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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

THE inaugural meeting of the Peace Conference is postponed by a week. Instead of taking place on Monday last, it will be held on the 23rd instant. All manner of forecasts about the business before the Conference and its order of procedure are being published. But the League of Nations, territorial adjustments, indemnity or reparation to be obtained from Germany—these appear to be the most important ones and would be first taken up. It has been calculated that the proceedings will last till the end of this year. This need cause no surprise as practically all the important nations of the world are involved in this conflict and the settlement will have reference not merely to broad questions of principle or policy but innumerable questions of detail as well.

THE situation in both Russia and Germany continues to be obscure. The only feature which we can clearly discern is that anarchy and chaos, which are the synonyms of Bolshevism, reign supreme in both the countries. One news agency states that intervention in Russia is one of the questions to be first taken up at the Peace Conference. In Berlin, a grave situation is being rapidly created. Constant street fighting is proceeding. A group, calling itself the Spartacists, is much to the front. There are conflicting reports about the result of the fight between these people and the Government. If this continues much longer, perhaps intervention in Germany also will have to be considered by the Paris conference.

THE demonstration of soldiers and war workers before the War Office in England is a symptom of unrest which it would not do to treat lightly. Of course, the British Government must be dealing with it in a firm but sympathetic manner. It may be

an ordinary demonstration. But when Bolshevism is raging so furiously on the continent of Europe, one cannot help having an uneasy feeling and wishing that Great Britain may pass through it all very well.—The news from Ireland is meagre. Whatever comes, however, is far from reassuring. A number of Sinn Fein M. P.s have been arrested. One has been sentenced to a period of imprisonment. With the Carsonites on the one hand and the Sinn Feiners on the other, the Government need not be envied the situation they find themselves in. For our part we consider the Irish problem more difficult to solve than any that British statesmen may be called upon to tackle at the Peace Conference.

THE appointment of Sir S. P. Sinha as an Under Secretary of State for India in the new Coalition Ministry is a measure of imperial significance. It clearly shows that His Majesty's Government mean business when they declare that it is their intention to raise India to the position of an equal partner in the Empire. Not only has the principle of equality been asserted, but it has also been partially acted upon. As a member of His Majesty's Government, Sir S. P. Sinha will have as much to do with shaping the policy and moulding the destinies of the Colonies and Dominions as with those of India. From the Indian standpoint this appointment stands on the same high level as the announcement of August 20, 1917. In it we see the first earnest of the fulfilment of all the promises made in the announcement. Indeed, Sir Satyendra is very fortunate and he has deserved all his good fortune by his abilities. He has been selected by Providence for high positions and honours such as have never been enjoyed by Indians before this time. He has been the first Indian Standing Counsel, the first Indian Advocate General of Bengal, the first Indian Member of the Imperial Executive Council, the first Indian Member of the Imperial War Conference and Cabinet, the first Indian delegate to the Peace Conference, and now the first Indian Member of His Majesty's Government. Other people have obtained high honours. But very often such honours mean the elevation only of the individual. It has been the peculiar good fortune of Sir Satyendra Prasanna that his rise symbolises the advancement of the whole Indian nation. Long live Sir Satyendra to enjoy his well deserved honours, including the prospective Peerage, and long may he be spared to serve India in higher spheres still.

MRS. BESANT and Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar have issued brief statements embodying some of the points of difference between them and the majority in the Congress, and explaining the causes of the cleavage in the Nationalist camp. The most important point of difference, which perhaps has led to the division, is, of course, as regards the reform scheme. The demand for complete provincial autonomy, which the Congress has put forward, they cannot agree to, and they have frankly stated the reasons why they find themselves unable to vote for such an extreme resolution. In their speeches in the Congress, they rested their objection principally upon this, that the passing of such a resolution would involve the abandonment of the compromise which, they asserted, was arrived at with the Moderates who attended the special session of Bombay. It would now appear, however, from their statements that, as a matter of fact, this was not the only, nor the most important, objection which Mrs. Besant and Mr. Ramaswami Aiyar felt to the demand for full provincial autonomy. They had far stronger grounds on which to oppose this demand, and one cannot help wishing they had put all these grounds before the delegates assembled in the Congress.

MR. RAMASWAMI AIYAR thinks that the Delhi resolution is tantamount to a virtual rejection of the scheme, and being of the opinion that it is essential that the Congress should accept its general framework, it is no wonder that he should refuse to countenance a resolution which, in effect if not in terms, rejects it altogether. Mrs. Besant's principal objection is the one which Mr. Sarma put forward in the Congress, *viz.*, that since we had asked for fiscal autonomy and a large transfer of departments in the central Government, we should practically be asking for complete home rule if to that demand we also joined the demand for the establishment of full and immediate responsible government in the provinces. The Congress having accepted the principle of successive stages in the evolution of responsible government, which was laid down in the announcement of 1917, we cannot consistently ask, so Mrs. Besant argues, for complete self-government now, as the Delhi Congress has practically done.

IF, therefore, the formula of "progressive realisation of responsible government" is to be adhered to, the choice lies—so runs Mrs. Besant's argument—between accepting partial autonomy in the provinces and asking for a simultaneous advance in the central Government, on the one hand, and demanding complete autonomy in the provinces and leaving the "machinery of autocracy" intact in the Government of India, on the other hand. The Congress has managed to put in both the demands in its resolution only by laying itself open to the charge of inconsistency. In the result, however, the Congress has not bettered but only

worsened the position by putting forward a claim to complete provincial autonomy, for it makes, in Mrs. Besant's judgment, for "the practical frustration of all hope of modifications in the central Government," and these latter are far more important than provincial autonomy. Thus she regards the policy adopted by the Congress to be "hasty, short-sighted, likely to render the realisation of Home Rule impossible in the near future." If Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar and Mrs. Besant thus felt overwhelming objection to the reforms resolution on its merits, apart from the alleged breach of faith with the Moderates which it involved, it was rather unfair that they should have made the weaker reason appear as the stronger one and practically kept back the reasons which were decisive with them.

PERHAPS the next most serious point of difference is the resolution on the British Committee. The Congress, by its resolution, on this head, has practically, in the words of Mr. Ramaswami Aiyar, passed a vote of censure on the Committee without making any inquiries into its affairs, and thus, so to say, condemned it unheard. Mrs. Besant goes further in her denunciation of the Congress resolution, for it means, according to her, "the destruction" of the Committee and *India*, since it virtually cuts off supplies from the committee. Mrs. Besant questions the validity of the resolution, inasmuch as the Congress constitution requires that half the delegates' fees should be paid to the British Committee for this session at least. Mrs. Besant inquired if half the proceeds of the special session were sent to the British Committee and was told that it was not. This is characteristic of the way in which Congressmen have been treating the British Committee. At any rate, the present resolution of the Congress is, to use Mrs. Besant's words, "a very serious breach of public faith."

DISSENTING from the resolution on reforms, Mrs. Besant or Mr. Ramaswami Aiyar cannot naturally join a deputation which is bidden to press, in all circumstances, for the whole of the resolution, not a vestige of latitude being allowed to the members of the deputation to carry on negotiations, if necessary, with British statesmen. Indeed, the latter being "the most important part of the deputation's work," Mrs. Besant and Mr. Aiyar could not naturally cast their vote in favour of the resolution which effectually excluded the members of the deputation from it, and are arranging a separate Home Rule League deputation which will work independently of the Congress deputation. Their dissent from the resolution on the Peace Conference appears to be based on personal grounds. They favour election instead of nomination in the choice of India's representative at this Conference, but they object to Mr. Tilak being selected. Mrs. Besant would have preferred the election of some one else in his place, presumably for the

same reasons for which she preferred the Raja of Muhammadabad or Syed Hasan Imam as President of the special Congress. Mr. Ramaswami Aiyar asserts plumply that "it is not to the advantage of the country to put forward Mr. Tilak as a representative of India at the Peace Conference."

THE above four points are common to the statements of both Mrs. Besant and Mr. Ramaswami Aiyar; but Mrs. Besant adds more in hers, saying that the differences between the two sections of the Nationalist party are "far graver" than is indicated by Mr. Ramaswami Aiyar in his statement. These differences extend both to policy and methods of public work, and although Mrs. Besant would have preferred unity till home rule was won, the differences have made a split inevitable; indeed, the split has actually taken place, and Mrs. Besant complains that Mr. Tilak's followers have disrupted the strong combination which she and Mr. Tilak together formed. But rather than ally herself with those "with whose policy and methods" she "disagrees, for the sake of a non-sincere unity," Mrs. Besant prefers to have a party of her own within the Congress, with a programme different from that of the other parties.

WE most sincerely congratulate the Deccan Education Society and its noble band of life-members, working under Principal Paranjpye on the large extension which they have been able to effect in their activities. Another Arts College, to be named after Lord Willingdon who rendered immense help to the Society in the initial stages of this new project, is to be established on British territory about midway between Miraj and Sangli and large financial support is expected from the Southern Maratha chiefs. The College will be opened in June next, and, we make no doubt, it has as glorious a future before it as the parent College itself. The Society also contemplates starting a third College near Bombay if sufficient monetary help is forthcoming. It will have spread its net far and wide when this scheme materialises. It will gladden the hearts of all well-wishers of India that Mr. Paranjpye and his devoted colleagues have found it possible to undertake such a large extension in their work, which we may be sure will not suffer in the least in efficiency because of the expansion.

WE deeply regret that the Industrial Conference should have taken the part of the capitalists against the general interests of the country in protesting against the proposed Excess Profits Tax. It is right to demand that, in view of the altered circumstances, India's money contribution should be reduced to the lowest figure possible and that active steps should be taken in this direction, but whatever expenditure is necessary must be borne by those who have profited by the war and not by the poor masses who have already made large sacrifices. The Industrial Conference

does not question the propriety of the contribution, either whole or in part, but only opposes the levy of the tax. The Conference with rapidly forfeit the confidence of the country if it identifies itself with the interests of a class at the sacrifice of the interests of the community.

SAYS *India*: "Dr. S. Subramania Iyer suggests that the Congress at Delhi should adopt a respectful representation to President Wilson, bespeaking the sympathy and support of the United States for India to obtain her rights on the principle of self-determination. This seems somewhat inconsistent, coming from the author of the doctrine that the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme of reforms ought to be rejected as being a foreign product. Apart, however, from that, it is certain that no greater disservice could be rendered to India at the present time than to appeal to an outside referee in a matter of domestic politics, when, in point of fact, the whole question of political reforms in India has still to be dealt with by the British Parliament, which undoubtedly will refuse to be interfered with, in the exercise of its functions, by no matter how sympathetic an outside influence. Dr. Subramania ought to be clear whether or not he is prepared to trust to the goodwill of the British democracy. He cannot have it both ways, as the Irish have found." The last Congress rejected this advice of Dr. Subramania to bring outside pressure to bear on the British Government as emphatically as the special Congress rejected his advice to reject the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme without consideration.

IT is really unfortunate that labour troubles are becoming a common feature of our industrial life. Bombay has, within the last few days, witnessed a strike on such an extensive scale that, it is said, it has no parallel in the history of any industry in India. First of all the trouble arose in the Century Mill where the mill-hands demanded an increase of 25 per cent. in their wages. Simultaneously with their demand, they struck work, and the mill had to be closed. And when the authorities did not show any signs of giving way, the disaffection spread with phenomenal rapidity and in the course of a day or two almost all the mills had to close down. The general body of the Mill-Owners' Association has promised to consider the demands of the mill-hands sympathetically in case they returned to work immediately and submitted their demands through proper authorities. It is to be earnestly hoped that a satisfactory settlement will be arrived at.

LADY WEDDERBURN (Meredith, Gloucester) will be much obliged if Sir William Wedderburn's friends in India will kindly lend her his letters to be used in a memoir of his life which she hopes will be published before long. They will be carefully preserved and punctually returned.—Mr. Devadhar, during his sojourn in England, is collecting letters written by Mr. Gokhale to his friends there.

THE POSITION OF THE I. C. S. UNDER THE REFORMS.

"WE regard it as a libel," remark the authors of the reforms report, "on Indian Civil Service as a body to say that they have resisted or will resist the policy announced last August." This policy consists in the progressive realisation of responsible government in this country, and the announcement contains a definite injunction that substantial steps in this direction should be taken as soon as possible. We have no means of knowing how far the I. C. S. welcomes the objective, but there is every indication latterly, the assurance of the Home Member in the Government of India to the contrary notwithstanding, that it does not support the reforms outlined in the report as "substantial steps" towards that objective. It was just in order to give the lie to the general assumption that the proposals have its approval that we heard the other day of the I. C. S. men of Bihar and Orissa banding themselves together in an Association and preparing to give an organised expression to their hostile view on the reforms. We now learn of a similar Association in Madras and a draft of the memorial which they wish to submit to Government has been brought to light. Now, in the first place, such a concerted movement on the part of the services, particularly where opposition is to be offered to the proposals formulated by Government, is so entirely a novel proceeding and so directly contrary to the traditions of the I. C. S. that such a violent departure from the established practice may well cause dismay in the hearts of those who are friendly to the reform scheme. Apart from the constitutional aspect of this matter, the published draft makes it clear that I. C. S. is unable to reconcile itself to the new rôle which the authors of the reforms intend for it. This rôle is certainly not so spacious as the present one, but is not the less important and honourable on that account. The necessary adjustment in its position which the substitution of popular for bureaucratic government renders inevitable the I. C. S. is unwilling to make, and the extra tenderness which the report shows to its material prospects does not seem to have gone far in conciliating its opposition.

It cannot be gainsaid that the reforms make a revolution in the position of the Indian Civil Service. As Lord Lansdowne said in the House of Lords: "The adoption of these proposals means the destruction of the I. C. S. as we have known it in the past. . . . The authors of the report know in their hearts that there is no room in this scheme for the I. C. S. that we have known in past years. . . . But while the I. C. S. will be whittled away numerically [Lord Lansdowne of course means by the I. C. S. only the European section of it], I think it is very likely to be done to death politically." These are no doubt strong words but are substantially true. For the execution of the reforms scheme does imply the practical destruction

of the Service "as we have known it in the past." How has it been known in the past? The Marquess of Lansdowne continues, "The strength of the I. C. S. has lain in the fact that its authority was unchallenged;" and it is a dead certainty that its authority will hereafter be questioned every now and then. But is not as much implied in the parliamentary government of which the reforms make a beginning in India? The difference, we thought, between the Civil Service of a Crown Colony Government and that of a Parliamentary Government was just this, that in the latter the service was continually subjected to criticism in Parliament, while in the former any little criticism that might be made did not affect it. The remarks of Dr. Fisher are instructive on this point. "The Civil Service of Great Britain," says he, "is never permitted to forget that it is in a true and literal sense a body of servants whose work is liable at any moment to be brought under the master's eye. . . . If it is comparatively free from that senseless surplusage of reglementation which is common in autocratic countries, the cause is to be found in the last two of the four safeguards which have been mentioned; the parliamentary critic in the House and the parliamentary chief in the office. . . . In the Crown Colonies, [on the other hand,] and more particularly in India, the spirit of the administration is widely different. Here the administration is the Government, and nothing else particularly matters" It is hopeless to expect that this position which the I. C. S. now enjoys in India will not undergo a radical alteration when an autocratic government is replaced by popular government in certain departments and by a government more responsive to popular sentiments in the other departments. Hereafter the services must be content to play a more restricted rôle. In respect of the functions made over to popular control, the English members of the service must be willing "to carry out the policy of Indian ministers," and though, in respect of the reserved functions, the responsibility will be mainly theirs, "even this responsibility must be discharged under new conditions. . . . In future, there must be more partnership which means for the official extra work, explanations, consultations and attempts to carry with him those who will do the work themselves." He must now argue where before he ordered, persuade where he directed, and warn where he forbade. To chafe at this is to obstruct the introduction of reforms. The Secretary of State and the Viceroy have assigned to the civil service the very high function of helping India along the the difficult journey to self-government. The discharge of this function requires that it should part with some of its all-pervasive power and take a well-defined place in the new polity.

No doubt "much is being asked of the services," and the change is not "irksome" but repugnant to many among them. It is not to be expected that they will readily "fall in with the new order of things." They will have ample opportu-

nity of tendering advice, but will cease to have on many matters the last word which they at present enjoy. They must be content to execute, instead of directing, policy. If they quarrel with this position which properly belongs to them, no one can offer them any consolation. However, no one who has rightly grasped the implications of the policy announced in 1917 can quarrel with this impending change in the position of the I. C. S. without attacking the policy itself, and the fact that the I. C. S. Associations make complaint of what logically follows from the effectuation of constitutional reforms only proves that the I. C. S. does not accept the policy. The conditions that will hereafter obtain in India are without doubt fundamentally different from those which existed when the present members of the I. C. S. signed their covenants or perhaps from those which they expected to exist when they put their hands to these august documents. One can only sympathise with them; but no cause of complaint arises so long as the covenant did not ensure to them a continuance of those conditions during their tenure of office. Even the members of the heaven-born service have got to submit to occasional vicissitudes of fortune equally with other men of a less elevated station, and if they think that the reforms will cause a degradation in their status, well, they must face it out with a good grace. Those who find the position unbearable can escape from it by resignation, but to claim a retiring pension with reference to their "loss of prospects" or to claim equally fat berths in other parts of the Empire as a reward for their unaccommodating nature is the height of arrogance which the Government will do well, in its own interest, publicly to discountenance. It is something that the Madras I. C. S. Association does not suggest, as Lord Sydenham recently suggested, that the covenant excuses the service men in their disobedience of the orders issued by Indian ministers. If they are indeed to give effect to a policy "diametrically opposed to British ideals" or to their personal convictions, again, they can sever the bond which ties them to the service by resigning. It is in this way that the requirements of service are reconciled to the scruples of conscience in every country, and we can only follow it in India. No one wishes to add to the difficulties of the services which, it is universally recognised, are great. The Indian leaders will "show themselves capable of statesmanship and self-restraint" while dealing with the I. C. S. and make every allowance for their natural feeling, when they are called upon to surrender a large part of their long-enjoyed power; but the latter must, for their part, be willing to be brought down from their present position of master to that of servant.

THE INDUSTRIES COMMISSION'S REPORT.

VI.

This sixth chapter is devoted to enumerating the various sources of power supplies and to suggest-

ing ways and means of increasing them. The most important source of power at present is coal, and in connection with it the Report says that as the demand for Bengal coal is increasing, and as the new metallurgical industries that are being established in the country will require larger and larger quantities of coal, it is necessary to have a "special survey of the situation, with a view to introducing economies in the methods of mining and consumption." Now that the war is over, is it not possible to utilize the services of the Coal Controller and his staff to carry out the survey suggested in the Report? The earlier this work is undertaken, the better for the new industries likely to be established here in the near future.

The other sources of power about which some detailed information is given are: (1) wood; (2) oil and alcohol, (3) and wind power. Regarding the first source, it seems from the evidence of the officers of the Forest Department that it will be "necessary to have recourse to extensive planting to meet any heavy and continuous demand for wood fuel at reasonable rates." The Report refers to the attempts at such extensive planting made at Changa Manga in the Punjab, and a few places in the South and also to the satisfactory result of the casuarina plantations on the Coromandal coast. In this connection the attention of the reader is drawn to the advantages of wood distillation as a method for producing charcoal and other valuable by-products. As regards oil supply, the Report says that it would be unwise to rely on this form of fuel to make up for the depletion of our coal supplies, and with reference to alcohol the Commissioners make the following very pertinent suggestion for the consideration of the excise departments of the provincial Governments. "We recommend that a more liberal policy should be followed by the excise authorities in respect of the class of the denaturist and more regard might be paid to the likelihood rather than to the mere possibility of frauds upon the revenue when the requirements of the commercial users conflict with the excise regulations." Referring to wind power, the Report says that its value for industrial purposes is very small owing to the lightness of the prevalent winds.

The last but not the least important source of power taken up by the Commissioners is water power. The credit of making beginnings in the utilization of such power belongs to an Indian State. The Government of Mysore under the guidance of its able and patriotic Dewan, Sir Seshadri Iyer, tackled this problem in 1903 by establishing the first central hydro-electric installation on the Kaveri river at Sivasamudram. The second large installation—more than double that of the Kaveri—has been put up at Khopoli by the Tatas. The electric power made available by the latter scheme is utilized by the mills in the city of Bombay. If this power had not been available in the war time and the mills had been obliged to use coal for their power, there would have been an industrial break-

down somewhere owing to the shortage of coal, and the country ought to feel grateful to that great man, the late Mr. J. N. Tata, whose brains laid the foundations of two very great industries—iron and steel manufacture and hydro-electric power—which proved so very useful to the country during the troublous times which it had recently to pass through. The Commissioners are of opinion that a hydro-graphic survey of the country cannot be undertaken by private individuals and ought not to be allowed to be undertaken by big syndicates whose interests may clash with those of the public or Government. They, therefore, rightly come to the conclusion, for which they give their reasons at the end of the chapter, that such a survey should be undertaken by the Government. It is gratifying to note once again that the Government of India have already appointed two experts, Mr. Barlow and Mr. Meares, to carry out the proposed survey.

"The Indian in Industries" is the heading of the next chapter. It does not, however, refer to the conditions under which the factory worker lives. As a whole the chapter is devoted later on to the welfare of factory labour. The Commissioners recognise that these conditions are "in the highest degree antagonistic to any improvement in efficiency." They seem to be so much depressed with the poverty and illiteracy of factory labour that they add: "These conditions are not easy to alter." The existing difficulties have been recognised by the leaders of thought in the country who have for years pressed Government to take steps to overcome the existing illiteracy by introducing free and compulsory education. It is some comfort to learn that the Commissioners have been convinced that one of the main obstacles in the way of making labour men efficient is "the lack of even vernacular education." The second main obstacle—the low standard of comfort—in the way of achieving this end can only be removed when "Capital" realizes its duty to "Labour," or, to use the modern phraseology, it realizes the right of Labour to participate in the profits earned jointly by Labour, Capital, and the brains of the management. As can be seen from the unprecedentedly large strike of mill-hands in Bombay, Labour is awake to its claims, and it is necessary in the interests of industry and all concerned that both Labour and Capital should recognise the fact that one cannot do anything without the other, and that they should co-operate with one another in a feeling of friendliness to be able successfully to run their industries in such a manner as to withstand foreign competition. One is not surprised to see the Commissioners, most of whom are neither educationists nor humanists, refer to the literary education at present given to our youngmen as a factor that has militated against industrial development. It would have been better if they had confined themselves to suggesting the necessity of providing technical educational facilities, instead of repeating parrot-

like the cry of interested parties against higher literary education. The rest of the chapter is devoted to describing the exceptional position of Bombay in regard to the question of industrial development and to giving a succinct and, on the whole, a fairly accurate account of the Swadeshi movement. Had the Swadeshi movement not been mixed up with the movement to boycott foreign goods, it would not have lost the sympathy not only of Government officials but of many capable industrialists who had by their efforts in starting new industries showed that they were in a guise better Swadeshis than those who carried on this agitation. As regards the lasting good results of the "honest" Swadeshi movement, the report correctly says: It speaks much for the strength and soundness of the feeling which underlay the effort that it still remains to some extent effective, and that a few professional men and landowners are still found, in Bengal and elsewhere, who support Swadeshi enterprises with such capital as they can afford.

L. S.

THE CHIEFS' CONFERENCE.

If the wheels of administration are to run smoothly, the stirring times in which we live, and particularly the events of the past few months have emphasised the danger that attends the exercise of autocratic rule without proper regard to the interests of the people. In the vast majority of the countries of the world, the realisation of this danger has led to the substitution of government by the people for the uncontrolled authority of an individual sovereign. The rulers of the Indian States in virtue of their protection by British Government enjoy an unusual degree of personal control over the welfare of their subjects and the responsibility that lies upon them is correspondingly great.—*His Excellency the Viceroy's speech at Bharatpur.*

A CONFERENCE of the Ruling Chiefs is going to be held in the capital of Delhi on 20th of this month. The suggestions contained in Chapter X of the Report on Constitutional Reforms will probably form the principal topic of discussion. It is really a great pity that the deliberations of such Conferences should not be made public. Why they should be held in private it is difficult to know. The present question of Constitutional Reforms is so important that it is absolutely necessary in the public interests that the proceedings of this year's conference at least should be made available to the subjects of Native States and to the subjects of British India and also to all the Chiefs and Princes who have not the privilege of attending this year's Conference. It is necessary to know how far the Ruling Princes in India are willing to co-operate with His Majesty's Government in carrying out the policy of August 20. The illustrious authors have failed to lay down this ideal for the immediate acceptance of the Ruling Princes. We have in these columns criticised this halting attitude of the joint authors in connection with Native States. Since the publication of the Report the war has brought about catastrophic changes of far-reaching magnitude and import-

ance. The abdication of the Kaiser and the fall of one crown after another during the brief interval of one week, have sounded the death-knell of autocratic rule. The Austro-German revolution not only adorns a romantic tale but points a moral which all the uneasy heads that wear the crown should for ever bear in mind. It is, therefore, very encouraging to note that the Viceroy, in his speech at the investiture of the Ruler of Bharatpur State, eloquently and earnestly appealed to the Rulers of Indian States to move with the times. "In India itself," said His Excellency, "the British Government has decided to grant a substantial measure of power to the people in the administration of their own affairs. Autocratic rule anywhere will in future be an exception and an anomaly." We expect that His Excellency will be pleased, at the forthcoming conference, to state emphatically the necessity of accepting this ideal by the Ruling Princes in India. The hesitation which is apparent in the Report in this connection will, we venture to hope, be entirely given up and a distinct pronouncement about the acceptance of the ideal of responsible government by the Ruling Princes be made by His Excellency in his opening address at this Conference. It is also necessary to remind the Ruling Chiefs and Princes that membership of the Council of Princes and of the Standing Committees and the right of joint deliberation are high privileges which would be conferred only on those who by their acts and deeds earnestly and enthusiastically co-operate with British Government in attaining this high ideal.

Coming now to the merits of the suggestions contained in Chapter X pertaining to Native States, they may be divided into two groups. The first group consists of suggestions bearing on constitutional reforms such as the Council of Princes, Standing Committees and the procedure of joint deliberation on matters of common interest. The second group consists of suggestions about standardising treaties and commissions of inquiry into cases of disputed rights and defaulting Chiefs. The latter reforms have been overdue for the last 50 years. Justice, equity and good conscience for a long time demanded the measures suggested in the second group. But we shall deal principally with the suggestions in the first group as they are of greater importance.

The creation of a permanent institution called the Council of Princes is undoubtedly a very useful measure. The Council is to consist only of those princes who enjoy full powers of internal administration. The Report does not specify the rights which go to constitute full powers of internal administration. Writers on jurisprudence have defined, and especially Mr. Austin, the quasi-sovereignty enjoyed by the Ruling Princes in India to consist in the right to levy taxes, the right to make laws, and the right to exercise civil, revenue, and criminal jurisdiction over their subjects. The right to wage war and conclude peace which constitutes the essential element of sovereignty is not enjoy-

ed by these States. The number of those Ruling Princes who have the right of levying taxes and making laws and administering civil and criminal justice and passing sentences of life and death on their subjects, is not more than 90. Applying this test, we find that only about 90 out of the 700, or 13 per cent. of the total Indian States are eligible for entry into the Council of Princes. The remaining more than 600 would be without any representation at all. The Report has altogether left out of consideration these 600 smaller states, and the brushing aside of this large section unmistakably shows the perfunctory manner in which this subject of Native States is dealt with by the illustrious authors. One of the important subjects which deserve urgent consideration at the hands of the Ruling Chiefs in this Conference would be the disposal of smaller States or rather States which do not fall under the category of fully autonomous States. The expression "autonomous State" here only means a State which is under the entire control of an autocratic Chief and is not subject to interference in his administration by the Paramount Power.

The object with which the Council of Princes is proposed to be created is to give the Princes an opportunity (1) of informing the Government as to their sentiments and wishes, (2) of broadening their outlook, and (3) of conferring with one another, (4) and with the Government. It is superfluous to state that these objects are common to all the Native States. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance in carrying out the objects of such a Council to include in it representatives of smaller States. To our mind it is not very difficult to devise a scheme which will secure just and adequate representation of all the princes on this Council. If the Government of India is to assume direct relations with all the Native States as described in the Report, it is necessary for the welfare of these Native States that they should have an opportunity to represent their grievances, their hardships and their views on all questions which have any direct bearing on their States. The Council of Princes is the only medium which can afford an opportunity for a fearless and open exposition of the views of smaller States concerning their interests. We, therefore, very strongly urge the necessity of considering the problem of giving representation to the smaller Native States which are not included in the proposed Council in the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme. If the princes who are privileged to attend this year's conference neglect to consider this question, to formulate their views or to suggest some solution about the smaller States, they would be doing great injustice to their brother chiefs and princes. Neglecting the claims of smaller States will, we apprehend, weaken the solidarity of all the Native States which the illustrious authors so eagerly desire to maintain. Smaller States too, have rendered utmost assistance, and in some cases even beyond proportion

to their income and resources, for the prosecution of this war, and it is essential that due recognition should be given to their claims.

Unfortunately, we find some Princes themselves raising objections to the creation of a Council of Princes. Misled by the designation of allies, these Princes think it derogatory to their *izzat* to participate in the deliberations of such a Council. The permanent creation of the institution of the Council of Princes will afford the best opportunity, which does not now exist, for all the enlightened Princes to exchange views, ventilate grievances and to take a concerted action on all matters affecting their interest and advancement. Wisdom and foresight demand that the most advanced and enlightened Rulers of the largest Native States should take part in the proceedings of this Council and should try to make this institution sufficiently powerful and influential to safeguard the interests of Native States against all attacks from within or without. Another objection, which is in some respects cogent, is that if all the full-power Chiefs are to be placed on the same footing in the proposed council, it would be very unfair to the largest Native States. If, for instance, a State like Baroda and a smaller State in the Southern Maratha Country—each coming within the description of fully autonomous state given in the Report—are to have the same rights and same privileges in the proposed Council of Princes the arrangement would not be acceptable to various Ruling Princes. We will, therefore, suggest that the representation to the Council of Princes, should be based on the basis of population, income, and powers of Native States. It is satisfactory to observe that the illustrious authors have abandoned the test of salutes in their Report. But it is necessary to add to this test another qualification based either on population or income or both. If, for instance, the State which has at present a Resident attached to its court and which is the smallest in population and income in all such States is taken as a unit of representation to the Council of Princes. All the fully autonomous Native States should be divided into constituencies equal to this unit. This division should be made as far as possible on geographical contiguity and ethnological identity. Each constituency should be equal in extent, population, income or both to such a unit, and it should have a right to elect one representative to the Council of Princes. This method will do away with the objections which have been raised in some quarters. If this method is approved, it will also give a solution for giving representation to smaller states. Another mode suggested is that of giving multiple votes to bigger Native States in proportion to their income and population. The majority of smaller Native States are in the Bombay presidency. It is suggested that so far as they are concerned there should be a provincial conference of Chiefs and they should elect their representatives to the Council of Princes. This suggestion also deserves serious

consideration. Space at our disposal prevents us from dilating on this subject at considerable length.

The creation of the Standing Committee of the Council is a very valuable suggestion. The Report does not suggest that the advice of this Committee shall be sought in all cases. Discretion is left to the Viceroy or the political department. We, however, suggest that every case, in which the Government wants to upset or modify the decision of any Native State, should invariably be referred to the Standing Committee. If the advice of the Standing Committee is taken in all such cases, the procedure will give great satisfaction to the State concerned. The Standing Committee should have powers to co-opt members familiar with the conditions of cases coming before the Committee, so that it may have the benefit of well-informed opinion. It is not possible that a small Standing Committee will be able to advise Government properly in all cases coming from various parts of the country. Knowledge of local conditions, usage, custom, sentiments, and aspirations would be required in the disposal of such cases and unless the Committee has powers to co-opt such members, who will be able to enlighten it, its work will not be satisfactorily done. The number of co-opted members should depend upon the strength of this Committee, but in no case should it be less than two. The third suggestion about joint deliberation, on matters of common interest, is not open to any serious objection except that it does not provide for the inclusion of the representatives of the subjects of Native States along with the subjects of British India. We have criticised this point at considerable length in these columns, and we do not wish to reiterate the same.

As regards the suggestions in the second group, they are a tardy concession to the just demands of Native States continuously made for the last six decades. As regards the standardising of treaties in order to reconcile practice with the letter of treaties, a machinery ought to be provided for such as that of a commission consisting of a high judicial officer of the rank of a High Court Judge, a representative of States and a representative of the British Government. Such a commission will be able to revise treaties, delete the defunct clauses and bring the terms of the engagements in line with existing practice. This reform ought to have been effected long ago. That meaningless treaties should have been allowed to remain unmodified so long reflects absolutely no credit on the civilized government. As regards the commissions to settle the inter-state disputes between a state and local government or between a state and the Government of India, the suggestion is belated and is not even just and up to the mark. The right of asking for a commission of inquiry is not left open to any contending party. The appointment of such a commission is left to the discretion of the Viceroy. We entirely fail to see on what grounds this reservation is justifiable. Such a commission should

ordinarily have to deal with civil or quasi-civil rights. The humblest subject of His Majesty's Government enjoys the privilege of instituting a suit against the Crown for disputed property rights and can claim the benefit of judicial adjudication. Why should even the elementary right of getting one's disputes settled by a properly constituted tribunal be denied to a Ruling Prince?

As regards the appointment of Commission to inquire into the misconduct of a Ruling Prince, we are glad to know that it has been made obligatory in all such cases hereafter. The Report suggests that the Commissioners should be five in number and the selection of the three of them has been provided for. The remaining two should always be commoners and their presence will ensure thoroughness and impartiality of the Commission. The defaulting Prince should have a right to challenge any of the Commissioners and that provision for giving him proper legal advice to defend himself, should also be made in the interests of justice, in every case by the state concerned.

The suggestions contained in the Report, if they are modified in the light of the remarks made above, would go a long way to better the position of Native States and to raise their status. This indeed is a great opportunity which the Princes assembled should utilise to press for modifications. The reconstruction of the Empire is under consideration. The Ruling Princes in India would be justified in claiming rights and privileges in other respects also. Such of them as possess a standing army should claim the right to reform and reorganise the same with a view to make them serviceable in the cause of the Empire. The Princes should demand that facilities for training their cadets should be provided for in this country, so as to fit them for officering their own armies and those also of the British Indian Army. They should demand the right of fiscal autonomy to build up their own industries, concessions for Railway extension, such as feeder lines. They should also demand the right to construct harbours in their territories and build dockyards with a view to encourage ship-building and share the sea-borne trade of this country. The most important States in Southern India can develop sea-ports which can become naval bases. The example of Mysore which is the most progressive State in India will show the various directions in which a State can utilise its resources and ensure its prosperity. All these demands are worthy of being conceded if Government sincerely wishes to raise the position of their partners in the Empire, so as to make them towers of strength in times of need. No one need apprehend danger if Native States become prosperous. Rather weak States are a danger. The driving power of nationalism may absorb the Native States, scattered over the length and breadth of this country if they remain in a moribund condition. The forces of self-governing and autonomous institutions may one day seriously sweep over smaller Native States and imperil

their existence by mediating them as was done in the case of smaller States in Germany. With a view, therefore, to avoid such a contingency and to safeguard their own interests, the Native States can hope to exist in this transitional period only by moving with the spirit of the times. The establishment of responsible government in their States is the only sovereign remedy to ward off all dangers from without, and also from within. Will any enlightened Prince come forward to establish popular government and thus lead the way to others?

G. R. ABHYANKAR.

A LETTER FROM LONDON.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

LONDON, DECEMBER 18.

A FORECAST OF THE GENERAL ELECTION.

THE Christmas season finds us in peace and quiet again after the strenuousness and unusual experience of a General Election. Last Saturday was polling day, and owing to the necessity of awaiting the soldiers' vote, the counting will not take place until the 28th. Most of the returns should be to hand by Monday, the 30th, and by the New Year, in all likelihood, the new Ministry will be announced. There is likely to be some considerable reconstruction in the Cabinet. To begin with, the War Cabinet will disappear, and with it, in all probability, General Smuts, whose services, however, will be required at the Peace Conference, where he will be General Botha's right-hand man. Indeed, the friendship between these two well-known South Africans is much closer than merely political, and knowing the reliance that General Botha has always placed in his brilliant colleague, I am surprised that he has been able to allow him to remain so long in this country. It is stated that Mr. Lloyd George's Peace Cabinet will not number more than twelve, round whom will be grouped a galaxy of lesser ministers. It is anticipated that the Coalition majority would be about a hundred more than that of all other parties combined, and that whilst the Unionists will be the largest single party, they alone will equal in numbers the rest of the House of Commons. Mr. Lloyd George has split the Liberal party, but he has gone to the polls with an advanced programme of social reconstruction that has left his opponents somewhat in the air. The Asquithian Liberals were only anaemic in their opposition, and everyone knew that not only were their numbers few, and their programme, to a large extent, indistinguishable from that of the Coalition, but also that they were not prepared to accept the responsibility of forming an alternative administration. Indeed, so heavy has been the landslide against them that but for an accident, it is extremely probable that Mr. Asquith himself would have failed to secure election in the constituency that has returned him regularly for a number of years past; whilst many other prominent Liberals will fail to find a place in

the new Parliaments, Mr. Charles Roberts' seat at Lincoln being among those that are in jeopardy. Indeed, people who are acquainted with the trend of the political situation are of opinion that the Labour party will secure a larger number of seats than the Asquithian Liberals, and that, being the largest party in opposition, they will be entitled to occupy the front Opposition benches in the House of Commons. Labour would probably have been more successful still, but for the folly of extreme I. L. P. members in some of the constituencies, in putting up revolutionary Socialists, such as the Bolshevik John Maclean in Glasgow against so old and tried a Labour man as Mr. George Barnes. As a result, Glasgow, which was expected to vote strongly with Labour in most of its fifteen constituencies, is expected to return eleven Coalition Unionists, three Coalition Liberals and one Coalition Labour man. The strong pacifism of some of the Labour leaders, like Mr. Ramsay Macdonald and Mr. Philip Snowden, has also told against the party, and on the day before polling day, the Prime Minister made great play with this fact in his final appeal to the electorate. It is not known for certain whether Mr. Macdonald's election is secured at Leicester; whilst Mr. Snowden is believed to have been defeated at Blackburn. It is believed that Mr. Montagu has been elected for Cambridge shire while Mr. Austin Chamberlain, who was returned unopposed, is likely to be Chancellor of the Exchequer in the place of Mr. Bonar Law. The women who voted for the first time did so in strength, though it is probable that there will be a number of spoilt votes. No one knows how the woman's vote has gone; but whilst it is believed that a considerable proportion of it has been cast for Labour, it is also thought that the bulk of it has gone to the Coalition, partly in recognition of the fact that it was a Coalition Government that pushed through the female franchise. Another incalculable element is the soldier's vote. Large numbers of soldiers, being far away from the Home front, will have been unable or unwilling to vote even by proxy. They will either have plumped for the Coalition or for Labour, where they have voted at all. Labour has a very distinct grievance against the War Cabinet for taking the Election at a time and in such circumstances that the soldiers have been unable to exercise a free and intelligent vote, owing to the impossibility of placing the issues properly before them, either by means of candidates' addresses or otherwise. Whilst there has been a certain amount of Election literature current, the paper shortage has prevented anything like electioneering on the old scale. A Dr. Tarachand has stood for the Mansfield Division of Nottingham, and, from an Indian point of view, two other candidatures should be of particular interest. One is that of Mr. H. E. A. Cotton in the Finsbury Division of London, which now comprises Mr. Cotton's old and the neighbouring division. His opponent was the sitting member of the other Division in the

defunct House, and a Unionist. Considering himself to have a stronger claim to Coalition support, he received the Coalition ticket, but just before polling day, Mr. Cotton was rather more sanguine of success, and it is to be hoped that he will be seen in Parliament, when it re-assembles. The other candidature was that of Lieut. Col. Hugh Meyler. Col. Meyler was formerly a member of the South African Union Parliament for a Natal constituency, having defeated one of the Ministers. He came strongly to the front at the time of the Indian strike that occurred in Natal in 1913 in the last stages of the Passive Resistance struggle. When the leaders of the movement were imprisoned, and the Solomon Commission appointed without consultation with them, Mr. Meyler strongly protested against the character of its personnel and objected in particular to the appointment of the late Mr. Ewald Esselen, K. C., who was regarded as strongly anti-Asiatic. Throughout the passage of the Indians Relief Act in the Union Parliament, he strongly supported the Indian cause and later spoke up courageously on behalf of the South African natives at the time of the passing of the Native Land Act. Early in the War, Col. Meyler joined the Imperial forces in Europe, received a commission and was gassed in 1915. He then entered the Air Force and successfully experimented with parachutes from observation balloons and aeroplanes after his immediate predecessors had been killed. He has made a special point of Indian Constitutional Reform, and he and Mr. Cotton had interchanged platforms. It was appropriate, therefore, that Mr. Polak should have spoken last Friday night in his constituency in support of his candidature.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SITUATION IN REGARD TO INDIA.

Having regard to the probable composition of the new House of Commons, it is plain that it is the Coalition and Coalition alone that may be expected, to bring a Bill, embodying a scheme of Constitutional Reforms in India. That measure must be based upon the Montagu-Chelmsford report, as modified by the reports of the Franchise and Functions Committees. There is no competing scheme, nor can there be. No private bill in existing Parliamentary conditions stands any chance of success. The Coalition party will be mainly Unionist. Some of the Unionists will be, like Sir George Lloyd, the new Bombay Governor, progressive; some will be reactionary. The Government Liberals and the Asquithian remnant will be similarly divided according to the strength of their Radicalism or the insistence of vested interest. Labour may be counted upon. The old Irish party will be non-existent. It will only have a fragmentary representation in the House of Commons. Unionist Ireland will increase its representation and the rest of the board will be swept by Sinn Fein. The first difficulty will be to ensure the passing of the scheme, as it stands, with, of course, the recommendations of the two Committees incorporated,

There is a real danger that the reactionaries will destroy the prospects of the measure, and the danger lies especially in the House of Lords. Whilst, for many reasons, the sending of the Bill to a Select Committee is extremely irritating, it may, in the end, prove the quickest way through, for, in all likelihood, it will be the only means by which disaster in the Lords may be staved off. At the worst, it means a small delay. The alternative may be the rejection of the measure in the Lords with consequences upon which I need not enlarge. Assuming that the difficulty of the passage of the scheme as it stands has been successfully negotiated, there remains the infinitely greater one of securing incorporation in it of the amendments and improvements agreed upon in principle by the Congress, the Moslem League, the non-official members of the Imperial Legislative Council and the recent Conference in Bombay. The only possible way, in which there will exist any possibility of obtaining this fortunate result, will be by the utmost degree of unity within the National party, the deliberate jettisoning of irrelevant demands and points of difference, and the concentration upon the points of agreement. Two other dangers must be guarded against. One is the dissipation of energy in working at the circumference of the circle instead of at the centre; the other is that of attaching the cause of Indian Constitutional Reform to a minority party in this country, and making of it a party weapon, with which to attack the Government, as unfortunately Mr. Tilak and his advisers here have done. There is yet one other danger to be avoided, and that is any attempt to make of Indian Constitutional Reform an issue at the Peace Conference. To attempt to remove Indian affairs from the sphere of domestic politics within the British Empire to an outside tribunal, however it may be composed, would be to commit a political blunder of the gravest magnitude, as Ireland may yet find in her own case. And nothing will be more calculated to alienate sympathy from India in friendly circles in this country. Unless these dangers are carefully avoided, opinion will spread here that Indian politicians are unbalanced and immature, and that it will not be safe to transfer power to them. It is sincerely to be hoped that such deputations as may be decided upon will be, so far as possible, homogeneous, united in their demands, given a free hand, and be composed of men who are acquainted with and appreciate the psychology of the British people, are above suspicion as regards their loyalty and whose reputation is such as to ensure that they will be able to meet the arguments of the very few people in this country, who at the present day count seriously in political life. To preach to the converted is a waste of energy. To preach to the unconverted, who count here, requires the skill, courage, knowledge, suppleness, self-restraint, and statesmanship of your very best men. Mere eloquence and still less empty verbosity will do harm rather than

good. It is well to be frank and plain in these matters, where so much is at stake. Over-confidence, self-satisfaction, inexperience and ignorance are injurious at any time; they are a grave peril in moments of national emergency.

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