

# THE Servant of India

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## TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

H. M. THE KING EMPEROR, in a message of congratulation to India on her part in the successful prosecution and conclusion of the war, says : " The struggle now so happily ended has demanded unprecedented sacrifices from us all and in responding to the call upon her for men and resources, India has played a part worthy of her martial qualities and high traditions. She has fulfilled my faith in her single-minded devotion to my person and Empire, and she has vindicated my confidence in her loyalty. The hand of brotherhood proved by partnership in trials and triumphs will endure in years to come when the reign of justice is restored, homes united, and blessings of peace are renewed." The Associated Press understands that Sir S. P. Sinha has been selected to represent India at the Inter-Allied Conference to consider the terms of peace.

THE meeting of the Bombay Legislative Council last week took only two days to get over the whole agenda. The only piece of legislation before it was the Cotton Control Bill, which aims at instituting a clearing house to regulate dealings in cotton and to put a check to a certain extent at least on the gambling in cotton which has in recent years reached enormous proportions. The measure is primarily a war measure intended to remain on the statute book for not more than two years after the close of the war, but it will be followed by a permanent measure somewhat on similar lines. The bill proposes a board of eight members, wholly nominated by Government. It was on this point that the debate turned, and almost every speaker advocated the creation of an elected board. It does not look as if this is really difficult to achieve, and we

hope that the Select Committee appointed to report on the bill will frame a practicable scheme for an elected board. The people engaged in the trade do not very much mind a nominated board in the temporary measure, but they are afraid that once that principle is accepted, it would be very hard to get it revised at the time of the permanent legislation.

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THE resolutions discussed at the meeting were not very numerous, but one of them produced a very interesting, and at times a heated, discussion. This was the one brought forward by the Hon. Mr. P. A. Desai, recommending that women be made eligible for election to the Bombay Corporation. This is almost the first occasion on which the question of women's rights has been discussed in an Indian legislative council, and it shows how fast India is progressing. The discussion did not turn on the usual lines about the natural functions and aptitudes of women, though a prominent member of Bombay introduced the inevitable four K's—*Kaiser, Kirche, Kinder, Küche* (Kaiser, church, children, kitchen)—which, according to the German Emperor, should form the only domain of women's activities. The members from Bombay apparently felt aggrieved at the sacrilege involved in the conduct of an up-country member laying his hands on the Bombay Corporation and would not be reconciled even though it was represented to them that the resolution was meant as a compliment to the *urbs prima in Indis*, which was only asked to give a lead to the rest of India. The Bombay members wanted a comprehensive resolution, including within its scope the district municipalities and the local boards or none at all. When the resolution could be opposed on such secondary grounds of drafting, &c., everybody professed himself to be in favour of the principle of women's rights, but it remains to be seen whether this will continue when a comprehensive resolution or bill is brought forward. Perhaps at that time some will sing the praises of slow and gradual steps and advocate a small experiment in the beginning. At the conclusion of the discussion Mr. Desai appealed to His Excellency to allow the official members to vote freely. The appeal was granted, and the resolution was carried by 18 votes to 12, the names of officers being found on both sides and the members of Government abstaining from voting.

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THE Government of Bombay have done well to take action upon the Hon. Principal Paranjpye's

resolution about the introduction of the first three English standards in selected first grade primary schools. It has been decided that the experiment should be tried in 20 schools. We do not think that it need be called an experiment at all. What we look for is the complete success of this new departure and the extension of this system. Without some kind of English education it is becoming increasingly difficult to get on in the world. Large numbers of boys—and their parents as well—find it impossible to obtain the necessary facilities in the mofussil, and with the best of wills they have to go without an English education simply for the lack of means. The old doctrine that education shall be available for those only that can pay for it, is now completely discredited. The willingness of the Government of Bombay to place educational facilities within the reach of the poor shows that they do not hold fast by this doctrine.

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DETERMINED as the 'Nationalists' are to attack the 'Moderate' Conference, they seem to be unable yet to make up their minds as to the ground of attack. The result is that the Conference is subjected to criticisms which are mutually contradictory. While some papers think that the resolutions adopted by the Conference are fundamentally different, both in spirit and substance, from those passed by the Congress, there are others which say that they are substantially the same and thus see no reason for a separate party conference. The *Hindu*, for instance, holds that the modifications suggested by the Moderate Conference only exhibit "a kind of vicarious abnegation that would be satisfied with much less than is offered" and that "the objective of the Conference seems to have been not so much to improve the scheme as to prevent its being overmuch improved, and from this point of view the progressive surrender of the Moderates has reached a stage at which there can be little in common between them and the Congress." *New India* and the *Mahratta*, on the other hand, hold that the Moderate Conference passed almost identical resolutions with the Congress and, in the words of Mrs. Besant, its proceedings only serve to show "how thoroughly the Moderates have come into line with the Extremists," and the only complaint of these journals is that the Moderates abstained from the Congress without sufficient reason. For our part we clearly perceive a difference in between accepting the general tenour of the recommendations and then pressing for an enlargement and improvement in them, and condemning the proposals outright. But we can make a two-fold reply to these critics, urging pleas which destroy each other. If the general attitude of the Moderates, as shown in the resolutions of their Conference, is the same as that of the Nationalists, there is really no disharmony and no disunion, whatever the Anglo-Indian papers may say. If, however, the Conference and the Congress are divergent in their views, there was ample justification for organising conference of the Moderate party.

WE had occasion to remark incidentally in our last issue on the change, now visible in the policy of the *Hindu*, from the policy advocated by its editor immediately on the publication of the reform proposals. The *Hindu* claims that it has consistently pressed for certain modifications in the scheme in order to make it satisfactory. One should have thought that the opinion to which its editor subscribed when the scheme was made public was radically different from what is expressed here. It was in these terms that the scheme

"Is so radically wrong alike in principles and in detail that, in our opinion, it is impossible to modify and improve it. Nor do we think it possible to devise any system of safeguards against the mischievous working of the whole complex scheme. It cannot consequently form the basis of discussion or compromise by the people or their representatives."

And an abandonment of the whole scheme was required. If improvements are now suggested in a scheme which was declared to be unimprovable, unworthy to form a basis of discussion, and fit only to be withdrawn, is not some slight change perceptible in the former attitude? The *Hindu's* own London correspondent says, writing of the special Congress:—

"There is a great difference between complete rejection of the scheme and the reasoned amendments which have been put forward for its improvement. If the proposals of the Secretary of State and the Viceroy were not regarded as at least a basis for discussion, the Congress would never have taken the trouble to tabulate the constructive criticisms set out in the resolutions."

The scheme marks a liberal advance in its provisions regarding the provinces, if anywhere, and if the *Hindu* thinks that under it "we may be giving up more than we gain," we see very little justification for this *volte face* on the part of the *Hindu*.

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AT a reception given on November 1, by the Empire Press Union to the Indian Press Deputation now in England, Messrs. Devadhar, Ghose and Kasturiranga Iyengar, while acknowledging the hospitality of the hosts, drew their attention to an imperfect understanding of the Indian situation by the British people and the many hardships and disabilities from which the Indian press suffered. The exclusion of certain papers like *New India* from Burma and the Punjab was referred to, and such arbitrary methods of dealing with respectable journals was characterised as a blot on the British administration.

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"THE INDEPENDENT," an influential American magazine has the following on the official reform proposals:

"The joint report of the Viceroy and Secretary of State for India on 'Constitutional Reforms' just published is likely to prove one of the epoch-making documents of the world's history, for it lays down the lines by which, it is hoped, a fifth of the human race may ultimately attain self-government. It is proposed to begin by devolving upon Indian ministers, responsible to a legislative council in which there is an Indian elected majority, certain defined powers in provincial administration. These powers are to be gradually extended at intervals of not more than five years in such directions as they have proved most successful. The control of the central British Government will be correspondingly relaxed until finally people of India, for the first time in history, will have a system of responsible self-government as complete as any of the other British dominions."

### THE TRIUMPH OF DEMOCRACY.

THE triumph of the Allied cause is complete. The terms of armistice dictated by them have been accepted by Germany. Hostilities have ceased on all fronts, and the travail and misery of four years of relentless war have come to an end. Whatever be the actual terms of the armistice or of the general pacification of Europe that will follow in its wake after prolonged discussion and negotiation, there are some broad principles that have been established on a firm and secure foundation by the complete defeat of the enemy. No more shall the peace of the world be disturbed at the sweet will and pleasure of a military autocrat. No more shall he try to bully a poor helpless nation into bartering away her honour for her safety. No more shall international engagements be treated merely as scraps of paper, nor shall any belligerent dare to violate the territory of a neutral people.

How have the mighty fallen! They have brought down with their fall all the tottering thrones, all the shaky crowns of perfidious potentates. Apart from the desolation wrought by the incessant bloodshed of four years and a quarter, Central Europe presents a dismal spectacle indeed. Turn where one may, what is it that meets the eye?—thrones overturned, crowns that are lost, monarchs fleeing for life, people with a grim determination to come by their own. While the whole world was moving towards democracy almost with a headlong speed, the people of Central Europe had been kept under and had been denied the natural privileges of free men. Repression has been followed by retribution, and Eastern Europe finds itself in the grip of an epidemic of revolutions. King, Kaiser and Prince followed each other across the stage in rapid succession. Czar Ferdinand of Bulgaria led the way. Emperor Karl of Austria came immediately after. Ludwig of Bavaria and some of the Princes of Germany had to give way to the Reds. For a time it appeared as if the arch-autocrat, the German Kaiser would place himself at the head of the new movement. But the forces were too strong for him, a new era had definitely set in, and even he of the indomitable will was swept along in the current.

The triumph of the Allies is the triumph of democracy. All the Allied nations represented the cause of democracy. Great Britain, France, Italy, the United States—all of them were fighting for and on behalf of their governing democracies. Russia symbolised the feet of clay of the Allied cause. It dropped out of the struggle, and could not remain a partner in the glory of final triumph. The war between the Allies and the Central Powers was a war of ideals, a conflict between two polities, a death-struggle between two views of social organisation, two estimates of international obligations. It reminds one of the great war in ancient Greece immortalised in the pages of Thucydides. Whatever the immediate occasion

of the Peloponnesian War, the deep underlying cause of the war between Athens and Sparta was that each of these two states stood for a different ideal. The present war is immensely superior to its ancient prototype in this, that while in the Peloponnesian war democracy showed signs of degeneration and had finally to succumb, in the present instance democracy has grown and developed, has shown its vitality and its power of expansion, has demonstrated its capacity to adapt itself to new conditions and circumstances. Never had democracy been called upon to face such problems, to make such high sacrifices, to put forth supreme efforts in organisation. Never has an ordeal been passed through more successfully, never has final triumph been more complete.

In all these great and complex transactions, the part played by Great Britain has been as glorious as it was difficult, and might have been perplexing to a less talented nation. Fighting for democracy, nationality and self-determination, the British Empire had its own weak spots, where the enemy might try all the artful trickery of which he was a past master. Great Britain has its Ireland, its Egypt, and its India. Germany tried her best to stir up all the elements of discontent and disorder in these countries and embarrass the British Government. British statesmanship and British capacity for administration overcame all difficulties. The rebellion in Ireland came to a premature end, revolutionary propaganda did not receive a hearty response in India, while Egypt continued to be a huge central camp for military operations in three continents. A greater problem still Great Britain had to face. What was to be the status of its millions of non-white and non-Christian subjects in the democratic federation of the future? Were they to be the helots of white Britishers, or equal partners in the British Empire? The problem was beset with difficulties. The democratic ideal of the west had never recognised the non-whites and the non-Christians. Europeans had never liked the idea of fighting by the side of non-whites against whites. The great daughters of Great Britain, the self-governing colonies and Dominions had ever refused to extend the hand of fellowship to the non-white citizens of the British Empire. But the statesmen of Great Britain took their courage in both hands and offered a bold solution. In the partnership of the British Empire they admitted non-white Indians into the Councils of the Empire. Full and complete self-government has been announced to be the goal of British policy in India while the War was in progress, and the Prime Minister has solemnly declared on the eve of triumph that 'India's necessities must not be forgotten when the Peace Conference is reached.' Above all, India is to be represented at the Peace Conference. When an Indian, the real representative of the Indian people, takes his place by the side of the plenipotentiaries of the great Powers of the world,

then will the true democratic ideal have been fully realised, and breaking through the artificial restrictions of religion, race and colour, democracy will have become co-extensive with humanity.

### EUROPEAN INTRANSIGENTS.

MR. CHARLES ROBERTS complained, in a recent article in an English review, that Lord Sydenham and his Indo-British Association, while they professed loyalty to accept the Government's declaration of last year, were yet engaged in a propaganda which was in direct opposition both to the letter and the spirit of that declaration. The European Association, which has now submitted its final statement of views on the reform proposals, cannot be accused even of paying lip-homage to the pronouncement to which the proposals purport to give effect. Thus, at any rate, the charge of inconsistency cannot be laid at the door of this Association, which indeed is thoroughly consistent in its attitude of uncompromising resistance to all reform, though in places in this statement a little weakening of this attitude is apparent. It maintains, as of old, that during the pre-occupation of war no distraction should have been caused by raising the question of Indian reform, and the whole proceeding, which has culminated in the joint report, seems to the Association reprehensible and mischievous. It is of the belief that not even 5 per cent. of the people of India desire any constitutional reform, much less reform on the representative model to which India is a stranger. The historical fact mentioned by *The Times*, which on other occasions is the source of inspiration to most members of the Association, will hardly be expected to produce any change of angle in the vision of this body, viz., that in every country reform is desired and brought about by a minute fraction of the population. Condemning, as it does, the spirit which has led the Secretary of State and the Viceroy to investigate the question of Indian reform and to report on it, the Association, convinced that, after all that has taken place, some forward step is rendered necessary, expresses its opinion on the recommendations, with a view to minimising, since they cannot be altogether prevented, the many and grave risks involved in them.

The principle of the compartmental transfer of power the European Association accepts, as no doubt less dangerous than a complete transfer, but the selection of the departments to be made over to Indian control is by no means an easy task. The subjects which, *prima facie*, may be supposed to lend themselves most easily to such a transfer, e. g., education and medical relief, are, in the Association's view, the very subjects on which "theories obnoxious to British ideas and (therefore) to commonsense prevail among advanced Indian politicians." The transfer of medical administration would undoubtedly mean the squandering of large sums of public money on the unscientific systems

of oriental medicine, and the transfer of education would mean a progressive lowering of the standard of efficiency. Besides, "it is inconceivable that the education of Europeans and Anglo-Indians in India should be entrusted to Indian control," though it is quite a reasonable proposition that Indian education should be, and if possible for ever remain, in European hands. Again, the European Association cannot endorse a division of functions by which the departments "evidently conducted for the public benefit" such as public works, sanitation, medical relief, famine relief, education and local self-government, should be transferred to Indians, while those reserved to official control should be such as are certain to bring odium on the authorities who are for the present predominantly British,—the departments, namely, "which exact revenue, punish crime, and administer laws not wholly to the Indian taste." If this arrangement is inadmissible as being one-sided, will the Association have Indians and Europeans change their parts? The Indians, for their part, are quite prepared to assume responsibility for law and order, if that will better please the Europeans. To such a proposal the Association's reply can only be imagined. If the departments which the Association regards as "of minor importance" cannot be given over to the Indians, what will it say of the transfer of "much more important" departments? What, then, does its acceptance, on principle, of compartmental transfer of power amount to in practice? Indeed, it makes no secret of the conclusion to which it is driven by the pressure of facts, and it is in effect that no departments could be transferred with safety or profit, inasmuch as the Indian *intelligentsia* "are profoundly uninterested in everything but litigation, a journalism that ignores three-fourths of life to concentrate on a few racial and political controversies, a certain kind of academic education, and the less wholesome forms of political agitation."

To another recommendation in the joint report the European Association applies likewise the method of *reductio ad absurdum* and proves, evidently to its own entire satisfaction, that nothing by way of practical action is feasible. In order that the experiment in partial self-government, which has been recommended in the report, may fairly test the capacity of Indians and have an educative value, it is necessary, the Association contends, that the responsibility of ministers should be complete; that is, their tenure of office should be dependent, from the commencement of the experiment, upon their ability to command the confidence of the legislature. Under the scheme, however, ministers are to be appointed for a fixed term, and not being liable to dismissal, they will fail to receive the training which the introduction of responsible government is designed to give. In this reasoning, be it noted, the Association ignores completely the fact that the report makes provision, in express terms, for the completion of res-

responsibility after the first five years, and it argues as if the non-responsible character of the ministers, in the technical sense of responsibility, is to persist for an indefinite length of time. It is thus clearly unjust to apply to the scheme as a whole a criticism which at best can be made applicable to its working during the initial stage. With the system of ins and outs Indians are not familiar, and it was thought by the framers of the scheme, and in our opinion rightly, that a brief period should pass before the ministers were required to quit office on a vote of loss of confidence. If, however, the European Association thinks such an interval unnecessary, does it advocate, as, for instance, do Messrs. William Archer and Bernard Houghton, the making of Indian ministers responsible to the legislature from the very first year of office? Emphatically not. "The risk is too great to be taken." Then what? Simply this—that "the idea of training in representative government must be abandoned for the time being, and the policy must be merely one of associating Indians more closely with the existing bureaucratic authority." Thus the European Association, which feels a virtuous objection to the ministers being left non-responsible for the matter of five years, is prepared to crush down the objection if the non-responsibility is made to extend indefinitely! Nay, more. The Association would not let the ministers possess even the quasi-responsible character which the report attaches to them in the initial stage, but would reduce them to the position of the present Indian members of the executive council. That is to say, under the dispensation of the European Association, if it has its way, only the proportion of Europeans to Indians in the present executive councils will be reversed—a far less beneficent arrangement, according to the Indians; and all this merely because the European Association entertains an academic objection to the arrangement which has been recommended by the Secretary of State and the Viceroy only for the first five years of the experiment!

Next, the European Association propounds a novel problem. As some people cannot comprehend a simultaneous reform of the supreme and local Governments, so is the European Association unable to understand how the Indianisation of the services can be taken in hand at the same time with the popularisation of government. The Association says that the transfer of control over policy cannot be considered apart from the racial composition of the services which carry out policy. Quite so; but not in the sense intended by the Association. It is inconceivable that, when India attains autonomy, in the sense that her people determine general policy, without reference to any outsiders, such policy will continue to be carried out, as at present, by a service composed, in the bulk, of non-Indians. Such a position is altogether excluded by the growing self-respect of the Indians, apart from the increased power they will enjoy. But the European As-

sociation argues the other way—that advance is possible in either of the two directions, but not in both at the same time. "Thoughtful men may be ready to support a fairly rapid transfer of control over policy to Indians, if satisfied that the execution of policy will be in British hands; or they may be, in favour of a substantial and steady increase in the Indian *personnel* of the administration, if given guarantees that policy will continue to be directed mainly by the British. It does not follow that rapid changes in respect of both Indian control of policy and Indian *personnel* would have their approval." For our part, we cannot appreciate this reasoning. But if choice is to be made between the two, we have no doubt that Indians will prefer the direction to the execution of policy. Only, we doubt whether the British officials will be content to play the *role* of the executants of the policy laid down by Indians. Is the Association prepared to make a more substantial advance in the direction of constitutional reform in consideration of the Indians forgoing their claim, should they be persuaded to do so, for the increase in the proportion of Indians in the I. C. S. proposed in the report, over and above what has been recommended by the Public Services Commission? If it is not, it is futile to bring forward such objections. The Association makes tremendous difficulty of the recommendation in the report that Indian recruitment should increase annually by 1½ per cent. It complains that the I. C. S. will lose so much in its attractiveness to the British after a few years that a steady decline of 1½ per cent. will mean in actual practice a much larger decline, and the final stages of the transition "from bureaucratic to popular government" will be reached sooner than is perhaps contemplated by the authors of the report. It is true that reform in any direction, once initiated, will accelerate the pace of further reform; and to object to this is really to object to the initiation of all reform. But no part of the Association's memorandum gives so true an insight into its habitual way of thinking as that where it speaks of the probability of the warlike races rising in revolt against Indian administrators, if the British element in the services is reduced or abolished. The grant of full responsible government necessarily means the withdrawal of British troops from India, and if we are to advance towards the former goal by stages, we must also prepare for the latter in corresponding stages. But how can this be attempted with safety, as the fighting races of India will not fail to note and draw their own moral from the fact that "political power is divorced from material power"? The sepoys are loyal to the core to the British, but how can they be expected to retain for their own fellow-countrymen, when they succeed to political power, the loyalty which they cherish for foreigners? You may try to cajole them by saying that the experiment which has now resulted in Indians wielding constitutional power was initiated by the British themselves, and that to be true to the British, they must own allegiance

to the rightful successors of their former masters. But no, the Indian soldiers will not hearken to any such argument and will refuse to be coaxed into a feeling of attachment for the new rulers.

Then the European Association advocates the creation of communal electorates for backward classes and important minorities, including Europeans. But this advocacy is prefaced by a curious reservation: "it is open to doubt whether India would not benefit more by increasingly liberal use of individual Indian (and European?) talent than by the adoption of an electoral system which seems unlikely to result in the utilisation of that talent." Here the Association gives away the entire case for electorates, separate or mixed, and after this, it is difficult to understand its objection to Government nomination, which is recommended in the report to supplement representation of chambers of commerce, planters' associations, and trades associations. The European Association wants instead communal representation, and this is not in place of, but over and above, specialised representation. The members, it would appear, who are returned by the European merchants through these corporations, can safeguard only economic interests, and the general interests of the non-official Europeans, including lawyers and doctors, can only be protected by the concession of communal representation to Europeans on a scale "commensurate with the importance of the community." And in measuring the importance it has to be remembered that as the number of Europeans in the public service dwindles, "the European non-official will become increasingly responsible for the maintenance in Indian administration of those ideals which Great Britain introduced into the country," and thus "it is essential to the welfare of India that European non-officials should have their proper share in the direction of affairs." So English merchants are to enter the citadel when it is evacuated by English civilians! And all this for India's sake! The presumption involved in this is hard to beat.

## INDIA'S WAR FINANCE AND PEACE TIME PROBLEMS.

### I. INTRODUCTORY.

PEACE now clearly appears to be in sight. Germany has been isolated and armistice terms she sought from the Allies have been dictated to her on the battlefield by their generalissimo. The enemy may chafe, fret and fume and gnash his teeth, but his demoralization and defeat are patent facts. The destructive activities of the belligerents have already been confined to a comparatively narrow area on account of the surrender of three of Germany's allies and the consequent cessation of military operations in the eastern and near eastern theatres of war, and the conclusion of general armistice will establish a calm on the remaining fronts. The moment destruction ceases,

the process of reconstruction must commence, and this work will prove even more difficult than the task of organization the Allies had to undertake for the efficient prosecution of the struggle. The problems the Peace Conference will have to face will be extremely complicated and delicate, and there will be prolonged deliberations and long drawn-out discussions before the proclaimed aims of the Allies are translated into practical realities. We are not, however, concerned here with the questions the Conference will have to deal with, though they have an important bearing upon the problems of national reconstruction, one of which, so far as it concerns India, we propose to consider in this place. Nations which have undergone terrible sufferings during the period of war will have to repair their losses and to take measures to facilitate the process of restoration to normal health and strength.

Things have been disorganized everywhere owing to the hasty adaptation of peace time arrangements to the requirements of war conditions; and industries, banking and trade are being carried on on lines suited only to the conduct of a great war. The conditions of work in factories, the relations of capital and labour, the position of the State with regard to industrial and trade operations, are to-day quite different from what they were four years ago. When the armies are demobilized, millions of soldiers will return to their civilian duties, and they will have to be slowly reabsorbed in their old employments. The factories, which are to-day devoted to the production of munitions, will have to be readjusted to their peaceful tasks and a similar transformation will have to take place in other spheres. This process will take a lot of time, and it is satisfactory to notice that many of the problems have been anticipated in England and work in connection with them has long been taken in hand. The enormous public debt of England will be the hardest nut that British statesmen will have to crack. France and other countries which have been devastated by the war, will find that question still more difficult to solve. The productive capacity of western nations is, however, great, and their recuperative power will certainly prove equal to the strain put upon them. They will take the lessons of the war to heart and will emerge out of the ruinous struggle, renovated, purified and determined to establish a new order of things in all departments of life.

India had not, indeed, to undergo sacrifices and sufferings on the same scale as England or France, and our problems of reconstruction will not be of the same nature and immensity as the ones confronting those nations. Still the need of a programme of reconstruction and construction in this country is by no means less urgently felt. Indian armies have extorted the admiration of England by the exploits achieved by them in Mesopotamia and Palestine, and the collapse of Turkey has quite properly been attributed to their valour. India has discharged the responsibility assigned to



her, as the share falling to her lot, in the most satisfactory manner. She has given her men and material and has cheerfully suffered all kinds of inconvenience and hardship with the view to help the Empire in the vigorous prosecution of the war. When it appeared that the enemy was embarking upon a policy of throwing Northern and Central Asia into the vortex of war with the object of creating a diversion by driving the tide of hostilities towards Persia and the frontiers of this country, India resolved to raise an additional army of five lakhs to frustrate that cunning design and also to bear a larger share of financial burden. For obvious reasons, India's contribution in men and money could not be represented by imposing figures like that of England. Her army could not grow by millions and her public revenue and public debt could not leap up by hundreds of millions. If India's contribution was not larger, it was not due to any lack of enthusiasm on the part of her people; it was the result of her poverty and of absence of opportunity. It has been frankly admitted by persons whose authority cannot be disputed that India could have played even a more useful part in the war if she had been industrially better equipped and her condition economically more strong. The Montagu-Chelmsford report has stated that the industrial development of India has become almost a military necessity from the point of view of the interests of the Empire as much as those of this country itself. And this view has been endorsed by the Industrial Commission, which states that in the future India ought to be made more self-contained in respect both of men and material.

Here is an important problem for reconstruction which ought to be immediately taken in hand. The weakest spot in the condition of India is the extreme poverty of our people, and the foremost place must be accorded to a fight against that intolerable evil in our work of construction and reconstruction. The work of reconstruction lies in completely overhauling our governmental and economic machinery and in abandoning our attitude of listlessness and drift, so as to make the attainment of the desired aim possible within a reasonable period of time. Finance is the vehicle of government, as the Montagu-Chelmsford report puts it, and that instrument must be so trimmed, tempered and handled that it may more effectively carry out governmental functions. The policy of the State with respect to the encouragement of industries and trade, the expansion of education and improvement of sanitation will, in a large measure, determine the economic development of the country, and a determined effort will be needed to make a rapid advance along these lines. Social and economic reform has been hampered in the past by difficulties and mistakes connected with finance, and during the time of war practically nothing has been done. A suitable system of taxation will have to be devised for the purpose of yielding to the State the necessary funds to

finance the urgent reforms, and the experience of the time of war has, we trust, taught those responsible for our financial management many a wholesome lesson in this matter. Vested interests and wealthy classes may be expected to resist all attempts to impose upon them the burdens which they ought cheerfully to bear, and they are vocal, influential and powerful classes. The interests of the large mass of the population will have to be safeguarded, and the financial burden must be fairly but firmly distributed in proportion to capacity. This financial reorganization will depend a great deal upon the constitutional reforms which are now under consideration—the financial relations between the Government of India and the provincial Governments, the financial control which the provincial and central legislatures will obtain over the executive Governments and the grant of fiscal autonomy to the Government of India under the control of the legislative assembly. It will also depend upon the manner in which the legislatures and the executive Governments discharge their responsibilities.

Other questions which will demand consideration will be those connected with our currency system, the financial management of the India Office, our banking, and our policy with reference to exchange, railways and irrigation. Exigencies of war have seriously disturbed the whole system of our currency and finance. The consideration of the report of the Chamberlain Commission had to be postponed on the outbreak of the war, and Government adjusted its machinery from time to time to the requirements of the situation as it developed. War conditions forced the hands of Government and compelled them to adopt changes which in peaceful times might not have been made or might have been made after prolonged discussion. The establishment of the gold mint in Bombay is an instance in point. The Chamberlain Commission had taken up a hostile attitude with regard to a gold currency for India, and the scramble that will take place on the return of peace for the possession of the yellow metal, among the nations of the world, lends unprecedented interest to the question of the currency system of this country. Shall we continue to have the present gold-exchange standard, or shall we work up to a system of a true gold standard accompanied by a gold currency extensively in circulation? This is a vital question, and it will have to be promptly and finally solved. Foreign exchange is bound up with currency policy and is again closely associated with the establishment of a central State Bank. As in another countries, so in India, the circulation of currency notes has been on an unprecedented scale during the time of war. The Government of India has passed various emergency enactments in order to adjust the currency mechanism to war exigencies. With the steady increase in the quantity of the notes issued, the proportion of the invested paper currency reserve has mounted up, and the bulk of it has been invested in British secu-

rities. The Gold Standard Reserve Fund now exceeds Rs. 50 crores and is all similarly invested. The disbursements which the Indian Government had to make on behalf of His Majesty's Government in this country put a severe strain upon its treasuries and led to the transfer of Indian funds to London in enormous quantities. They also necessitated the emission of huge batches of notes and of huge quantities of rupees. The rise in the price of silver accentuated these difficulties, and the rate of foreign exchange had to be put up. Imports of gold and sovereigns on private account were practically stopped, and export merchants were greatly inconvenienced owing to the artificial condition of foreign exchange.

The Government of India promptly and enthusiastically responded to the call made upon it by His Majesty's Government to render assistance in the prosecution of the war, and the people willingly co-operated with them. These services rendered by India to the Empire were unostentatious and little noticed, but all the same they were invaluable. An amount of reconstruction will be needed in respect of our currency and exchange policy, and it will have to be permanently established on a sound and stable basis. The interests of London financiers will conflict with those of India, and the latter will have to be given the dominant consideration. The financial management of the India Office, the purchase of silver and stores for India, the investment of Indian money in London and the transfer of our gold to that city, have already been strongly criticised, and it appears from Lord Islington's recent utterance in that behalf that the Secretary of State is not inclined to let go his hold upon matters which ought to be authoritatively managed by the Indian Government. This question has thus an important bearing upon the impending constitutional reforms, chiefly the reconstitution of the India Office and the modification of the relations of the Secretary of State with the Government of India to the advantage of the latter. The financial affairs of this country must now be managed from India under popular control, and India must be able to receive the full value of every pie of her money. Financial interests in London ought no longer to be allowed to stop or retard the flow to India of the gold to which she is entitled as the price of her exports, and it must be allowed to circulate here to fertilize the fields of industry.

The management of the State railways by State agency is a subject which will have to be decided immediately, and railway policy as a whole will have to be definitely laid down in harmony with Indian public opinion. The railways will, again, clamour for the supply of large quantities of capital for extensions and renewals. The London money market will, for years to come, not be able to supply the Indian demand and capital will have to be raised in this country itself. It is believed that it will be possible to raise the required funds for public works in India itself, and the experience

of the war loan is cited as an encouraging sign. The unproductive public debt of India is nothing by the side of the burdens of other nations. But the war gift of one hundred million will entail an annual charge upon the revenues of the country, and the debt will have to be steadily wiped off. Government have large assets, corresponding to the heavy liability, but our national expenditure will, in the future, stand at a high level and will go on steadily increasing. It is difficult to say what fresh burdens India may be called upon to bear as her share of the charge of imperial defence, whether India will have a navy of her own, whether her military expenditure will be curtailed or will remain on the existing basis. The future is shrouded in uncertainty, but we shall have to prepare for bearing what burdens will be equitably and proportionately thrown on our shoulders. Expenditure incurred for measures of reform is, in the long run, more than repaid, but for the time being, it will necessitate additional taxation, and the art of the statesman will lie in devising wise and equitable methods of raising a larger State revenue.

These are the problems of reconstruction which confront the Government of India and the brunt of the struggle will fall upon our new Finance Member, Sir James Meston. Sir William Meyer who has just doffed the armour of Finance Minister, found his lot cast in anxious and troublous times. He was suddenly called upon to face an extraordinary situation created by the war, and he faced it with courage and skill. The position changed from day to day, and he responded to the call made upon him by war exigencies and by the policy determined upon by His Majesty's Government for adoption by the Indian Government. Sir William proved himself to be an expert manager of the financial machine, manipulating it and handling his tools with the dexterity of a resourceful engineer devoted to his appointed task. But his firm grasp of the technique of the trade did not compensate for his deplorable lack of a wide outlook, of a deep insight into the surrounding conditions, and of a lively imagination which describes the possibilities of the future as it feels the requirements of the present and of a generous sympathy with the aspirations of the people. It will indeed be unfair to compare a mariner who has to struggle his way safe through a tremendous storm with a captain who is favoured with calm weather. But it is doing no injustice to Sir William to point out what qualities he demonstrably did not possess and in what respects his financial administration was not such a success as people wanted it to be, even in the adverse conditions in which he was placed. Perhaps he allowed his responsibility to weigh too heavily upon him, and did not wish it to be said of him that he faltered or doubted when asked to place all the financial resources of India at the service of the Empire. His view as to the contribution this country could make to the prosecution of the war in money was correct at the start, but underwent a decided



change in course of time till he proposed that India should and could commit herself to an expenditure of £45 million for the new armies raised and to be raised in the country. Like the average Anglo-Indian official, Sir William could not have a vision of an India of the near future which badly needed all the funds that could be spared for measures of social and economic reform and all enthusiasm which could be put into the work. There were several directions in which, even in spite of the distractions of the war, schemes of social and economic development could have been taken in hand and prosecuted. But the faith and the zeal were lacking, and the results of Sir William's financial administration from the people's point of view did not prove satisfactory. In devising new forms of taxation, in properly distributing burdens and in providing finance for schemes of development, not much foresight, sympathy and courage were shown. In England, they were preparing for peace in times of war. In India, war was a sufficient plan for postponing and hanging up all programme of reform. From the people's point of view, and that ought to count for most, this was the serious drawback from which Sir William's financial administration suffered, and there is no escape from this conclusion to an impartial critic, however much he may sympathise with him for the embarrassing circumstances in which he found himself placed.

Sir James Meston who succeeds him has no light task set before him. He will undoubtedly have comparatively favourable conditions to work in. The stress of the war will steadily diminish, and normal conditions will be slowly restored. But the work of reconstruction will be heavy and his responsibilities will grow. There are a hundred and one things which have to be adjusted, and the problems of the peace times, which will succeed a war of such dimensions and far-reaching consequences, will prove more difficult than those created by the conditions of the war itself. The expectations of the people have been raised to a high pitch, and there are the constitutional reforms which will throw a heavier burden upon the ministers. People may no longer be put off by him with the plea of war distractions or be satisfied with the old arguments that Government knows more about their affairs and cares more for their interests than their representatives and leaders. The different problems that will have to be immediately tackled have been briefly indicated above, and they will demand all the patience, all the enthusiasm and all the courage that Sir James may command. Fortunately, he is not a stranger to the country and is not new to the task to which he has been called. It is not so much experience, recently acquired as the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces, that will help him at this new post as the training he already had gained in the working of the financial department of the Government of India. It was reported some time ago that, while

in England on leave, he utilised the opportunity to get a thorough insight into the India Office working of finance. Sir James is well-known for his great ability, and one may look forward to his financial administration during the next five years with high hopes and trust that it will leave a permanent mark upon the development of India. The opportunity is unique, the scope for achievement is vast and the work is such that it may conspicuously bring the great capacity of the Finance Member into play and earn him a glory which others may envy. We do not wish to ignore the limitations of his position and entertain or raise unduly high expectations. At the same time we cannot but indicate the high and urgent importance of the task that has to be performed and express a reasonable wish that it will be done in the right spirit.

V. G. KALE.

### FRANCHISE IN THE SELF-GOVERNING COLONIES.

IN view of the fact that the Franchise Committee, whose personnel and terms of reference were announced some time ago, will begin work shortly, it may be of some interest to our readers to know the franchise that prevails in different countries. We propose to deal in this article with the franchise relating to the self-governing dominions of the British Empire, with special regard to the terms of reference of the appointed committee.

#### AUSTRALIA.

The Australian constitution makes provision for a bi-cameral system. The Senate is composed of six senators for each of the original states chosen for six years. Generally, the Senate is renewed to the extent of one-half every three years. They are to be 'directly chosen by the people of the state, voting, until the Parliament otherwise provides, as one electorate.' Queensland is an exception to this. Qualifications of members and voters are the same as those for the election to the House of Representatives. The only proviso added is that 'in choosing senators each elector shall vote only once.' On condition that the method of election shall be uniform in all the states, the Commonwealth Parliament is vested with the power of prescribing the method of choosing senators. Subject to this limitation, the states are at liberty to prescribe the method to be followed in the choice of senators for their respective states. As regards the House of Representatives, the precedent of the United States is followed, in making the number of members proportionate to the population of each state. It has been laid down that the number of members of the lower House should be twice the number of senators. The method by which the number of representatives of each state is determined requires some elaborate treatment. The calculation is merely based on the quota ascertain-

ed as described below. The number of members that should represent a state is arrived at by dividing the population of that state by the quota. In case the remainder is greater than one-half of the quota, one more member is granted. Messrs. Quick and Garran in their "Annotated Constitution of Australian Commonwealth" explain the process thus :

"The quota is that number of the aggregate population of the Commonwealth which, considered as a unit, is entitled to one member in the House of Representatives. It is obtained by dividing the population of the Commonwealth by twice the number of senators. The population is that shown in the latest statistics. The number resulting from the division, the quotient, is called the quota. This is the ratio of representation, there being one representative for every quota of the population of the Commonwealth. The method of obtaining the quota may be shown as follows :—

Twice the number of senators.	Population of Commonwealth.	Quota.
72	3,717,700	51,635 (or exactly, 51,634·72)

With reference to the qualifications of members, section 34 of the Act lays down that he must be either a natural-born subject of the King or have been for at least five years naturalised under a law of the United Kingdom or of a colony that has become or becomes a state or of the Commonwealth or of a state. He must be of the full age of 21 years and must possess electoral qualification.

Next, with regard to qualifications of electors, section 30 enacts that "until Parliament otherwise provides, the qualification of electors of members of the House of Representatives shall be in each state that which is prescribed by the laws of the state as the qualification of electors of the more numerous House of Parliament of the state; but in the choosing of members each state shall vote only once." "Since the first Parliament of the Commonwealth was instituted, an Electoral Act has unified the franchise for both chambers, on the basis of universal adult (male and female) suffrage."

Coming to the provinces of the Commonwealth, we find the wholesale adoption of the two House system. As in Canada, the upper House in New South Wales and Queensland are wholly nominated for life, whereas those of other provinces are wholly elected for varying periods. In Tasmania, the Legislative Council consists of 18 members elected from 15 electoral districts for 6 years. The electors should be natural-born or naturalised subjects of the crown, and must possess either a freehold worth £10 a year, or a leasehold of £30 or should be barristers or solicitors practising in the supreme court, duly qualified medical practitioners, and all persons holding a commission or possessing a degree. The upper House in Victoria is composed of 34 members elected for 6 years. The qualifications for a member are that he should be 30 years of age, natural-born or naturalised

subject for 10 years and be in possession of an estate of the net value of 50£ for one year prior to his election. As regards electors, the qualifications are practically the same as those in Tasmania. In South Australia, the Legislative Council consists of 20 members, of whom nine retire every three years, and the vacancies are filled by new members elected by the five districts into which the state is divided for this purpose. The candidate should not only be of 30 years of age and a natural-born or naturalised subject, but also a resident in the state for a term of three years. The qualifications of an elector are that he should be "21 years of age, a natural-born or naturalised subject of the King, and have been on the electoral roll for 6 months, besides having a freehold of £50, or leasehold of £20 annual value or occupying a dwelling house the rent of which is not less than £17 per annum, or a registered proprietor of a Crown lease with improvements to the value of at least £50 the property of the elector; head teacher of a college or school residing on premises; postmaster or postmistress residing in a building; railway stationmaster resident in premises; members of police force in charge of a station; officiating minister of religion." Women also enjoy the franchise. In 1916, the number of electors was 95,625 (23,796 women). It is provided that the Legislative Council of Western Australia shall consist of 30 members elected for 6 years by 10 electoral divisions. A members of Council must be 30 years of age, "resident in the state for two years, and either be a natural-born British subject or naturalised for 5 years; resident in the state for 5 years." "Every elector must have resided in the state for 6 months, and must possess within the province freehold estate of the clear value of £50 or be a householder occupying a dwelling house of the clear annual value of £17, or holder of a lease of the value of £17 per annum, or the holder of lease or license from the Crown of the annual rental of £10, or of his name on the electoral list of a municipality or Roads Boards in respect of property in the province of the annual rateable value or £17."

The lower House of New South Wales, is a body of 90 persons elected for a period of 3 years. "Every man and woman, being a natural-born or naturalised subject above 21 years of age, having resided six months in the Commonwealth, three months in the state, and one month in the electorate," is entitled to one vote only. Where a candidate fails to get the absolute majority of votes, a second ballot is necessary. In 1917, out of the population of 1,867,456, 1,013,266 were enrolled. Out of these 487,588 were women electors. The Legislative Assembly of Queensland comprises 72 members elected by ballot for 3 years on male and female adult suffrage, only a twelve-months' continuous residence being enforced. In 1915, 184,627 males and 150,568 were registered as voters. (Population in 1911 was 329,506 males and 276,307 females.) In the House of Assembly of

South Australia, provision for 46 members elected for 3 years is made. The qualification for members and electors is the same. They should be of full 21 years of age, and have been on the electoral roll for 6 months. The number of electors registered in 1916 was 251,860 of which 120,370 were women. (Population in 1911: 207,358 men and 301,200 women.) The Assembly in Tasmania is composed of 30 members, elected for 3 years on a universal adult suffrage (including women) with a proviso of two months' residential qualification. In Victoria, the members of the lower house are elected by universal adult suffrage with no property qualification. No one person may vote twice in the same district or in more than one district. In Western Australia, the members of the legislative assembly must be 21 years of age, natural-born or naturalised subjects of the crown for 5 years and must have resided in the state for 12 months. As regards electors, the same qualifications apply except that 6 months' residence is sufficient and that they must have been residents of the district at least for one month. No difference with regard to sex is observed. The rule regarding the registration in more than one district in the case of Victoria, applies here equally well.

(To be continued.)

R. S. R.

## LETTERS FROM THE PROVINCES.

### MADRAS.

Madras, November 9.

#### THE MODERATES' CONFERENCE AND MADRAS OPINIONS.

THAT contemptible and utterly insignificant gathering in Bombay called the All-India Moderates' Conference has caused quite a storm of moral indignation in certain journalistic quarters here; so much so that a society for the suppression of moral indignation has become an absolutely necessary institution (Chesterton's idea, not mine). Your contemporary, the *Hindu*, has—well, it has surpassed itself. Its columns have been graced by writings whose dignity and exquisite good taste cannot be even rivalled, much less eclipsed, by those that used to appear some time ago in another journal. Indeed, it has become a neck and neck race between the *Hindu* and *Justice* as to which shall carry off the palm for violent abuse and utter irrelevancy and inanity of argument. Their particular affection and partiality for certain personalities is too notorious to need any reiteration here at this time of the day. Writing about the Moderates' Conference, which all the time it affects to despise, the *Hindu* has indulged in language that can be characterised by only one word—billingsgate. The Moderates are "moderate only in their patriotism." "Loquacious gentlemen who took part in the Conference," whose motives were "disappointed self-love and other allied motives" (whatever the mysterious alliance may be, the *Hindu* does not deign to say). They are a party "with no more popular sanction behind it than the approval of a gratified bureaucracy." The *Hindu* goes on to shower on their devoted heads its omnipotent wrath in such adjectives as "disgraceful" and "contemptible" and many other equally select epithets. Well, I hope no one will consider me guilty of exaggeration when I characterise all this inane stuff as mere billingsgate, without even an attempt at logic—undiluted, unmitigated abuse without the least touch of argument. He who runs

may read its underlying spirit of misrepresentation as clearly as he may behold the noonday sun. But enough of this disagreeable subject. The violent and notorious prejudices of the *Hindu* and *Justice* (what an alliance in bad taste!) and their futile ravings should not be taken too seriously. It is really refreshing to turn from this to what Mrs. Besant says in a signed article in *New India* on this subject: it is like stepping out of a den filled with stifling and venomous vapours into the pure, free and bracing air of an open field. Mrs. Besant is of opinion that the Moderates have come thoroughly into line with the Extremists: they demand, as did the Congress, exactly the changes which the I. A. pointedly refuse." Though this opinion cannot be said to be altogether right, yet everyone will agree that it comes nearer to sense and the truth than this gem from the *Hindu*, "This (the Moderates' demand) is modesty with a vengeance, the kind of vicarious (*sic*) abnegation that it would be satisfied *with much less than is offered*"! (Italics mine.) Can anybody doubt, after this, that what the *Hindu* was bent upon was misrepresentation, pure and simple? I wonder whether the writer knew the meaning of the word "vicarious" when he wrote this stuff; for having repudiated the representative character of the Conference, where would the "vicarious" nature of the alleged "abnegation" come in? But, in truth, some of our extremist friends are extreme in the impenetrability of their thoughts as in everything else, and this may be an instance. But even the *Hindu*, the heroic and uncompromising exponent of local extremism, has been constrained to admit towards the conclusion of a rather tediously verbose article, "If the Moderates' Conference has in any degree served its purpose of strengthening Mr. Montagu's hands, it may yet justify itself,"—After all! What a tiny grain of sense in what a mighty heap of chaff! The world may be saved yet.

#### THE ECONOMIC SITUATION.

The food scarcity is rapidly assuming the proportions of famine—perhaps with the intention of giving our good Government a chance of taking action under the Famine Code. The situation is worse than it was before the looting took place. Rice sells at 2½ measures here and in several places in the mofussil. The prices of chillies, salt, kerosine oil and or necessaries of life have doubled and trebled. The Director of Civil Supplies—well, there seems to be neither a Director nor civil supplies, judging by results. So far only a few private agencies are at work to relieve this universal distress and, needless to say, their efforts are far from commensurate with the requirements of the situation. Rice depots have been opened in several centres in the city and the mofussil, where rice is sold at cost price to the poor. One such shop has been opened in the premises of the Madras Branch of the Servants of India Society, Royapettah. I wish the local deities that rule our destinies—I mean, Sir Alexander Cardew and the rest of them had seen the surging crowds on the opening day of the above depot. Perhaps, then, they would have got an idea of the condition of the poor, and it might have—I don't say, would have—caused them some heart-searchings. Will they wake up to a sense of their duty at least now?

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