

Servant of India

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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

The British Elections.

THE British Elections have gone much as we expected when we first wrote on the dissolution of Parliament three weeks ago. The possibility, which supervened owing to the transparent manoeuvres of the old Coalition gang and which might easily have resulted in a sweeping victory for Labour, was skilfully countered by an eleventh hour "Bolshevik" stunt. As a result what was originally predicted has happened: Liberalism has ceased to exist as a practical factor; Labour has gained at its expense and so have the Conservatives, only more so. It is necessary, in view of Reuter's conspiracy of silence on that point, to stress that Labour has gained: from less than four and a half million votes last year to more than five and a half millions this year. That these 4½ million votes in 1923 were represented by 191 seats in the old House and the 5½ millions in 1924 by 151 in the new is as much due to the hazards of the voting system as that the Conservatives, having polled 47% in the country, should be rewarded with 67% of the voting power in the Commons. Still, the fact remains, that the British are still frightened of launching out into the deep of a new World policy and are still clinging, panic-stricken, to the selfish shallows of an old Empire policy. For the former, it was imperative to get Russia into the comity of nations: and to sneer at the Russian loan as so much *Danegeld* is particularly amusing when coming from people pledged to pay all the Dominions *Danegeld*, in order to retain their "loyalty".

Unfortunately the fall of Mr. MacDonald will have more than domestic and imperial repercussions. The first felt will be that of the American presidential election which is proceeding, as we are writing. Mr. La Follette's chances cannot but have been much damaged by the example of what will be "featured" as the return of England to Conservative sanity. The German Nationalists, who

were in a fair way of being obliterated at the forthcoming elections in December, triumphantly shout that the world after all is not being ruled by idealistic nonsense *a la* Macdonald and now count on getting back into the *Reichstag* in full strength, to give German Nationalist tit for British Nationalist tat. As for M. Herriot, poor man, he will be left without a partner anywhere abroad and an early return to a Government of the Right in France is, one is afraid, now a foregone conclusion. Even M. Mussolini, against whom the Italian Liberal worm was just about to turn, can smile sardonically and tell his compatriots: *Cosi fan tutti*. Such is the outlook consequent upon the firm of Baldwin, Birkenhead, Churchill & Co. being given the new management and a blank cheque wherewith to manage at their sweet will. Perhaps after even less than five years of that sort of thing, when domestically, imperially and internationally the scene will have become once more that of a beargarden and when "Anti-Socialism" will have had ample time to bring home to even the densest of British voters its inherent ineptitude and viciousness: then, perhaps, the time will be ripe for the conscience of an awakened nation to call back "old Mac"—not to office, but to power.

No Retrocession of Berar.

THE *Tribune* of the 2nd instant says: "We have good reasons to believe that the question of retrocession of Berar to the Nizam was considered, along with the report of Mr. T. P. Thompson, Political Secretary, on the subject, at a recent meeting of the Executive Council of the Governor-General, and that the decision arrived at by the Governor-General in Council was against the Nizam's claims". Having regard to the overwhelming opposition of the people of Berar to the retrocession, this decision of the Government of India was only to be expected. Nevertheless, the news is gratifying, since it shows that where its own interests are not adversely affected, the Government of India recognise what we have so often urged in these columns, that the wishes of the people concerned in any proposed transfer of territory should determine finally whether such transfer should take place or not. Presumably for publishing the above news, the *Tribune* has been proscribed from Hyderabad State, like so many other Indian papers that have either criticised the Nizam's administration or opposed his claim to Berar.

COMMUNALISM is nowhere so rampant as in the Punjab. You meet there the Mussalman, the Hindu, the Sikh, but not the Indian. It is there that the demand is made for 'communal representation' in Government service, educational institutions, and every conceivable sphere. In those circumstances one is glad to know, from Sir Malcolm Hailey's reply to a Mussalman deputation of agriculturists, that he does not mean to encourage any extension of this communalism during his tenure of office. He told

the deputation that the Government were not in a position, nor had the desire, to modify communal representation in the legislative bodies. "But," he added, "equally I do not think that any of us have a desire to see it extended to any sphere in which its necessity cannot be unequivocally demonstrated and we claim its advocates would be best serving the cause of their community by making every constructive effort so to improve their educational and social position as to make its extension and indeed its retention unnecessary." This is very sound advice, and we hope Sir Malcolm's policy in everyday administration and his attitude to the Ministers will be quite in keeping with it.

* * *

Mr. Gandhi and Kohat.

THE Viceroy's veto of Mr. Gandhi's proposed visit to Kohat cannot but be regarded as unfortunate. He was to go on a mission of reconciliation, with a strong contingent of influential Muhammadan friends, and nothing but good could have resulted from the visit. The Viceroy thinks that such a mission now by Mr. Gandhi is premature and that it would only spoil the work of pacification in which the local officials are engaged. He fears that Mr. Gandhi's visit will draw Hindu crowds to see him, that this will lead to Muhammadans gathering in force, with reinforcements from trans-border tribes, and that an outburst of communal frenzy might result which would be beyond the control of Mr. Gandhi or the authorities. All this is in our opinion plain miscalculation. In the first place, there are not enough Hindus in Kohat or the surrounding country to form a crowd. The difficulty about which the local authorities have been publicly complaining is that the Hindus are unwilling to go back to Kohat. No Hindus, however ignorant, will flock to Mr. Gandhi hoping to fight the Mussalmans under his banner. The mere announcement of his visit to Kohat would not have led anybody, otherwise intent upon boycotting that place, to go there. Moreover, it was not Mr. Gandhi's intention to induce any Hindu to go there unless the Muhammadan residents, who are in a very large majority of the population, were prepared to welcome them with open arms. Mr. Gandhi's visit, if permitted, would undoubtedly have facilitated the reconciliation which the authorities are trying hard to bring about, but without much success. There is no doubt about the Viceroy having appreciated Mr. Gandhi's motive, but he is utterly wrong in his calculation of what is likely to result from the latter's visit. We are not, however, sure that the local authorities—whose advice the Viceroy undoubtedly sought and has accepted—were not swayed, in part at least, by considerations of prestige. The Viceroy publicly expressed his sympathy with Mr. Gandhi's recent effort at Hindu-Moslem unity. After that, one would have expected him to give special facilities to Mr. Gandhi to visit Kohat which was the immediate occasion of his historic fast. Here was an occasion for co-operation, but it has been sadly missed.

* * *

BISHOP WESTON of Zanzibar has in the October number of the *Empire* Review revealed in a characteristically outspoken fashion the real inwardness of the proposed federation of the East African Colonies. It involves, according to him, nothing less than the stealing of Zanzibar and the annexation of Tanganyika on the part of Great Britain. This act of robbery is recommended in the interest of Kenya Europeans alone, who stand in need of two things: money for railways in the Highlands and labour—

virtually forced labour—to exploit these white areas. Zanzibar can supply the former and Tanganyika the latter. International obligations incurred by England apparently do not deter British statesmen overmuch. Great Britain is pledged to secure to the Sultan of Zanzibar his throne and the due succession of his royal line. "These treaties bind us. Yet we have already broken them. We have robbed the Sultan of his mainland dominion; and last year it began to leak out that he was to be deposed in order that his country might be federated with Kenya and other colonies. Later, we heard that the British had refused to guarantee the succession, but that the deposition was no longer imminent." "As Zanzibar can be taken from its Sultan, so Tanganyika can be got out of the hands of the League of Nations. Who is to stop Great Britain? There is no power in a position to step in and prevent the annexation of the two countries." It is not a question of a formal change of sovereignty. It means a heavy deterioration in the position of the Africans; for in Zanzibar and Tanganyika, though not much is being done for the native, the rulers are at least "alive to his existence as a person on whose health and prosperity everything depends. In Kenya on the other hand, the African is valued chiefly as far as he can take the place of the Asiatic clerk and tradesman, and can fill up the plantations of the white men. Kenya, as a whole, does not wish to see African farmers. The keenest settlers look forward to seeing thousands more white men in the Colony and talk of the enforced labour as a quite natural policy."

* * *

IT is well that these evils resulting from the Kenyaisation of Eastern Africa, which have been pointed out by others before, have been enforced by the Bishop of Zanzibar with all his great authority. But his real service in this article consists in the warning he has given against the too speedy development of white Highlands that is now proceeding with the help of the black labourers, who have to be forced by a vicious system of taxation from their reserves into the European plantations. "I wish to suggest," he says, "that the present policy of speeding up the development of East Africa is not, from the Imperial point of view, at all a wise one. It can only be carried out by drawing the natives of Africa away from their homes and tribes, with the consequent spread of venereal disease and the lowering of the birth-rate. This has already gone too far. A wise rule would shut out settlers from any district that could not show a sufficient supply of local labour." At a time when an attempt will surely be made under the Conservative régime to reverse the Labour policy and to restrict the immigration of Indians, it is best that we have one in the position of the Bishop of Zanzibar to advocate, on grounds entirely unconnected with Indian claims, the practical exclusion of all European immigrants from the Highlands, for there is surely no local labour supply available in the Highlands for future entrants when even the existing settlers have to search high and low for labourers to satisfy their present needs. Though this is the logical consequence of the "Africa for the Africans" policy adopted by Government, no one had the courage so far to put it in words, and he who made the Colonial Office withdraw the hated Ainsworth circular will surely be able by his forceful advocacy to range the whole Christian world on the side of the wretched natives.—As we go to press, we have the sad news of the sudden death of Bishop Weston, and we can only say that this his last will and testament is in every respect worthy of the incessant campaign that he waged on behalf of righteousness.

* * *

REPRESSION IN BENGAL.

BY V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI.

UNLIKE many of his supporters and friends, Mr. C. R. Das has not attempted either to deny or to extenuate the anarchical and dangerous movement in his province. His speech to the Calcutta Corporation includes a straightforward and emphatic repetition of his former statements on the subject. He makes, however, the complaint, natural and proper in the circumstances, that while the Government have taken his warning as to the danger, they have not applied his remedy. The only two signs of Government having thought of the remedy are their declaration of faithful adherence to the policy of the Government of India Act of 1919 and their appointment of the Reforms Enquiry Committee. The former is heavily discounted by the stationary, if not reactionary, course pursued by Government during the last three years; and one is constrained to withhold full credit from the assurance contained in the Viceroy's statement:—"I and my Government will therefore proceed, as we are doing, along the line of political development laid down in the declared policy of Parliament, reaffirmed by His Majesty's Government." The Reforms Enquiry Committee, whether by design or otherwise, has protracted its operations beyond the limits of public expectation; and its report will be issued when the Tory government is well settled in office. Mr. Das's complaint therefore is quite well-founded. Government have not paid due heed to the wise maxim of statesmanship, that sedition can only be cured by removing the matter of it. The old pedagogy believed in government through fear. It would be just to claim that Indian educational practice has discarded this method in favour of government by love. Our administrators, however, lag much behind our schoolmasters. They have small faith in governing the people by respecting their wishes and enlisting their sympathies. By insisting on their responsibility to the Imperial Parliament, which for all practical purposes is synonymous with irresponsibility, and maintaining their old attitude of ostentatious isolation from all Indian opinion, which is incompatible with representative institutions, though they be as crude as those in India, they have produced the conviction in ardent political circles that the advance of India, though guaranteed by Parliament, can be won from the bureaucracy only by the familiar method of violence and revolution. My own faith was once much stronger than it is now, that the spirit of peace and goodwill towards nations has established itself firmly amongst all political parties in Great Britain, and that whatever government is in power at Westminster, India's onward march would be not only assured, but in increasing harmony with the duly expressed wishes of her natural leaders. I cannot bring myself to condemn the pessimism which prevails among our political workers, however much I might deplore certain of its manifestations.

The Viceroy and the Governor of Bengal are doubtless actuated by humane considerations and feel

that sinister events compel them to adopt measures which are repugnant to their political training as well as to their nature. The Anglo-Indian press, with its usual adroitness, fully exploits Lord Reading's undoubted Liberalism and his late office. It may be readily allowed that the aim of the new Ordinance is to strike at the agents and instruments of revolution in Bengal. We however must ask, what will be its effect? Can the Viceroy guarantee that the extraordinary powers which he bestows on his subordinates will be used by them only for that purpose? Can he guarantee this much smaller thing, that if these powers are misapplied and innocent citizens are hindered in their work or otherwise molested, he would bring the erring officials to book? Alas, the Punjab episode and the more recent episode of 1921-22 have demonstrated the limitations of even the highest potentates when they desire to do good to their subjects. To go a little further back, Sir Surendranath Banerjee and Babu Bhupendranath Basu, in pleading during the last term of the old Imperial Legislative Council for the extension of royal amnesty to the long-suffering victims of the régime of *lettres de cachet* and deportations under Regulation III of 1818, drew a picture of desolated homes, ruined families and broken patriots, which still dwells in the memory of those that heard. When one of the speakers at the recent protest meeting in Calcutta cried out in his anguish that it was better to endure the evil wrought by a revolutionary gang or two than to bear the frightfulness, the general crushing of all manly spirit and the widespread and indiscriminating tyranny of the instruments of repression, he was indulging in no rhetorical exaggeration, but in a real comparison of two great evils, which would be generally admitted to be just. After the riot in Cocanada of a few years ago, I was asking a high official whether the Government of Madras felt justified in letting loose on the town a horde of their most notorious spies and policemen. He replied in the same sense as General Dyer did later, but more politely—the people had to be taught a lesson. It is not an altogether apocryphal story that a Secretary to Government, in passing the accounts of an attorney engaged in a difficult case, remarked: "This is a monster of crookedness, but he has served the State well." A man of the world is always prepared to make allowances for the necessities of a Government which has to combat skilful and organised crime; but he cannot stand up for a Government which passively tolerates the oppression of its subjects by those who are paid to protect them. In the land of *bushido*, a bravo first became a *ronin* before he ran amuck. Modern officialdom, on the contrary, screens its vices and weaknesses in the dark corners of the temple of Departmental Prestige. It is only when honours and medals and increased emoluments are available that the distribution begins at the top, and mostly ends there. When retrenchments and punishments are in question, it is always the bottom which has the monopoly. The ex-Chief Justice of England, who promised to mete out

justice all round if he did nothing else, must have by now discovered that the hardest thing in India is to secure justice to the aggrieved subject against the official wrongdoer. Lord Ripon used to marvel at the extent to which the Indian people carried their faculty of acquiescence in established fact. Without euphemism, we are as patient and forbearant as any of God's creatures. Why, have we not nearly forgiven, though we can never forget, not only the horrors of the martial law régime, but the unwillingness to hold a public inquiry, the attempts to conceal, the simulated surprise and indignation at disclosures, the white-washings and unabashed excuses, the gentle censure and the seeming punishment, which were the pitiful sequelæ of Amritsar? As a measure of the regard paid by our Government to the good name and reputation of the private citizen, one may cite the fact that it has not yet offered any reparation or apology, so far as the public are aware, to the respectable gentlemen of the Punjab, who were harassed, humiliated and persecuted in the terrorist régime, without any reasonable cause. To ask the people of this country to trust either in the self-restraint of the executive officials in times of panic or in the capacity of members of the Government to keep them in order, is to treat them as angels or—idiots. That the drastic powers of the Ordinance will be used to stifle legitimate agitation and find the administration a short-cut through its difficulties is only too probable. I do not deny that the anarchical movement will be rendered impotent for the moment. That is a necessary duty of Government and it will be efficiently performed. The test, however, to apply to British administration is whether it can restore order and tranquillity without crushing freedom and fearless exercise of citizenship. This test has repeatedly found our Government wanting. Arrests without warrant, summary trials, searches of houses and offices are occasionally necessary even in advanced countries. But indefinite detention and imprisonment at the pleasure of the executive and without judicial trial are barbarous expedients which, we flattered ourselves, we were about to eliminate from the life of India. The average Englishman in this country considers the Indian politician an ill-conditioned malcontent. When I was returning home from the strenuous session in which the Rowlatt Act was enacted, I fell in with a judge of one of our High Courts, who held forth on our wrong-headedness in not recognising the necessity which the most enlightened administration might on occasions be put to of restricting the liberties of some of its subjects without warrant and for a number of days at a time. I enquired whether the executive in Britain, France or America would claim the right on such occasions of seizing people, holding them for indefinite periods in duress and refusing *ever* to bring them to justice. He doubted that could be the effect of any part of the hated legislation of the session. When I assured him it was, he just stared at me for a second, drew out his watch and remembered a pressing engagement.

In his exordium to the Ordinance the Viceroy says:—"The Ordinance is directed solely to these ends and will in no way touch or affect the interests or liberties of any citizens whether engaged in private or public affairs so long as they do not connect themselves with violent criminal methods." This claim is based on the fact that sections 124 A and 153 A of the Indian Penal Code, which, against our protests at the time, were included within the Rowlatt Bill, are excluded from the scope of the present measure. This is doubtless an improvement. But in certain other respects, it deviates for the worse from its prototype. A restrictive order passed under the Rowlatt Act had operation in the first instance for one year and could be renewed for another year. But there is no such limit of time to orders passed under the Ordinance. The investigating authority under the earlier measure was to consist of three persons, one of whom should be a non-official. The Ordinance refers all cases of preventive action to two officials of the rank of District and Sessions Judge. The right of the aggrieved subject to be heard in person by the investigating authority and the duty of this authority to submit its report in a certain form were also set forth in more explicit terms in the Rowlatt Act. Perhaps these changes would be effected when the Bengal Legislative Council is engaged on the measure or when the Governor of Bengal enacts it on his own responsibility. But even with these changes, the public of India will not be reconciled to its being placed on the statute-book temporarily or permanently; and many loyal subjects of His Majesty will find themselves unable, with the best will in the world, to give the Viceroy and his Government that support and co-operation which His Excellency expects from "all those who have truly at heart the peace, the prosperity and the political future of India." My mind naturally looks back on the conflict of 1919. Mr. (now Sir) Surendranath Banerjea, Mr. (now Sir) Mahomed Shafi and I signed the dissenting minute at the select committee stage; and Mr. (now Sir) B. N. Sarma struck many a shrewd blow during the fight in Council. The Bengal warrior we have no right to disturb in his retirement. The responsibility of office has imposed silence on the two others. What a difference it makes whether one is Executive Councillor or non-official member. And yet in truth, why should there be this difference? Sir Mahomed Shafi gives proof of his Panjabi mettle by holding on to his office, as he gives proof of his far-seeing statesmanship by his questionings on the Enquiry Committee. Sir Narasimha Sarma, after his gallant fight in 1919, found his tenuous responsibility as a non-official an intolerable burden and was in haste to discard it, though only for twenty-four hours. He is perhaps waiting for an opportunity in the few months of office that still remain to him of rendering the country some mighty service which will make up for the misdeeds of the present administration, albeit some of these be the individual acts of the Viceroy.

The Swarajya party assert that the main force

of the repression is intended to fall on them, as they have proved their power to wreck the present constitution, and the Bengal Government is anxious to avert the catastrophe. I sympathise with the Government's anxiety, but cannot approve of its method. Nor am I willing yet to believe that the object of Lord Lytton is to put a few M.L.C.'s out of action and thus secure a majority before he causes fresh proposals to be made to the legislature. The gravity of the crisis in Bengal is presumably sufficient by itself to justify extraordinary action on the part of the executive. My quarrel is with the character of the proposed extraordinary action, which follows closely the lines of the Rowlatt Act, described by me on a former occasion as the unblest mother of a monstrous brood of evil. Once the weapon is there in the armoury of the executive, it is apt to be used as an administrative convenience and against the express intention of the framers, as the Press Act was used, as the Defence of India Act was used, as section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code was used. The temptation is unfortunately irresistible to a government which is not responsible for law and order to any local legislature and can always mislead the Imperial Parliament, whose authority alone it acknowledges. In the outcry that followed the internment of Dr. Besant and her followers under the Defence of India Act, the Liberal politicians of the time joined. I was among them. The Liberal party as such had not yet come into existence. I did not think it necessary then to join the home rule organization to prove my sympathy or enhance the value of my protest against the arbitrary action of the Madras Government. And I do not think it necessary now to join the Swarajya party. Rather do I feel that my opposition to the Ordinance, its policy, and its provisions will attract the greater notice for my not participating in the destructive tactics of the Swarajists or sharing their partiality, platonic though it be at present, for civil disobedience or non-payment of taxes.

SOME SUGGESTIONS REGARDING CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS.

II.

4 With regard to the Budget, I feel that

(1) There should be one Budget for the whole Government as now, and no separate purse;

(2) That the Budget should be passed by the votes of all the Members of the Cabinet in session. Even if dyarchy continues, the distribution of funds between the different heads should be decided on at joint meetings;

(3) That a sufficient amount of money should be provided by statutory grants, so that the essential functions of the administration may not be put out of work by an adverse vote of the Council.

(4) Power should be given to the Governor General in Council, in cases of emergency, to pass ordinances by which the Government may be enabled to spend money for essential administrative

functions, when the Council have disallowed the grant, for a period not exceeding six months.

5. The Electoral Franchise needs revision. The present franchise gives an undue prominence to the landlord interest. It gives double votes to members of special electorates like that of landlords, and it keeps out too many people who should be given the vote.

(a) I should give a vote to every adult who can sign his name, and is not under any disqualification, and the vote should be given to males and females alike. In any case, there is need to enlarge the franchise very considerably.

(b) In no case should the same man be allowed to vote twice. No special constituencies should be permitted where the members of the constituency are already voters in the general constituency. Where a special constituency, like that of Zemindars, or businessmen, or graduates, is constituted, the voters of the constituency should lose their vote in the local electorates.

(c) No constituency should be permitted to return a member in which less than five thousand voters are on the Electoral Roll, or less than two thousand go to the polls.

(d) No member should be declared elected who polls less than one-fifth of the total voting strength of the constituency.

The present system of special electorates is arbitrary and unsound.

(1) A Mahomedan is bound to vote in the Mahomedan constituency, though he is out of sympathy with the majority of the voters in his constituency. I should give every person who is entitled to vote in a special constituency the option to vote either in the general or the special electorate.

(2) The special constituencies created by the 1919 Act do not necessarily represent separate political interests, and, in some cases, real political minorities have not been recognised as special electorates.

(3) The numerical strength of the special seats is fixed on arbitrary and unsound bases. For instance, a handful of Mahomedans in a West Bengal District elect one member, while several thousand voters in the Deccan elect only one representative.

To place the whole thing on a more scientific basis, I suggest that there should be one set of seats distributed on a local basis. These should form the general constituencies.

Special constituencies may be formed by the Government with the approval of a Franchise Committee of the Council in each Province.

(a) Where not less than five thousand qualified voters apply to withdraw themselves from the general constituency and vote in a separate constituency, in which the vote should be enjoyed by persons who, in addition to being voters at the general constituency, have some further general qualification sufficiently concrete and definite, they should be permitted to form themselves into a special constituency, which should be distinguished by some

general definition. In this way Mahomedans, Christians, Sikhs, Europeans, merchants, traders, raiyats and others who claim to represent special political interests may, in course of time, form special electorates. And, as no one would be bound to join the special electorate and everybody should have the option to go over from the special to the general electorate, it will provide a machinery which will automatically extinguish in course of time, all special electorates not founded on real political differences, and automatically create openings for real political interests, neglected in artificial classifications, to form themselves into definite political units.

I do not think this process will involve more complication than the present process. The only additional work to be done would be to investigate applications by those who want to form special electorates. This may be done very easily in the course of the formation of the electoral rolls.

If this scheme is accepted, it will be necessary to enlarge the maximum statutory number of members of Council in order to leave it open to the Government to create new constituencies. I should suggest that the number should be so fixed that not more than 75 p. c. of the maximum number of Councillors should form the strength of the Council at the start.

Much has been said for and against communal representation. Granting that any community has a separate political interest, you cannot possibly deny them the privilege of separate representation. At the same time, so long as Hindu and Mussalman means separate political interest, no considerable advance in political status of the nation as a whole is possible. I venture to think that my scheme furnishes a means by which it would be possible to get out of the anomaly of communal representation in course of time as a re-grouping of political parties on the basis of real political interests takes place. I shall take it that to start with ninety per cent., if not more, of the Mahomedans of a locality will apply to be voters in a special constituency. But let us say that ten years hence, the question of the permanent settlement becomes a live political issue, and Mussalman raiyats as well as Hindu raiyats wish to separate from the general constituencies and form raiyat constituencies. The results would be a mixed constituency with a real political interest to distinguish them. It is quite conceivable that the upshot of this process may be that the communal special electorates may die out and be automatically replaced by other special electorates. And this end would have been achieved by a purely voluntary process without any violence whatsoever to anybody.

The zemindars and the businessmen are at present in the enjoyment of what are in most places, mere pocket constituencies. In so far as these people represent political interests, they are entitled, if they so desire, to form separate constituencies. But the interests they represent must be considerable and must embrace a suffi-

ciently large number of men. And in the second place, they should, by getting a franchise in the special electorate, lose their general franchise. If these two principles are insisted upon, the disproportionately large number of seats reserved for zemindars and businessmen would be substantially reduced by an automatic process, without any violent interference with vested interests.

CONCLUSION.

IN conclusion, I wish to point out that it would be unwise to make the constitution too complex by providing all forms of checks and counterchecks. We must realise that no human foresight can work out a perfect constitution on paper. A comparatively simple constitution with a large amount of elasticity, and some machinery for self-adjustment to circumstances not contemplated by the founders, would be an ideal form of constitution. Oliver Wendell Holmes has immortalised a famous effort to build a perfect *one horse shay*. We need not emulate the example of the worthy priest who built it. It would be far better to trust to a simple work-a-day constitution to start with, and then rely on the growing common sense of the people to give it a more practical shape.

Impatience with the imperfections of human nature will not improve the situation. From the days of Adam and Eve, foolishness, perversity and wickedness have existed in the world and have, at times, got the upper hand. The wise man and statesman does not quarrel with this, nor lose his head because his best laid out schemes are going wrong. The best course in nine out of ten such cases is to cultivate a philosophical outlook, and let the evil run its course. To lose patience with it is to invite ruin. A politician in haste is very generally a suicide.

Much as I am out of sympathy with some features of the Swaraj party's politics, I do not think anything has happened to justify alarm. We have to forge ahead if we can. If by common consent it is possible to have a constitution which all parties would willingly work, we should have it by all means. But if that is not possible, we must wait and trust to time. To talk of recasting the constitution so far as to keep out wreckers and Swarajists is foolish shortsightedness. That attempt was made not so very long ago in the Indian National Congress by the Convention formed at Surat. The dismal failure of that scheme ought to open the eyes of people to the futility of such efforts, if nothing else will.

In any case, I should deprecate nervousness and alarm. If nothing can be done, at any rate the *status quo* can be maintained. The Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme at least provides for the carrying on of administration in any emergency.

NARES C. SEN-GUPTA.

A LETTER FROM LONDON.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

LONDON, OCTOBER 16th.

THE expected happened. Parliament was dissolved last Thursday having first disposed of the Irish Bill as it promised it would, and now we are in the

throes of a new election, the third in three years. A feeling of irritability is abroad; the country resents being again plunged into all the trouble, worry and expense of another election so soon. And the various contesting parties are showing a bitterness in attacking each other that makes an ordinary citizen feel like scrapping the lot, or leaving them to fight it out among themselves. But the thoughtful man, while recognising the breaking up of the Government was inevitable, feels most strongly that the Campbell case should not have been made the deciding factor in the dissolution of the House. If Mr. MacDonald had consented to an enquiry into the prosecution and the reason for its withdrawal, as he was asked to do, and which seemed a reasonable thing for him to agree to, the present trouble would not have arisen. The whole of the Campbell scandal might have been and should have been dealt with last session, at the time of the first outburst of indignation over it. But since that time, statement after statement has been made by responsible men each contradicting the other, until at last, an action that might have been capable of a perfectly innocent explanation at the beginning, has now become one of national importance, and a little article that very few people read brings an obscure little paper into the fullest possible prominence. That the Government would have had to go out on the Russian Treaty is practically certain, and it is generally said that Mr. MacDonald and his Government did not wish to wait for that, for on that issue they would have less chance in their appeal to the country, and so they seized the present opportunity of getting out of a more serious and painful situation. Mr. MacDonald's plaint that he has not had fair play is not borne out by events. During his term of office his Government has been defeated ten times during its life of 8 months, and yet has not been forced to accept the usual consequences of such defeat. But for the acknowledged support of the Liberals, the Labour Government would have gone out almost as soon as it got in. From Mr. MacDonald's present speeches it is perfectly evident he did not expect to get through with the Russian Treaty for there was solid opposition from both Liberals and Unionists, and not a certainty of firmness in his own party. It is also evident that he is not too sanguine in his expressed hopes of a return of his party to power. He said in his opening campaign speech yesterday that Labour may receive a set-back and that they must be prepared for it, thus preparing for a climb down. One of the few men of the Labour Cabinet that have not seemed to lose dignity in the present time of stress has been Mr. Thomas. His period of office has given him a command of himself and the situation that has been sadly lacking in others.

It is not easy to predict political events correctly today. The unknown and unlooked for has got into the habit of springing up and upsetting all one's calculations. Yet it seems fairly safe to say that the Unionists will be returned at this election with a broader programme than they have ever had before.

A fairly large number of women candidates are

in the field and it is expected many of them will be successful.

Any way the fight is to be a very short one. The end of October will also see the end of the contest and we shall then know what the voting community thinks of it, and which party it believes best represents its needs.

The much convassed German Loan, which was to be issued for the purpose of carrying into effect the Dawes plan of the discharge of Germany's obligation, has at last made its appearance. It was given a good send-off by the success of the American portion where it was over-subscribed within a few minutes. A long queue was in waiting long before the Bank of England opened its doors and by mid-day the books were officially closed, the whole being subscribed in a few hours.

In the midst of the general unrest occupying our immediate attention comes the news of the fall of Mecca. The entrance of the Wahabis into the Holy City has a serious aspect for the whole of the Moslem world. It has been stated that if the Anglo-Hejazi Treaty had been signed before the Wahabi attack on Mecca, Great Britain would have been obliged to support the Hashimite dynasty of the Hejaz against Ibn Saud. But the Treaty was not signed owing to the reservations made by King Husein, and even if it had been, it is not at all clear that Great Britain would have had to render actual military assistance to the Hashimite Government. But the complete change of events there cannot fail to be felt here, and much serious consideration will have to be given to it.

REVIEW.

TRADUCIANISM.

- (I) MILLIN, SARAH GERTRUDE: GOD'S STEP-CHILDREN. London. 1924. 7½ × 5. pp. 306. (Constable. 7/6).
- (II) MATHEWS, BASIL: THE CLASH OF COLOUR: a Study in the Problem of Race. London. 1924. 7 × 5. pp. 176. (U. C. M. E. 2/-).
- (III) OLDHAM, J. H.: CHRISTIANITY AND THE RACE PROBLEM. London. 1924. 8½ × 5½. pp. xx & 280. (S. C. M. 7/6)

"CHRISTIANITY and the Race Problem", though the title of only one of these three books, is really the theme common to them all. Mrs. Millin's novel to be sure depicts not only in the two clergymen, Andrew, the "ancestor", and Barry, his great-great-grand-child, a perfect caricature of Christianity, but also, in the rest of its characters, a perfect caricature of the Race Problem—but for all that, or rather because of it, "God's Step-Children" is a most useful book to study: not because it tells one true facts, but because it brings home to one how the facts of race are currently interpreted by the White man-in-the-street, who honestly believes that the White man's standards represent the supreme human values attainable or, as Mrs. Millin pithily puts it, that "God is White" and that, if all men are His children at all, they can only be "perhaps His step-children" (I, 34).

Neither Mr. Mathews nor Mr. Oldham takes that line. On the contrary, they both would indignantly deny its truth. Mr. Mathews indeed, though he modestly calls his little book merely "a porch" to Mr. Oldham's work, is definite enough as far as he goes and, in his somewhat flamboyant style, admits in Jack London's words that half the trouble is the stupidity of the Whites." (II, 9). Not so Mr. Oldham, who has an extraordinary knack of taking back, in one and the same sentence, "on the other hand", what he has just freely assented to "on the one hand"—neither of these two mental hands of his obviously ever knowing what the other is doing.

But to one, however little acquainted with traditional Christian theology, the most curious thing about so much that to-day is written about race (including the three books above), is the fact that the principle fundamental to the whole problem is hardly ever considered at all. For in the last instance surely the whole race problem goes back to the question whether the human mind (or soul) is a mere function of the human body, in which case of course the parents, by producing the body of their progeny, must also produce their mind. This fact of course, if fact it was, would not exclude the possibility of environment (in its broadest sense) affecting and changing the original body-cum-mind: but this original material, once given, would in that case never admit of a complete elimination. Now if mind is merely a product and function of matter, different kinds of function must necessarily attach to different kinds of matter and it would therefore be absurd to expect, say, some white matter to exhibit the same functions as, say, some black matter. To the materialist therefore, differences in human race must logically betoken differences in human thoughts; a materialist, therefore, to be consistent, must believe in caste.

Christian ideology is the very opposite of this materialistic theory, which it calls *Traducianism*; i. e. the theory that the soul of man is produced like a layer (*Lat.* "tradux") from a parent vine. Christian philosophy observes that the human mind can abstract the immaterial from the material and therefore concludes that it must itself be immaterial; and if immaterial, self-subsisting and therefore immortal; and that therefore, if the human mind (or soul) is immaterial and immortal, it cannot be materially produced. Which forces one to adopt the theory called Creationism, opposed to Traducianism, viz. that each individual human soul is created by God, *ex nihilo* and *ad hoc*. As a Creationist one is therefore on perfectly firm ground in opposing caste; for each individual soul is the equal of every other human soul, not indeed as regards the body into which it is infused at the moment of conception, nor as regards the social environment which envelops it from the moment of its birth: but equal as regards the faculty which each human soul possesses of dictating to the physiological *data* of his body and the psychological *data* of his social environment by saying "no" to any one of them. Man is master of his fate: and therein does he differ essentially from the animals, the impulses and instincts of whose sensory life he shares, in that he has the free will of consciously choosing between such impulses and instincts. Hence, whatever Biology may tell us about our sensory body or about the breeding of characteristics of that body, it obviously can tell us nothing about the "nothing" out of which the rational soul emerges with its super-sensory power of immaterial abstraction and free-will choice. As S. Thomas (*Sum.* I, 118, 2) concisely puts it: "the power of the intellectual principle, as intellectual, cannot reach the semen."

Now Mr. Oldham, I am afraid, is inclined to be

rather contemptuous of "the mind of the Church" for having "occupied itself with philosophical and theological problems, with the text and contents of the scriptures and with the history of its own past" instead of having "set itself to grapple in earnest with the complexities of modern life." (III, 238). As a consequence of this somewhat Victorian attitude we find Mr. Oldham "grappling in earnest" perhaps, as he thinks, but for all the rest of the world seeming to be merely beating the air for all that. For he never meets the question of Traducianism fair and square at all. On the one hand he suggests that "in the present state of knowledge it is a pure assumption to suppose that particular mental or moral qualities are invariably associated in inheritance with any particular physical feature" (III, 62): but that is as far as his caution will permit him to go. "Not invariably." But that as a matter of fact "mental and moral qualities" can and do form part of the physical inheritance—which is the Traducianist view—seems to him quite obvious. "Biological inheritance", he says (III, 217), "is the clay which education and social agencies and religion must learn to mould"; for not only our anatomical and physiological, but "our psychological possibilities were pre-determined in the germ-cells from which we came" (III, 51). Intermarriage therefore to him means *inter alia* the "crossing of character complexes" (III, 146) and to him "it is evident, in view of what the white race has actually accomplished in history, that certain qualities that make for human progress are present in that race" (III, 153). Now it is even a good deal more evident, in that case, that the whole objection to caste and to what, apparently quite erroneously, is called "race prejudice" lacks all substance of fact. One may be glad to have Mr. Oldham's assurance that "not invariably" is a fancy for Old Masters or Old Port handed on in the germ-cells from father to son and that "not invariably" does a hooked nose get linked up with a crooked mind: but is it not the very dickens, never to be sure, whether it might not, in a given case, do so after all? And if so, why take the risk? Why not stick to caste as to a safe guide?

Take the ancestry of a man, almost white, depicted for us in Mrs. Millin's novel. "A mad white missionary who married a degraded Hottentot woman, a thing like a beast. And his daughter who had an illegitimate son by a passing Boer. And a coloured nursemaid who married that son. And a woman who ran away with another man. That, on one side. And, on the other, a bad old man who, when he was more than sixty, fell in love with a coloured child, and didn't care what happened as long as he got her. All this evil Barry has in his blood to hand on further." (I, 220). Mr. Oldham soothingly says, "not invariably." No; perhaps not, but who is mad enough to take that risk if even only sometimes it is handed on? If, "coming into the world a hundred years after his ancestor, Barry had had deposited in him the same religious germ that had made his great-grandfather want to give the boots from his feet to a beggar" (I, 242): is it not temerarious to allow the germ-cell of asceticism in a Brahman to get neutralized by the acquisitiveness in the germ-cell of a Bania, let alone queered by the vicious taint of a Mahar? I submit that, if Christianity as a rational system can tolerate the idea that soul characteristics are physically inheritable, it cannot exclude the reasonableness of caste; or that, if moral characteristics are physically transmissible, Christianity cannot teach that the caste system is wrong, without at the same time proving that its teaching is quite unreasonable. Which alternative does Mr. Oldham prefer, I wonder?

Fortunately for Christians who require a reason-

able faith, the biological phrases used by Mr. Oldham are grounded on no biological facts whatsoever. The biologist has the greatest difficulty in making quite sure with what red eyes in *Drosophila* are linked up and is painfully labouring to find out whether and how disequilibrated rats can hand on specific disturbances in their eye movements to subsequent generations, without even dreaming of wasting his time on localizing a bump for, say, credulity in a human germ-cell. Indeed it has been quite a revelation to me to find how little proof in this respect an otherwise so balanced and so judicial mind as that of Mr. Oldham is against the merest claptrap of pseudo-scientific analogies à la Lothrop Stoddard. And not only does the negative hold absolutely—viz. that no mental trait has ever been proved to be the function of anything material—the very opposite has again and again been proved, viz. that physical similarity does not necessitate a mental one. Mr. Mathews tellingly reminds his readers that the French nation consists of three anthropologically quite different races: the tall fair narrow headed Nordic, the short dark narrow headed a Mediterranean and the short dark round headed Alpine type; that “the Englishman is racially nearer to the narrow-headed Indian of say Benares and to the Persian of Teheran, than he is to the pure Welshman or Highlander of his own nation. Not only so, but the Indian of Benares is further removed racially from the Indian of Madras than he is from the American of Washington. Whilst the ‘race-conflict’ between Arab and Jew is today as vehement as any antagonism in the world, though together they constitute almost all the pure Semites now living on the earth!” (II, 119—120). And may I here just add, without trying to exhaust the subject, that the really remarkable fact about inheritance is not that progenitors and progeny are so similar, but that they are at all dissimilar; that in fact, as the latest biological researches into the mechanism of fertilization have shown, sexual conjugation seems to be nothing but a most ingenious complication introduced for the apparently sole purpose of increasing as much as at all possible the chances for dissimilarity between offspring and parents, as also between the individuals composing the offspring itself. This fact, curiously enough, is not referred to by any of our three authors, but its significance surely is unmistakable.

So that not only are there no facts contradicting Creationism (the theory opposed to Traducianism), but indeed what facts there are, serve but to bear it out. But if Traducianism is false, how else account for the psychological similarities between members of a family, a clan, a race? Mr. Oldham rightly admits that “man differs from other animals in the fact that tradition plays an enormous part in his development” (III, 147). Hence he can quote with approval Rivers (III, 58) that “we are no longer content to adopt the pessimistic attitude of those who were fed on the old views of heredity, but we are coming to see to how great an extent the disorders and faulty trends of mental life are the result of wrong methods of treatment in the years when the individual is painfully learning to control the instinctive impulses which he has brought into the world with him so as to make them compatible with the traditions and ideals of the society of which he is to be a member;” and can report Mr. Fraser, late of Kandy, as being “convinced, in the light of long educational experience in the East, that the arrest, which occurs not only among Africans but among boys from other backward communities, can be successfully overcome if the right educational methods are adopted.” (III, 74). Mr. Oldham strongly emphasizes, as I would do, that “the members of a particular race have not only a common biological inheritance but

also a common history. The same influences of climate and soil and scenery have contributed to the formation of their character; the same historical experiences of conquest or defeat, the same social institutions, the same traditions, the same heritage of philosophy and religion, of literature and art have contributed to shaping their thought and outlook” (III, 217): but instead of saying that, as physical characteristics are only physically transmissible so psychological characteristics are only psychologically transmissible, he mixes up the physical and the psychological, using the term “race” for both characteristics and, true Traducianist that he is at heart, refuses to say more than that “Race, as it actually meets us, means something far more than biological inheritance.” He admits that “in man heredity counts for least”: but not, because heredity accounts only for the physical, and therefore subordinate, part of man, but because apparently his mental part can obliterate a good deal of his original, physiologically transmitted, mentality. He pleads that “of all animals in man is infancy longest, instincts least fixed, brain most unfinished at birth, powers of habit-making and habit-changing most marked, susceptibility to social impressions keenest”—yet all these facts do not suggest to him that the human mind at birth is a *tabula rasa*, a blank, a mere potentiality which gradually, under the stimulus of life and experience, builds up its own mentality. He acknowledges that “even the customs and habits of centuries may under the influence of new ideas, as experience has proved, undergo large modifications in a very short space of time” (III, 218)—but explains that as due to “the plasticity of man’s nature”: a metaphor (Mr. Oldham of course does not hint that it is anything more than a metaphor), a metaphor from which one gains the impression that “race” is the clay which psychological influence may turn into all kinds of shapes, without however being ever able to alter the nature of the clay itself. The Traducianist hoof here once more shows unmistakably.

Against this it is the Christian, i. e. Creationist, conviction that a man’s mind is much rather to be compared to a musical instrument, which a person under the instructions of others and of experiments of his own builds up, in order to express his musical ideas: a boy, never taught anything better than to make a rude reed-pipe, may compare unfavourably with a Stradivarius, but that does not prove, that he had not the inherent faculty of the latter; nor does it follow (since man not only is the maker of, but also the performer on, the instrument of his mind), that a musical duffer must necessarily become a Bach, if only he is taught to build an organ. If there are original differences, they can only be differences in the extent of mental potentiality; but this greater or lesser faculty for making and playing musical instruments cannot be conceived as in any way depending on the physical constituents of the instruments: the latter may more or less check or give full play to the faculty, they cannot determine the nature of the faculty itself. And again, one can only say, that whilst there is not the vestige of biological fact for the materialistic “clay” theory of the Traducianist, every evidence that is available points in the exactly opposite, i. e. Creationist, direction. How account for it that “the Mestizo in Peru is not palpably inferior in intellect to the Spanish colonial of unmixed blood” (III, 148) and that “what is true of half-caste populations in some parts of the world does not apply to the Mulatto in the United States” (III, 147)—unless by the fact that the “half-caste” mentality is of purely psychological making, that, if, as in Peru half-caste and pure White, or as in the States half-caste and pure Black, are psychologically not distinguished, the mental distinctiveness

itself—so palpable elsewhere—does not arise at all : half-caste not differing from White, where ranked with White ; not differing from Black, where lumped together with Black, whatever his complexion or other anatomical characteristics.

The notorious Dr. Lothrop Stoddard (quoted III, 46) against this defends the view that "civilization is merely an effect of the creative urge of superior germ-plasm." Mr. Oldham does not really like the look of all this : but, unfortunately he seems over-awed by "momentous discoveries resulting in the modern knowledge of heredity" (III, 46) : quite needlessly so, as I have tried to show already. However, with this wrong impression fixed in his mind, Mr. Oldham cannot proceed without at every step insuring himself against the possibility of the Stoddardian theory of mental inheritance being accepted by biologists. Hence the feebleness of his witness on the twin questions of segregation and intermarriage. The experiment of race segregation in South Africa according to him "will and must be tried, since no other solution is at present within sight" (III, 171) : although he is fully aware that to increase separateness is to decrease opportunities of mutual understanding and therefore to increase the chances for friction and conflict (III, 175) ; and although he states clearly that "a solution which has regard exclusively to the interests and claims of the white race is no solution at all" (III, 190). In one and the same breath he can say (III, 262) that where an artificial race segregation is imposed, "a vital and essential truth of Christianity is compromised" and that "it is not for those who are at a distance to pass judgment on what should be done where racial problems are acute." Very well : but can he then wonder that the non-Christian reader must necessarily "sweep aside as meaningless" Christianity, if that is all that Christianity stands for? Even for Mr. Mathews this race segregation (*vulgo* caste system) has a curious fascination and, like Mr. Oldham, he cannot forbear quoting with apparent approval that abominable Birmingham speech of the late Warren Harding (II, 80) : "Here then is the true conception of the inter-relationship of colour : absolute equality in the paths of knowledge and culture ; in matters social and racial a separate path."

There occurs to me a passage from a little pamphlet, written by a White Chaplain in a Brown man's land, a dear Christian soul, for whom "Christianity teaches that all were once one in Adam and again shall become one in the Second Adam. God has made of one blood every race of men, but *all* have sinned and fallen short : there is no essential vital distinction. Hence the unity of the Church can not merely mean an artificial assembling together for worship followed by separation, still less so a mere semblance of unity of race churches under a common Bishop, but must express itself in life and not merely in ecclesiastical organization, must mean social relationships between members of different races which will imply the ultimate possibility—and if the possibility, then the rightness—of intermarriage between races ; not necessarily as the beginning, but certainly as the end of the process of race fellowship." * Now I for one hold that here speaks the genuine voice of Christianity, of a Christian who for all his own whiteness, refuses to bend his knee to the Baalim of white Race superiority. Such refusal means sacrifice, of course, means martyrdom. But "martyr" is mere Christian phraseology for "witness." Mr. Mathews has a telling story (II, 113) of a sports captain at Beyrout, who says "I

have won the battle, when I have taught a boy to pass the ball." That is just it, not to keep the ball for oneself to score the goal, but to pass it on ; perhaps to one inferior in skill. There is self-denial, there is sacrifice ; there is martyrdom in limiting one's own powers, to give those one has trained a chance, even if that chance for them means the marring of one's own life work. If the White race was a superior race and if it was also a Christian race, its guiding policy surely should be to "pass on the ball," or, in more familiar and more Christian language, to *serve*. "I am among you as a servant," said Christ. Do the Christians in their imperial roles come "as a servant" ? Mr. Mathews at least thinks they ought to. "We are there in India today as conquerors gradually giving self-government—in instalments and at our discretion : instead of being guests, sharing self-government with them at their invitation" (II, 123). Mr. Oldham on the contrary, sees only either reversal to White autocracy in India or co-operation : the idea that the British should find their true function in India as subordinates, instead of co-ordinates, characteristically never seems to strike him at all. So he sums up : "Our discussion of Indian problems has not provided us with any clear-cut solution. It could hardly be otherwise." (III, 124).

Maybe. But Mr. Oldham must not be surprised, if under such circumstances the non-Christian Indian tosses aside this book of his as mere "pi-talk" : and if he does not dismiss Christianity as altogether irrelevant to the solution of Race Problems, it will not be on account of what Mr. Oldham has said, but of what, alas, he has left unsaid.

H. C. E. ZACHARIAS.

MISCELLANEA.

PROBLEM OF HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY.

PROF. S. KHUDA BUKSH writes in the "Bengalee" :

"Pessimism and optimism are labels slung about by the frivolous or the ignorant. To be obsessed either by gloom or by hope, without knowledge of facts, is equally wrong. Humanity is ever encircled with tremendous difficulties : it is endowed with incalculable powers of recuperation. The ignorant do not see the dangers ; the poor-hearted do not feel the hope. The wise man is often full of anxiety for the immediate future : he never loses faith in ultimate victory. He is always at once pessimist and optimist ; for he never under-rates the practical difficulties which obstruct the path of progress. But all the time he knows that progress must in the end prevail. And in the darkest hour he awaits the certain Dawn of Light."

Thus wrote Frederic Harrison. And does it not cheer the weary, revive the fainting, stir the languid pulses of man? Yes, in the darkest hour we must patiently await the certain dawn of light. But the expectation of the certain dawn must be based on realities and not on illusions, on facts, not on either fantasies or fakes. The best and the only way to conquer a difficulty is to measure its force and to overcome it by a still greater force. In dealing with the Hindu-Muslim question—more than any other question of the day—we should not search for a diplomatic formula which antagonises nobody, commits nobody, and means nothing. Nor need we place much reliance on fasts and prayers and tears. They are good in their own way, but the materialistic world is not much influenced by these things—certainly is not moved by them. They neither solve the problem nor usher in an era of universal brotherhood. What we want is a frank statement, and an equally frank solution of the problem. The first question, therefore, which we must ask ourselves is, "Have we prepared the way for an assault on those formidable entrenchments which suspicion

* Champion, A. B. : Races within the Church. Singapore. 1918. 9½ x 6. pp. 24.

hatred and ignorance so tenaciously defend?" What then are those formidable entrenchments defended by: vested interests, suspicion, hatred and ignorance? First and foremost is the belief universally held by the Mohamedans that they are an alien race, transplanted into an alien soil. This belief—historically untenable—is so ineradicably rooted in my co-religionists—that they cannot—so long as it continues—cherish, much less respond to, the idea of unity—political or social. It is a mischievous belief; for it assumes that we are a foreign people wholly different from the Hindus. And this assumption has raised a dividing wall apparently unscalable for the present and has implanted an idea that the Muslims are and must for ever remain a distinct people, always on the alert to safeguard their interests and to battle against any invasion of their rights. Needless to say, this idea cannot be reconciled with any possible or potential unity. Coupled with this is the religious fanaticism which is so acute and so far-reaching that it stands hopelessly in the way of adjustment of disputes and differences. I do not for one moment suggest that Islam is a religion of fanaticism. I have always maintained and still maintain that there is no religion which is or has been more just and generous to other religions than Islam has been throughout its historic career. But I do assert that Islam has never appeared, to its best advantage, in India. Here Muslims have always shown an impenetrable ignorance of its true spirit, and a reckless defiance of its genuine precepts. But I shall be wrong and unjust to my co-religionists if I lay all the blame on them. If they are and have been ignorant and fanatical—the Hindus are and have been no less. The first and the most terrible obstacle, therefore, to a true unity is our religion. And not without good reason has the poet sung:—

I loathe the church, the temple, and the mosque—I loathe them all—for are they not unyielding barriers, dividing walls? Break them down, O beautiful spirit of Truth and in thy fold unite us all."

But if we cannot yet realise the dream of the poet—can we not, at least infuse a more liberal and tolerant spirit into our countrymen, and teach them that while beef-eating and cow-killing are not integral parts of Islam—so shedding of blood, on flimsy pretexts, is not quite in accord with the peaceful spirit and sweet reasonableness of essential Hinduism? Toleration then must be the first item on any programme which hopes to usher in unity between the two great communities in India. For toleration alone will enable them to see that the differences, which are alleged to divide them, are false and unreal and that their true interests are one and the same. Then and then only, will be the glory of India our common aim—the attainment of freedom—our one supreme goal. But with differences and division, clash of arms and conflicting passions—can we ever hope to advance one step beyond where we are to day? And instead of helping forward the great consummation—to which all right-minded Indians longingly look forward—we, by culpable folly, hinder and thwart that end. Religion, instead of bringing peace, brings a sword. Politics, instead of uniting, divides us. We are riven by petty jealousies, torn by domestic strife. Is this an atmosphere congenial to peace, progress, trust and esteem? Can we really hope for Hindu-Muslim unity amid such surroundings any among such peoples? If we do—it is naught else but an idle vision of an empty day. But we must not despond. Unity, true unity—we shall have some day. We shall have it when the mist of suspicion and distrust has lifted—and lift it must; when religion will be a blessing and not a curse; when politics will be a noble pursuit and not a sordid game; when love of India will not be a lip-profession but a sacred, burning faith.

I refuse to believe that a cause to which a Gandhi has dedicated his life—a cause to which a Mohamed Ali once sacrificed his freedom—can ever be a lost cause. Set-back it may have—obstacles it may encounter—but in its ultimate success I have not the least doubt. Sure is its success, sure by right divine. Then will harsh times mellow into peace—then will life evolve the three-fold romance of goodness, truth and beauty. Then religion will be cleansed of its impurities, and love be enthroned in its kingdom. That day—like a dim

horizon to the seaworthy sailors—is not so far as it seems. Its realization rests with ourselves. It depends upon our own efforts, earnestness, honesty, good-will. Can we not rise to the occasion? Realize this dream? Realize ourselves?

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