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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

IT is satisfactory to receive the assurance from Mr. Wilson that the draft Covenant of the League of Nations has undergone modifications in the light of the criticisms that have been made and that a revised draft will immediately be submitted to the public a second time for criticism. One of the worst vices in the present draft, which stamps the whole business of the League of Nations with a one-sided character, is that, while elaborate precautions are to be taken against a possible exploitation of the enemy colonies and a sacrifice of their interests, the colonies of the Allied countries are to be left just in the position in which they are at present—in the belief, unsupported by facts, that the righteous principle to be enforced for the first time in the case of the ex-German colonies is already at work in the government of the colonial possessions of the Allied countries. Why should not, as the *Nation* asks, the mandatory system be applied to the latter as well as to the former, and their government be made a matter of international concern? If this is not to be, existing colonies of the Great Powers may at any rate be governed as if the mandatory principle applied to them no less than to the colonies to be taken over from the enemy countries.

IF the Deputy Commissioner of Delhi had intended to irritate rather than pacify the public, he could not have chosen a better form of notice than the one he issued on Saturday last. It was very presumptuous of him to think that where the Viceroy and the Home Member failed to convince the people of the necessity and propriety of the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crime Act, he would succeed in dispelling their doubts. It would have been more in taste also if, instead of trying to per-

suade the people of the innocuousness and the beneficence of the measure, he had merely sought their co-operation in preventing an outbreak of disorder and in quelling it, if it should happen. He threw the whole of the blame for the tragic events of the preceding Sunday on the satyagrahis and he told them that the latter were solely responsible for converting passive resistance into an active riot. Even if this were literally true, it would not help in preventing the recurrence of such an outbreak to remind the people of it. Again, what effect would ordinarily be produced on the mind of a miscellaneous crowd to be told that the closing of shops would under no circumstance hurt the *Sirkar*? One would have thought that the public would take it as a challenge thrown down by the *Sirkar*. It is a characteristic vice of the bureaucracy that where a delicate situation requires tactful handling, the authorities almost invariably fail. Col. Beadon's behaviour on this occasion and Mr. Pratt's blunder in dealing with the Kaira affair only serve to show how hopelessly unfitted their official experience makes the authorities in pacifying an excited people.

IN one or two places meetings convened to enter a protest against the Rowlatt legislation were prohibited by the local authorities, on the plea that they were likely to lead to a breach of the peace. Now, unless there was something very peculiar in the local conditions, the presumption would be that the meetings would pass off peacefully and that the forbiddal itself would throw the people into uncontrollable excitement. Huge meetings, of almost unprecedented dimensions, have been held in large centres of political life without producing as much as a ripple on its smooth surface. The immediate effect of Mr. Gandhi's preaching has been throughout to strengthen the popular instinct for order and peace. It has been brought home to the people, as perhaps nothing else would have, that the slightest disturbance caused at meetings would only afford the authorities an opportunity to step in and assume control of the situation. Extraordinary care is therefore taken not to give the officials the semblance of an excuse to take over the management of meetings. It is best that the officials recognised this new factor in the situation and allowed the people to give free vent to the resentment which they feel against the Rowlatt legislation. While the usual police precautions

must of course be taken, the greatest care must be taken not to exercise any authority till the need for it has clearly arisen and even then not to exercise more authority than is absolutely necessary. Officials must practise forbearance as well as the public.

* * *

THE Moderate party has organised itself in Bengal, Bombay, the Central Provinces, the United Provinces and Madras. The party is not numerically strong in any of these provinces, but some of the best elements in Indian Nationalism are to be found within its ranks. The parties have largely reshaped themselves within the last few months, and the Indian Liberals have received a large accession of strength in the person of some who have recently joined the party. Some others who have not formally done so are at one with the Liberals in principles and policy, and will throw the whole weight of their great influence and power into the scale of the Liberals. This is a time for concentration of forces, when we are face to face with reaction, and if only the party plays its part well and worthily its contribution to the upbuilding of New India will be very substantial, although for the moment it is its unfortunate portion to contend against a lot of misdirected enthusiasm, which is calculated, in its opinion, to set back the hands of the clock.

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The *Leader* has given voice to a fear entertained in informed circles that Sir James Meston's forthcoming visit to England is intended to urge upon the Home Government certain views which, if adopted, will deprive the scheme of much of its value. With this and the undue exaltation of the Indian Civil Service, which the Viceroy's opening speech to the last session of the Legislative Council so clearly indicated, the reform scheme is in danger of being emasculated, and none but the ignorant or the perverse can read the political sky and feel assured of the fate of reforms. Mr. Tilak's view is said to be that whatever reform bill may be fathered by the British Ministry, it is sure to pass into a statute without let or hindrance. This is true enough; but the main question is, as the *Leader's* London correspondent has suggested, as to what kind of measure the Ministry will make themselves responsible for. While one sees little to encourage the hope that the scheme will undergo extension, there are many signs that it will be changed for the worse.

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A VIGOROUS propaganda is needed in England, undertaken with a view to enlightening those who influence thought and action in Great Britain. It must be made clear on behalf of Indian Liberals, who endorse the general principles of the reform scheme, that while several enlargements, especially in the central Government, are vitally necessary if the scheme is to be fully satisfactory to them, any whittling down of it is attended with grave risks. The situation is none too hopeful; it may easily get out of hand.

A vanguard of the Liberals has presently proceeded to England in the person of Mr. N. M. Samarth who can be trusted, with his rare mastery of constitutional details and his forceful advocacy of the Indian case, to bring British statesmen to a perception of the situation and to convince them of the only way in which it can be satisfactorily met. Mr. Samarth is also accompanied by Mr. K. C. Roy who has already done a good day's work in England and who will certainly improve upon it by his present visit.

* * *

CORROBORATION has come from a quarter from which one would have little expected it, of the futility and unwisdom of confining the political propaganda in England to the Labour party. Mr. St. Nihal Singh says in the *Commonweal* of last week that for Indians to bend their energies exclusively or even mainly to the winning over of the Labour party is very much like preaching to the converted. They must also extend their work to the large non-Labour mass who have no particular knowledge of India and no particular sympathy with her. The much-vaunted achievement, therefore, of Mr. Joseph Baptista, *viz.*, the identification of India's cause with that of the Labour party is, in the opinion of Mr. Singh, of a dubious value, if he does not regard it, with Mr. Pannikar, as positively harmful. The whole of the trouble that has arisen in the British Committee of the Congress is owing to the desire on the part of the Nationalists to convert it into an appendage of the Labour party, whereas the Committee, while never neglecting to take such help as could be derived from the Labour party, does its best to enlist the sympathies of the English middle class which wields political power. To deflect the Committee from this course by throwing in India's lot with the Labour party would be injurious. The proper course would be, as suggested by Mr. Panikar, that while the Home Rule League in England, may be left to work in association with Labour, the British Congress Committee should continue to address its appeal mainly to the middle class, for to neglect the latter in favour of Labour would spell a disaster for India.

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THE April *Modern Review* sets forth at great length an objection to the passive resisters pledging themselves to a breach of such laws as may be decided upon by a committee of unknown persons. It says that such a blind obedience to the dictates of a committee, however composed, is inconsistent with the fundamental principle of passive resistance, *viz.*, that a satyagrahi should set one's own conscience above every order emanating from however high an authority. This objection has been urged by many others before, and by Mrs. Besant with the utmost impressiveness, but it has now lost all force, since Mr. Gandhi has declared that a satyagrahi must agree to the breakage of all laws which do not involve a moral sanction. The Rowlatt Act, passed by the Government in opposition to the

unanimous wishes of the non-official members, has deprived, in the eyes of a satyagrahi, all laws of their moral force, and any one of them could in conscience be broken with a view to undoing the objectionable Rowlatt Act. All that the committee does is to select a few laws for violation from among many that could be treated in a similar way, merely as expediency may suggest. Surely this does not involve any coercion of the conscience of a satyagrahi.

* * *

WHETHER one is morally justified in regarding as null and void all laws passed by a Government which is guilty of enacting one unnecessary and wicked law till this law remains on the statute book, and whether the infraction of other laws may be used as an instrument to secure its repeal, is another matter. Mrs. Besant strongly objects to the violation of any law but the one against which conscience naturally revolts; the artificial breach of other laws is not justifiable, in her view, even though it may be resorted to only as a weapon with which to fight an unconscionable law. The *Modern Review* apparently does not share this view; nor is it prepared to give in its adherence to the sweeping doctrine enunciated by Mr. Gandhi. Laws which are necessary for the preservation and welfare of society must be obeyed under all circumstances, but "is it right," it asks itself, "to break an otherwise unobjectionable, though non-essential, law, because of the enactment by Government of an objectionable law? In other words, does Government forfeit the right to the obedience of even its unobjectionable laws because it has enacted a very harmful law against public opinion?" And its answer is: "Here we do not feel quite competent to give a definite answer dogmatically."

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NOR is the *Modern Review* at all sanguine of any tangible results flowing from the passive resistance movement. As a process of self-purification and moral uplift, the movement will produce excellent effects on those who will practise satyagraha, as Mr. Gandhi teaches it; but to the *Modern Review* there does not seem to be much chance of the movement prevailing in a trial of strength with the Government. The reason is that "passive resistance is most successful in forcing the hands of a Government when it is resorted to by a comparatively small community, living in a limited area, on a definite and clear issue, and when there is neither a majority nor an influential minority of the community opposed to it. These conditions are not satisfied in the present case." No expectation of results, therefore, should be formed, and the movement should not be judged by the common standard. But even if there is one passive resister, whose righteous will the Government cannot break, that must be accounted a defeat for Government and triumph for the upholder of personal liberty and of the dignity of human nature. It is results of this des-

cription that, according to the *Review*, are to be looked for from this movement.

WE congratulate the Bombay Government on their adopting the suggestion made by the Servants of India Society's vernacular journal of Poona that the place of a nominated councillor, left vacant by Mr. Apte's death in the Poona City Municipality, should be filled by a member of the depressed classes. The paper had also suggested that the appointment might be made on the recommendation of the Depressed Classes Mission, and we understand that the person who has been appointed in the present instance is the one recommended by the Mission. We may take it, therefore, that the choice is well made, and that it will justify the new departure made by Government, which should have come at least two decades ago. A deputation of the Depressed Classes Mission had urged it upon the Bombay Government to nominate one member on each of the local bodies in the Presidency from among depressed classes, and now that the reservation of a few seats to these classes in the legislative councils is being considered, it is but meet that they should be admitted into municipalities and local boards. It is not merely to satisfy the requirements of theoretical justice that the demand is made on behalf of the depressed classes that their representatives should sit on municipal boards. As a fact, these classes are practically denied all the comforts and conveniences to which they as citizens and ratepayers are entitled, and it is too much to expect that in the present circumstances anyone but members of these classes will look after their interests as they should be.

* * *

WE daresay an interesting situation will be created in the Poona Municipality by the appointment of a gentleman belonging to the so-called untouchable classes, who is the equal of any other member in point of respectability. The municipal board boasts of at least two Nationalist members who had the temerity in these days of democracy openly to oppose an innocent resolution urging the desirability of removing the taint of untouchableness from the depressed classes at a conference of the Poona district last year. They may, if they so choose, wash off the pollution in a holy bath on the riverside every day (which will also afford them an opportunity to add to their religious merit), but we trust they will restrain their nationalist impulses so far as to abstain from bringing forward a resolution in the municipality for reserving a separate seat for the new member, as seats are set apart for Pariah boys in schools. This experiment may well be extended by Government and at least one member of the untouchables nominated on each of the municipal and local boards; it is calculated to bring about a substantial improvement in the civic conditions of the localities inhabited by the depressed classes, as well as bring down the hauteur of the higher castes and restore to the lower castes their self-respect, lost long long ago.

THE COUNTRY'S PROTEST.

MAMMOTH meetings were held in some of the largest cities on Sunday last to register the country's protest against the Rowlatt Act and to pray His Majesty to disallow it in deference to the unanimous wishes of his subjects. The meetings were conducted everywhere with perfect order and decorum, thanks to the spirit inculcated by Mr. Gandhi and Swami Shradhdhanandji. Nowhere did the need arise to disperse the mob, and Mr. Gandhi insisting that the people should quietly obey police orders of dispersal, at no place was any trouble experienced. So far as the people are concerned, they seem to have learnt what lesson there was for them to learn in the tragedy that was enacted at Delhi on March 30. They realise the tremendous risk incurred in refusing to obey the orders of the police engaged in preserving order among a vast assemblage. At last Sunday's meetings, the intervention of the police was not at all required. Those who are given to religion also observed fast on the day and offered prayers. In some of the important business centres, business was practically at a standstill, the people mourning the loss of liberty which the new legislation entails. There was also a fraternization between Hindus and Moslems, and a most impressive scene was observed at the Jumma Musjid where Swami Shradhdhanandji was requested to preach from the pulpit which no Hindu had before ascended in the history of Islam. This shows the intensity of the popular resentment against the Rowlatt Act and should afford a grave warning to the authorities. His Excellency the Viceroy hopes that it will remain mostly a dead letter and that there will not be occasion to put it into force. However, the mere existence of the Act on the statute book is regarded by the people as an affront to the unanimous wishes of their accredited spokesmen, and this affront is naturally unbearable to them. The aftermath of the Act promises to be terrible, and no wise Government can afford to adopt a defiant attitude to it. The proceedings of last Sunday were not connected with the passive resistance movement and were participated in by those who are opposed to the movement as well as by those who are pledged to it. This is as it should be, and it incidentally affords a sufficient answer to those who speak contemptuously of the constitutional agitation by the usual methods as if all its resources have been exhausted and it is destined to prove a failure. The happenings of last Sunday will on the contrary force the conviction on the mind of a dispassionate observer that a steady and intensified agitation of the kind in which all can join will in all human probability be crowned with success.

The tragic occurrences of March 30 yet remain obscure. The versions of Swami Shradhdhanand and the local officials are widely divergent and hopelessly irreconcilable. The Government of India have so far done nothing but to issue in the form a *communiqué* the news retailed to it by the

Delhi authorities. The *communiqué* states that the mob attempted to practise coercion on the sweetmeat seller and assaulted him, which resulted in the arrest of two of the assailants. A rush was consequently made into the station yard with a view to rescue the arrested persons and all stoppage of work was threatened. Tonga drivers were forcibly made to join in the *hartal*. One of the men attempted to snatch a rifle, and so on and so forth. All these statements are categorically denied in the other version, which in the eyes of the people will not be entitled to less credit but more. But leaving these details apart and granting that the mob did commit some excesses, it is not easy to believe that the officials on their part were not guilty of excessive harshness. It is admitted that the military was called out at an early stage of the day's disturbance, and it is not made clear that firing was commenced only after its necessity had demonstrably arisen. The fact that in the evening the funeral procession and the meeting under the presidency of Swami Shradhdhanand passed off without any disturbance after the day's excitement cannot but leave a strong impression on one's mind that the mob could not have become so unmanageable in the earlier part of the day. It is on the clearest proof of the necessity of such a stern measure that firing can be justified in any particular instance, and it devolves upon the Government to institute an inquiry and publish facts as regards the various incidents of the disturbance. Mr. Gandhi has related an instance that happened in South Africa, where, even when dealing with an armed crowd, the police controlled the situation without calling in the aid of the military. As he says, an Indian crowd is the easiest to disperse, and the resort to stern measures on the present occasion can be warranted only on indubitable evidence of its necessity. A non-official inquiry is being conducted, and all the details in regard to the breach of the peace are being collected. But it is necessary that the Government should carry on its investigation and form its opinion, in the light of the results of the inquiry, as to whether force was rightly used or not. It would be disastrous to create the impression that the officials are anxious to suppress the popular feeling by intimidation.

THE INDUSTRIES COMMISSION'S REPORT.

XII.*

AFTER making suggestions for providing facilities for giving primary education to all employers, the Commissioners take up the question of training up a higher class of artisans, mechanics and other skilled workmen. They divide the industries for which such workmen are required into two classes, organised and unorganised, and they further divide the former into manipulative and

* Previous articles on this subject appeared in the issues of Nov. 21, Dec. 5, 12, and 19, Jan. 2 & 16, and Feb. 6, 13 & 27, and March 20 & 27.

non-manipulative. They take up the subject of cottage industries as the unorganised industries, and in this connection refer to the industrial school started in the Madras Presidency in 1877-78 to give instruction in carpentry, blacksmith's work hand-loom weaving, tailoring, etc., which is said to be the first attempt of its kind in this country. I daresay the Commissioners had before them sufficient data to give to the promoters of this school the credit of being pioneers in the field. I have a recollection that, as a schoolboy, I heard of attempts in the same direction being made in Gujerat just about that time by persons who had so far back felt the necessity of helping indigenous industries to withstand foreign competition. This, however, is a question for decision by students of history, and I need not say anything more on it. Referring to the educational work of industrial schools started in the country, mostly according to the Madras type, the Commissioners say, "In places where local artisans were lacking in skill, these schools met a distinct want; but in others they served merely to satisfy vague local aspirations towards the promotion of industrial education." Those who have carefully watched the progress of a few such institutions will agree with the above-quoted opinion of the Commissioners, that a large percentage of educated people desire to do something to prevent local industries being crushed out by competition and to introduce improvements in the process of manufacture is a hopeful sign for the future. The next step for them is to study local conditions and also the best method of meeting the requirements of the local industries and then lay down a definite policy for industrial training instead of having "vague aspirations," which the report gives them credit for. The main difficulty with regard to such institutions is that of finding a competent headmaster or superintendent. He must not only know the modern methods of handicraft in general and have a detailed knowledge of some particular industry, but must believe in his mission of training young men for a better class of work than is done at present in that particular locality, and must be able to inspire confidence in the young men and also in their parents. Such men are very rarely to be found for the present, and consequently it will be necessary for some time to come to follow the example of the Central Provinces and place the headmaster of the largest school in the province in charge of the smaller schools, whose staff will in most cases consist of men trained by him.

The verdict of the Commissioners on the work done by existing industrial schools is unfavourable. While they recognise that it is only through an industrial school that the indigenous artisan can be trained, they go on to say, "though, in the past, through ignorance and lack of education, and through the imperfections of their equipment and teaching staff, industrial schools have failed in the majority of cases to achieve any appreciable results" very few definite remedies have been suggested to

improve the existing condition of things, excepting that the Commissioners recommend the transfer of the control of industrial schools from the Department of Education to that of Industries. The chief object of this transfer of control seems to be to bring these schools in closer touch with the cottage industries than they are at present. How far the transfer of the control of these schools from one department to another will be able to bring about this desirable end will depend upon the outlook of the new Industries department. The implied condemnation of the educational department for having neglected this side of its activities is strong enough. Will the Directors of Public Instruction be given an opportunity of meeting this charge of neglect of duty?

The report makes a casual reference to the necessity of assisting cottage industries in the purchase of raw materials and the disposal of the manufactured goods. The co-operative movement is doing some good work in this direction in this presidency. The Local Government had also foreshadowed in a way the recommendations of the Commissioners about helping the handloom weavers in the selection of suitable designs and patterns for the woven cloth by appointing the Prefect of the Victoria Jubilee Technical Institute as technical advisor to the Registrar of Co-operative Societies. There is now a proposal before the Local Government for increasing the staff of the Co-operative Department to meet with the growing demands of purchase and sale societies. Let us hope that the suggestion of the Commissioners will be carefully considered by the commission to be appointed to consider all these questions.

Before taking up the question of both manipulative and non-manipulative industries, the Commissioners refer to the great lack of Indians of the superior class and then lay down that the main remedy to meet this defect is "the provision of an incentive to excel, which can be given only through a general improvement in their conditions of life." The Commissioners do not care to go deeper into the matter to find out why the conditions of the living of this class of men is as poor as it is, and then to suggest ways and means of improving this state of things. Until the sons of the country are given equal opportunities with outsiders to get posts of the superior class, the department concerned will not be able to attract the right type of men in the lower grades. With reference to one branch of the manipulative industries, workshops, the Commissioners say that they were "struck with the almost complete absence of Indians from the ranks of foremen and chargemen." These posts are either filled by men imported from abroad, or by "European and Anglo-Indian youths, the sons of their own employees as a rule" trained in their own workshops, when Indians do not appear to be given the same kind of training. The Commissioners recognize this injustice to the claims of Indians and say that "the continuance of conditions which

force the industrialists to import so many of their subordinate supervising staff is clearly most undesirable. They form a serious handicap to progress and militate against the ideal of an industrially self-sufficing India." This is a strong condemnation of the existing state of things and the apathy of powers that be towards the claims of the Indians for higher technical training. While the Commissioners are strong in pointing out the defects of the present system, they do not take up an equally strong attitude when suggesting remedies. Whether they are afraid of making up their minds or are afraid of giving offence to vested interests or they see difficulties ahead, their recommendations are made in a halting spirit, which shows a want of confidence in themselves, if nothing else. It is doubtful whether even such recommendations will be carried out in their entirety by Government. Unless all the Railways are nationalized and unless their management can be influenced by Indian opinion, most of the recommendations made under this heading are likely to be whittled down to a very large extent and the results of any reforms introduced will practically be nil. We want our Railways to be taken away from management by private companies and to be managed by the State, because we feel that we can now influence the policy of Government to a greater extent than we can the policy of directors managing the affairs of the company from a distance of 6000 miles. If our wishes are carried out we may see the recommendations of the report carried out in the spirit in which they are made.

L. S.

"INDIA IN TRANSITION: A STUDY IN POLITICAL EVOLUTION."

III.

NEXT to constitutional reform comes the question of reforming the methods of recruitment to the Indian Civil Service. The present system has many merits, and, on the whole, it has worked so well that no drastic change is necessary, unless the institution of simultaneous Civil Service Examinations is considered drastic. But it has one serious defect; it has tended to form the Indian Civil Service into a rigid caste, bringing in its train the evils of caste exclusiveness, narrowness and *hauteur*. His Highness the Aga Khan of course favours the demand for simultaneous examinations; but he thinks that a mere increase in the number of Indian members of the Service will not remove those evils. What is wanted is to bring district administration into closer touch with the people by non-official dilution, and with that view he makes a suggestion which deserves serious consideration. He proposes that men who, though they do not belong to the Civil Service, have shown such ability that they may be trusted to discharge efficiently the responsibilities of district administration, should be appointed as Collectors. This may appear a bold step, but the Aga Khan points

out that this method has been successfully tried in some European countries. In France, for instance, leading local gentlemen, whether members of the landed nobility or distinguished for their wealth, position, intelligence or honorary public services, have been often appointed prefects. "From amongst the ordinary citizens of India," says the Aga Khan, "it would be possible to select many excellent district collectors for a term of years. A leading landlord, a public-spirited millionaire, or a lawyer or a gentleman at large who has given much of his time to local public service might well be nominated to the headship of his district." The Aga Khan expects great good from this leavening of the Civil Service with men who will bring fresh minds and broader outlook to bear upon the performance of the duties of the Collectors. The question is not so easy as the Aga Khan seems to think. While it is true that the appointment of a fair proportion of non-official Indians directly as Collectors will give a wider field for the exercise of Indian administrative talents and perceptibly weaken the sense of caste exclusiveness that at present pervades the Civil Service and impairs its efficiency, the danger that always lurks in such methods of appointment is that the selection may be influenced by other considerations than that of genuine merit. But provided that the greatest care is taken in giving the appointments only to those who are really capable and endowed with a rich and broad mind, there can be no doubt that the proposal made by the Aga Khan is fraught with great possibilities of good. British statesmen are not inherently incapable of making right appointments, as is evidenced by the appointment of Lord Sinha as the Under-Secretary of State for India, and it would be too much to assert that the local Governments would always be swayed by improper considerations in appointing non-official Indians directly as Collectors. The Aga Khan's suggestion may, therefore, be acted upon at least as an experimental measure. If we could have a few *Turgôts*, there can be no doubt whatever that the district administration would be vastly improved; and some of these District *Turgôts* would also provide us with our future ministers and permanent under-secretaries.

In the chapter dealing with "Army and Navy" the Aga Khan advocates a uniform and federal army for the whole of India. He rightly says that the Indian Army must be a truly national force and that all races and castes of India should be afforded full opportunities for military training and service. The army must, moreover, be completely self-contained in respect to all branches of equipment. The Indian Army must not throw an excessive burden on the resources of India. It should be strictly commensurate with her legitimate needs, but there can be no doubt that it should be an independent and self-contained unit provided with all the branches of military equipment and that in all these branches no distinctions should be made on the ground either of race or

-caste. The door of military training and service should be fully open both to Europeans and Indians. We do not believe in militarism, but a country would be pursuing a foolish and suicidal policy if it did not make adequate provision for defending itself against foreign aggression. This implies that India should have not only an adequate army but also an adequate navy. The result of the present state of things has been that we have had no naval training at all. The physical situation of India makes it absolutely necessary for her to have a navy. She must be strong and self-contained both from the military and the naval point of view. Provided that Indians would be given full naval training and every naval career would be thrown open to them, we feel confident that India would be willing to spend as much money for creating and maintaining an efficient Indian Navy as would be necessary. The Aga Khan rightly says that such an Indian Navy gradually built up on these lines would be a unifying force and a tower of strength to the British Empire. The point to be noted is that the Government must fully recognise the claims of India's sons to the highest naval and military careers. With such recognition on the part of the Government, India would cheerfully make every sacrifice demanded of her for becoming a strong military and naval power. But if such recognition is wanting, it would be no wonder if she would resent the exploitation of her resources for an object which can have no moral significance for her, and which therefore can inspire her with no national ardour.

The Aga Khan's views on the industrial development of India are in consonance with those urged by the National Congress and the Muslim League. He pleads for fiscal autonomy and urges that the injustice involved in the excise duty on the cotton goods should be removed without delay. His suggestion that Indians should be attached to the staffs of the British consulates as representing Indian commercial interests ought to commend itself to the acceptance of the Government.

By far the most interesting chapters in the Aga Khan's book are those which deal with the status of Indians in foreign countries and their claim to East Africa. He recognises the principle now generally accepted that in dominions such as Canada, the temperate regions of South Africa and Australia, which are predominantly white, the requirements of a fairly homogeneous structure of society demand that some restrictions should be placed on Indian immigration though their scope should be strictly limited to the avowed end in view. But he rightly urges that no such claim can be legitimately advanced with regard to East Africa, whether British or German, and therefore pleads that those territories should be transferred to India to be administered as an Indian Colony by the Central Government. This question of the "fate" of German and British East Africa has not, we regret to note, received much consideration at the hands of Indian publicists. It would be re-

membered that Gokhale in his 'political testament' suggested that British East Africa should be transferred to the Government of India. Sir Theodore Morison in his article published in the *Nineteenth Century* a few months ago proposed that both German and British East Africa should be handed over to the Indian Government and administered as an Indian Colony. His Highness the Aga Khan cordially supports this proposal and urges that the interests of both these countries would best be promoted by throwing them open to full Indian emigration and administration. Both those regions have provided a field for Indian emigration from ancient times; moreover, their development is mainly the work of Indian labour, skill and enterprise. It is, therefore, but fair that they should be transferred to the control not of the South African Union, but of India. The Aga Khan very rightly observes that there is something singularly revolting in the desire of a mere handful of whites to keep East Africa as a preserve for themselves. "There are," he adds, "but some 65,000,000 whites in the British Empire, and they have for their almost exclusive enterprise not only the United Kingdom, but the immense tracts of Canada, Australia and South Africa proper. Yet a small section desires to bar to the 315,000,000 Indian subjects of the King the lands of East Africa to which their labour and enterprise have given them an unanswerable claim." His Highness the Aga Khan has pleaded the case for the transfer of East Africa to India with great truth and force, and it is to be sincerely hoped that the leading political organisations of India will support the proposal made by the late Mr. Gokhale, Sir Theodore Morison and His Highness the Aga Khan. We would only add that the Indians in these territories should be allowed full self-government in the administration of their internal affairs. They should be constituted as Indian Colonies, but their constitution should be based on the principle of responsible government.

As regards the general question of the status of Indians in Canada, Australia and South Africa, the Aga Khan rightly observes that a satisfactory *modus vivendi* would not be difficult if only both the sides would try to appreciate each other's point of view. The policy of unrestricted immigration may not be acceptable to the Governments and peoples of these countries, but it is the height of injustice to deny the ordinary rights of citizenship to those Indians who have already settled there.

Space forbids us from reviewing the Aga Khan's views on the educational and social aspects of the Indian problems. Suffice it to say, they fully reflect the better mind of India. In the chapter entitled "co-ordinated progress," he rightly lays stress on the point that India must advance in every sphere of national life. He thus represents the school of thought of which Ranade, Telang, Gokhale were the most eminent and powerful exponents. We shall conclude this review with quot-

ing the following paragraph which is also the closing paragraph of the book :—

“ Let me speak, finally, of my conviction that a progressive, satisfied and happy India would be the strongest pillar . . . of the British Empire. Strong winds with world-forces are moving Asia towards some great destiny. Germany and Turkey, Japan or China, dismembered Russia, the erstwhile Central Asian States—what influences will the play of world-forces give to each for good or evil? While no man can answer these questions, Britain must remember that for more than 150 years she has been the first Power of Asia and that the position of her vigorous daughter-partners, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, would become dangerously weak if the great base of her Eastern authority, triangular India, were ever to fall into other hands. In India she has a natural foster-daughter that has imbibed her culture and liberalising ideals. What is to be the position of this adopted, fast-growing child in the scattered family of the foster-mother? . . . A solid yet unchafing union, based on esteem and mutual interest, on the memory of common sacrifice for imperishable principles and the cause of liberty, will unite the foster-child with the grown-up daughters of the aged and geographically small but powerful and noble mother-country into a great instrument for the good of mankind, working everywhere in co-operation from Ottawa to Calcutta, from London to Delhi, from Melbourne to Delhi, for one beneficent Empire under a beloved Sovereign.”

R. G. PRADHAN.

(*Concluded.*)

THE REFORM SCHEME.

THE scheme has been variously styled as epoch-making, revolutionary, progressive, democratic, according to the particular aspect of it which catches the eye of the reader. It is epoch-making in the sense that for the first time since the advent of the British Government in India the idea of irresponsible government is dropped and some sort of responsible government, whatever its lineaments may be, is declared to be one which must be established at once, with complete responsible government as the ultimate goal. It seems to be taken for granted by all those who have expressed their opinion on the scheme that responsible government is the acme of wisdom and the last word in politics and that responsible government must conform to the type which has been evolved by the English-speaking races. It would be against the canons of criticism to criticise a scheme for not being what it never professed to be. Yet as it is necessary to go to the root of the matter and appeal to first principles before we can give a final opinion as to the suitability of the scheme to Indian conditions a review of the principles of democratic government is the best prolegomena.

The root principle of democracy is that administration without people's participation in it is unnatural; besides, it is certain to be antagonistic to the interests of the people governed; that even if it is conducive to the people's good, as judged by external prosperity and outward order, it does not develop the personality and stifles the development

of the inner man. Now, granting the truth of this main thesis, the most important question in the history of liberalism has always been, What are the best means of realizing this development of the personality. Now, the history of monarchical government throughout the historical period has demonstrated that this development is thwarted by absolute and irresponsible kings when they regard their subjects as their chattel and when they regard the public treasury as their private purse. But the history of monarchy has also revealed oases in this desert of tyranny and absolutism. There have been kings whom their people would not have exchanged for all the democracies in the world. The key to the mystery of this fondness for absolute sovereigns lies in the character of the kings. If the king thinks not of himself or his personal gratification but of Dharma then he brings a veritable paradise to his people. His popularity consists in his identification of himself with the general good, in his being the father of his people, in his conception of duty for duty's sake.

But unfortunately such kings are few and far between. Plato said that when kings are philosophers the state would thrive, but a philosopher-king is as rare as the Kohinoor. It is at this point that democracy attempts to make its claim irresistible. It says in effect, “ Kings are not likely to foster the corporate interests of society; so society should itself undertake the work; in short people must not be governed by kings or even by aristocrats as the second best; people must govern themselves.”

In antiquity, with small states, this arrangement worked out by means of the most elementary and direct method of all the citizens gathering together to decide by acclamation every matter that concerned the body politic; with the proviso that the category of citizens was circumscribed by the exclusion of the major portion of the units of society, who were slaves. It was generally believed at the time that this arrangement was the most perfect imaginable. But in times of stress and periods of acute disputes it left no room for an arbiter who would decide between the conflicting parties; as a result, many of the democracies were swallowed up amidst the welter of frequent revolutions which brought forth a Napoleon whom they had not bargained for. Thus absolutism, benevolent or otherwise, was again established by a swing of the pendulum, common in politics.

In modern times the vast empires and even small kingdoms are much too populous for the method of democracy that availed in antiquity to be practicable and hence the rise of representative government. The new method replaces the general body of the people meeting in the Agora, by a few representatives of all the people who are for purposes of voting divided into a few circles or electoral areas. The real sovereignty resides in the electors; the representatives are liable to be thrown out as soon as they cease to voice the feelings of the electors; by giving a mandate to their representatives the electors can get any piece of legislation passed; public money is spent in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the people; the executive is in most countries completely responsible to the legislature, while the legislature reflects the opinions of the people.

The essence of this system is the belief in the ultimate infallibility of the popular will; an idea that even experts ought to bow to the sovereign body and consent to abide by its decision; that people are not likely to go wrong on any question of policy and can be trusted to give ultimate deci-

sions. It is on the truth of these postulates that the success of democracy hangs.

It would carry us too far away from the theme in hand to discuss the question of democracy in all its bearings. It would therefore be convenient to judge of the applicability of these principles to the case of India before discussing the pros and cons of the scheme of reforms. The general thesis that under a purely autocratic administration the interests of the people are likely to be ignored is as true of India as of any other country; especially when the administrators are chosen from a country with a different culture, following different standards of public morality and with a decided bias in favour of their own culture and civilization. This cultural diversity makes a pure autocracy in India wielded by the people of one nation in the government of the people of another nation a stumbling-block to a harmonious development of polity. Efficiency is secured and prosperity kept in view; but the motives and acts of the rulers do not appeal to the ruled. There is always an *arrière-pensée* even when the best intentioned measures of legislation are passed. There is the feeling that the culture and interests of the former loom largely in the legislative enactments, and the culture and interests of the latter are not sufficiently kept in ariew.

This inherent antinomy, to use a Kantian phrase, in Indian politics can only be extinguished only by associating the rulers with the ruled in the matter of legislation and administration. To this extent democracy is a desideratum in India.

When, however, we come to the details and inquire how the people of this country are to be associated with the government of the country and how many of them should be chosen and what their qualifications should be, the prospect of democracy seems far less cheerful. In the first place, the grand thesis of democratic theory that the ultimate will of the people is infallible and unerring and that the people in the mass are not likely to go wrong is ludicrously false even in the west, from where we have imported our modern democratic creed. In India, which as one country is much vaster and far more populous than any western country, the thesis requires a greater scrutiny. Those who are enamoured of western democracy, generally take the leading conceptions of it as biblical truths, beyond the realm of controversy ranking as self-proven axioms. But this is by no means the case. A manhood suffrage in municipal matters for instance would create such a pandemonium in municipal government as the most ardent champion of democracy never bargained for. An out and out democracy therefore is not what one with a sufficient knowledge of European history would propose. The premise that the mass of the people are the best judges of their own interest is hopelessly wrong. We consider therefore the next logical alternative.

This alternative is that a small number of people whom we may call the select wise men of the community would be chosen and that the suffrage should be sufficiently high to keep out of the list of electors men who are not enlightened enough to express any opinion even on the question of the suitability of the candidate. A broad franchise is a sure precursor of corruption, intimidation and the whole catalogue of evils which the history of France reveals to any one who has got the eyes to see. America is another standing warning to the politicians who are so much taken up with ideas of universal suffrage and their congeners.

It appears so far that an extended franchise is undesirable. A limited suffrage is the only means to the end of the selection of the few enlightened constituting the electorate. As the question of the franchise and the electorate has not been touched in the reform scheme we will pass on to the next consideration.

On the whole, I am inclined to the view that a narrow franchise is the best preparation in India for a system of responsible government. As for the retort of the Anglo-Indian that the attempt of the Indian politicians is to substitute an Indian oligarchy for the oligarchy of English officials, nothing is lost by confessing at once that this is true. The object is to substitute an agency in sympathy with our culture for an agency that is bound to be wanting in that sympathy. The spectre of Brahmin oligarchy conjured up by the Anglo-Indian is a figment of his imagination. Even a limited franchise will not send into our legislative assemblies a phalanx of Brahmins to the exclusion of other castes. The history of municipal administration gives the lie to such an apprehension.

The question of responsible government in India is made intricate by the fact that the Government of India is primarily responsible to the British Parliament by the statutes; and whatever change in the statutes might be effected, it will continue to be so. This Janus-like face of the Indian constitution involves the retention of complete control of administration by the supreme Government.

If a responsible government of the colonial type is at once established, the responsibility to Parliament will be reduced to a vanishing point. As this might raise important issues, the best thing will be to concentrate attention on the provincial autonomy and local self-government in districts and villages. One thing, however, is clear; that responsible government will mean for the present an oligarchic democracy of the type introduced in England by the Reform Bill of 1832. The sooner this basic fact is realised by all the shades of Indian as well as Anglo-Indian opinion, the better will it be for the good relations between all parties which are a *sine qua non* of the success of any scheme that is introduced.

V. N. GODBOLE.

FAMINE TOUR IN PANCH MAHALS.

I WAS deputed by the Bombay Presidency Famine Relief Fund to visit the Panch Mahals District with a view to inform the Committee if the non-official relief in that backward district was being well distributed, and to report what further relief was needed. I spent about 10 days towards the end of March last with a view to making this inquiry, travelled about 150 miles by cart, visited 11 famine relief works of tank excavation and metal-breaking and came away with a great liking for the Bhils, who form the bulk of the cultivating classes. The eastern or Dohad sub-division is the worst affected portion of the district. I confined myself therefore to wandering in the Dohad and Jhalod talukas only. Distress among cattle was found to be great, and though mortality among them has not been great so far, they are at present reduced to mere bones and skin. As the district officials seem to have blundered at the start in the matter of estimating the extent of cattle distress in this sub-division, the quantity of Government grass allotted to this area is very small in proportion to its requirements and hence some cultivators are advanced cash money to buy grass instead of Government. Human relief too was not adequate for some time and gratuitous relief was given a month or so too late. Even at the time of my visit the number of workers' dependants, children and old persons, entitled to free relief, was restricted by a great

many unnecessary restrictions. But things have much improved during the last month and the officers in charge are not slow to correct their errors or defects when pointed out to them in good spirit.

THE BHIL.

The Bhil is a very good fellow. Improvident by nature, he does not spend much labour on his farm. Besides he is addicted to drinking. But he is a brave, honest and straightforward man. He does not reside in congested villages with crooked and insanitary lanes, but in the open in his farm house. A village is a number of hamlets spread over a few square miles. His language is a corrupt form of Gujarati with several common words borrowed from Marathi. As soon as a youth takes a wife, he separates himself from his parents and sets up his own house. He is not regarded as an untouchable, but still even the Shudra may not drink water touched by him, perhaps because the Bhil does not cherish the same reverence for the cow as other Hindus do. The Salvation Army and other Christian missionaries befriend him, but no Hindu religious or social organization has yet given a thought to the amelioration of his condition, for he is in a tight economical bondage to his Sowkar. Over three-quarters of the population of these two talukas is Bhil. Owing to the large number of Bhil teachers sent out from the Bhil Boarding Schools at (1) Dohad in this district and at (2) Godsamba in Mandir taluka of Surat district, Government has made it possible to start a number of primary schools for Bhil children and thus to elevate the younger generation.

CATTLE AND HUMAN DISTRESS.

The pinch felt by the Bhil on account of failure of crops is great, but that felt by his cattle is greater. The advice, given by H. E. the Governor at Dohad in reply to the address from the municipal board that the cultivator should keep his own fodder reserve for bad years, was a counsel of perfection, and given, I am afraid, in the wrong place. If given to the Kaira Patidar or the Kathiawad Kunbi, it may be of some practical value, but when given to the Bhil, it is absolutely thrown away. The fodder stacks at the time of my inspection had run out, trees in reserved forests were bare of leaves and cultivators were anxiously waiting for grass being advanced to them by Government, sold at cheap rates by charitable bodies. To the great misfortune of the Bhil the revenue officers greatly overestimated the fodder available on the spot and grew wiser when it was all but too late to get more grass. The evil effects of this bungling will be felt in the months of May and June, and I hope they will not be serious. Amongst human beings there is not much distress at present, but large numbers of them flock to relief works and walk 2 to 6 miles, morning and evening, to get employment. According to latest figures, there were over 15,000 persons employed on relief works and nearly 12,000 gratuitously relieved. Almost all of these were in the two talukas, Dohad and Jhalod, the total population of which is about 1,25,000. So about 20 per cent. of the people in the two areas are already on Government relief lists. This is rather a huge proportion.

LARGE vs. VILLAGE FAMINE WORKS.

It would not be inopportune to discuss here the comparative merits and demerits of large and small works for giving employment to those that need it. A village work is generally more attractive on account of its proximity to the worker's home, and on that account the famine code enjoins upon the worker there to do 33 per cent. more work than on a large, which naturally happens to be a distant, work. In the areas visited by me, I saw a happy mean between the two classes of work, each work serving villagers from an area with a radius of about 5 or 6 miles and giving employment to 500 to 4000 workers. Naturally, the worker likes to spend his evening in his home surrounded by his children and other relatives, and takes what care he can of his starving cattle. He prefers walking 10 miles a day to live a camp life away from his cattle and in any hut that may be provided for him by the unsym-

pathetic engineering officer. The general tax-payer is spared the expense of erecting the camp for such a large army of workers, and the worker is more happy at home than in camp, say 10 to 20 miles away from his village. A large camp of 10,000 persons or more is more difficult to supervise from a health point of view apart from the heavy expense of the camp, and in case of an epidemic great panic ensues and demoralises all concerned. The present arrangement therefore of having, say, one work to about 20 to 60 square miles is very satisfactory.

NON-OFFICIAL RELIEF.

In the current famine, Governmental efforts for famine relief are supplemented to a great extent by non-official organized efforts. The Bombay Fund not only supplies funds to famine stricken districts, but sends its representatives for the formation of local committees which run either cost-price or cheap grainshops or cheap foddershops or for the distribution of clothing and supplementing Government doles of grain to destitute or for maintaining free cattle kitchens. This sub-division has three such committees. Besides, the Salvation Army officers and other missionaries are at work to alleviate distress. Cattle camps are being started to maintain poor cultivators' bullocks, cows and other animals, free of charge or at a nominal charge, till the dire days are over. Pleaders and school masters are found devoting all their spare time, merchants are seen working, neglecting their private business in favour of the work of attending to the wants of the distressed men and cattle, and we come across occasional instances of Government servants throwing up their jobs for this work of charity. College boys hasten to enroll their names when volunteers are invited to do social welfare work among famine workers. Women in high station in life, accustomed to urban life only, are seen rambling from village to village in springless bullock carts in search of the hungry and the half-naked,—and rights of half-naked women are not wanting in villages in these days. Amidst the squalid poverty that we see in villages, this desire of serving one's fellow-beings is a great relief and raises great hopes for the future.

SOCIAL WELFARE WORK.

I have submitted a small scheme to the Bombay Fund for posting honorary social workers on large famine works, and hope that it will soon be put into operation. The workers are being selected from among college students who are prepared to spend their days of vacation among the Bhils and their children, trying to help them, instruct them in the three R's and elevate them, preaching abstinence or moderation in drink and giving them a wider outlook on life. About a dozen such workers will, it is hoped, be living in famine camps, befriending the Bhil and sowing the seeds of a Hindu Mission for the Bhils in the near future. Let even the illiterate Bhil feel that he forms a part of the Indian nation and that he too is not a mean citizen of the British Empire.

I conclude these remarks with an expression of great admiration and respect for the Salvation Army, which is doing meritorious work in this area. The Army officer goes out in villages with a bundle of clothes to cover the naked and arranges to send the poor man's lean bullocks to his cattle kitchen. I am also obliged to the Collector, Mr. Clayton, for facilitating my work, allowing me to co-operate with him and adopting several of the suggestions made to him.

A. V. THAKKAR.

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