers. This international and interdenominational Mission provides funds for the purchase of sites, erection of buildings, and the maintenance of lepers in India. In various ways the Mission ministers to some 7500 lepers in India. The provincial Governments, besides giving grants for new buildings, contribute, at so much per leper inmate, the amount varying from Rs. 11 in the Punjab to Rs. 3 in Central Provinces per mensem.

Compared with the Census returns of 1911 (109,094), the Census for 1921 shows a decrease of 6581 in the number of lepers in India. The researches of Sir Leonard Rogers with Chalmoogra oil have resulted in the discovery of an almost positive cure for leprosy. Further researches are being carried out by Dr. Muir in the School of Tropical Medicines at Calcutta. The new treatment, wherever adopted, has shown remarkably satisfactory results and many have been declared bacteriologically free from the disease, after the treatment. Chalmoogra oil is obtained from the seeds of Chalmoogra (Taroktogeros Kurzii), the trees of which are found in Assam valley and Chittagong Hill Tracts. The treatment costs about Rs. 15 per year per leper, and to be effective must be undergone for a sufficiently long time.

Recent investigations in leprosy have proved that leprosy is contagious only and not hereditary. Children born of lepers, if segregated from parents at an early age, remain free from the disease. This fact together with the new treatment makes the stamping out of leprosy from India as elsewhere a practical proposition, attainable within a definite period of time. Segregation and treatment, if vigorously carried out, can achieve this end. The amended Indian Lepers Act of 1920 is a great improvement on the Leper Act of 1897. It provides for compulsory segregation of all pauper lepers, in whatever stage of disease they may be.

Mr. Oldrieve suggests the following methods to be used in solving the leper problem in India:—

- (1) That existing institutions for voluntary inmates be increased in number and size.
- (2) That central leper settlements should be built in each province for compulsorily segregated lepers.
- (3) That special clinics for leper out-patients should be established in all large centres.
- (4) That the children of all leper out-patients be specially cared for and protected.
- (5) That the latest treatment should be improved and in any way possible made available for every leper in the country.

Mr. Oldrieve's book is a useful conspectus of the leprosy problem in India and will be exceedingly helpful to social workers.

J. B. S.

MISCELLANEA.

A CONSPIRACY CONFESSED

(BY A YOUNG LIBERAL.)

"It would not be sufficient now merely to celebrate a day in holy memory of the late Lokamanya Tilak. Now while wishing glory to his name, the members of the Swaraj Party and the followers of the Lokamanya must take a vow to strike at Mahatma Gandhi's Flag; and this alone is keeping alive the memory of the Lokamanya, and in thus obtaining a victory lies the memorial of the Lokamanya."

So says Mr. Madhao Shrihari Ane, member of the Legislative Assembly, in his article on Tilak, published in the special Tilak Issue of the weekly "Prajapaksha" of Akola (Berar). Along with Mr. N. C. Kelkar of Poona, Mr. Ane is considered to be the true disciple of the late Mr. B. G. Tilak. In Berar he is the trusted leader of the Tilakites and an exponent of the school of Responsive Co-operation. In this article Mr. Ane makes a confession of the conspiracy he and Mr. N. C. Kelkar hatched soon after the Calcutta and Nagpur Congress sessions of 1920, and how they successfully carried on a guerilla warfare against Mahatma Gandhi, which resulted in the utter rout of the Non-co-operators very recently at Ahmedabad. In this article Mr. Ane boasts that Berar alone like a naughty child insisted upon going along the old path in those days. Not only that, the public-spirited men of Berar passed their days then in anxiously pondering over the problem as to how the other Indian Provinces could again be persuaded to come back to the old and well-trodden path.

With this brief opening remark Mr. Ane goes on to describe how the conspiracy was hatched, how it developed and how it became successful in the end. Firstly a few individuals openly began to say that Mahatma Gandhi's programme was unpractical. Not satisfied with this, some of them persuaded the voters to vote and called upon some of their party to stand for Council election. In every district of Berar candidates stood for election and entered the Councils. A new organisation came into being composed of public-spirited men of Berar and C. P. and thus came into being a centre, though small, to oppose Mahatma Gandhi's programme. In the next elections of the Berar Congress Committee the pro-changers captured the Committee. Likewise the Nagpur Congress Committee also was captured by the pro-changers. Both these committees sent representatives of their views to the All-India Congress Committee.

But a definite and an open step was taken at Akola (Berar), where a Conference was held under the presidency of Mr. N. C. Kelkar and here it was demonstrated to the public that not only Berar and Nagpur but Maharashtra also was Pro-Changer. Mahatma Gandhi could not neglect the Maharashtra rebels and tried to persuade them at the Ahmedabad session of the Congress by yielding to the proposal that the execution of the triple boycott should be left to the willingness of the Provincial Committees. At the famous Bombay meeting held for discussing the question of a Round Table Conference, it was through the pressure of the Maharashtra members that Mahatma Gandhi had to say that "dominion status" was their political goal. After the Bardoli fiasco Mahatma Gandhi was ready to give the mother of coconut in the shape of a constructive programme to the nation ["निर्दोष कार्यक्रम की प्रतीति देना ही हमारा महत्त्वपूर्ण उद्देश्य है"]. At the next Delhi session of the All-India Congress Committee it was Dr. Moonje who proposed that a committee be appointed to examine why the Non-Co-operation Programme did not succeed. This proposal was by way of an amendment to the resolution which was proposed by Mahatma Gandhi. The latter at once said that Dr. Moonje's amendment was nothing but a vote of censure.

But after Mahatma Gandhi went to jail, the work carried on by the Maharashtra rebels met with excellent success. The after-history of this revolt was not confined to Maharashtra alone. The whole of India was affected by the influence of the conspirators. Though Dr. Moonje's amendment was defeated, another resolution indirectly meaning the same thing was carried. In accordance with it a Committee was appointed to enquire whether the nation was ready for civil disobedience. Till this committee of Pandit Nehru and Patel, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Rajagopalachariar came to Nagpur, all the witnesses examined belonged to the Pro-Changers. Even these could not definitely state that the Nation would be willing for Civil Disobedience. But at Nagpur, Akola and Poona the witnesses of the Pro-Changers were examined who openly said that Mahatma Gandhi's Non-Co-operation programme was useless and they strongly insisted on Council entry. As a result, the majority of the Committee favoured Council entry and definitely proposed that the other two boycotts be suspended. To this view of Pandit Motilal Nehru and Hakim Ajmal Khan Mr. Das extended his support and his first pronouncement on this question was made at Amraoti.

Soon after this as President of the Berar and Nagpur Conference Mr. Das placed his programme before the nation. He reiterated the same at Gaya as the President of the Gaya Congress. At Gaya was founded the Swaraj Party. The rebellion which was simmering inside Maharashtra now had its flames spread all over the country. In the special Congress of Delhi the Council entry was consented to which was again approved of at the Cosanada sessions of the Congress. Thus a few individuals in a backward province like Berar conspired against the Non-Co-operation movement, which resulted in an open revolt against Mahatma Gandhi now visible in the whole of India.

To this effect is the argument of Mr. Ane in his article in support of the plot he and his friend hatched and which culminated in utterly crushing the movement of Mahatma Gandhi. Mr. Ane winds up his article by the passage which is quoted in the beginning, in which he now openly calls upon the followers of Mr. Tilak to strike at Mahatma Gandhi's Flag. Mr. Ane's article should serve as an eye-opener to many who will now be in a position rightly to understand the exploits of Mr. Ane and his friend!

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