

THE Servant of India

Acting Editor: S. G. VAZE.

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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

IT may be remembered that the Depressed Classes Mission Society waited in deputation upon Lord Willingdon in 1913 and requested the Bombay Government to nominate at least one depressed classes member on each of the district and local boards and municipalities, and that His Excellency gave a sympathetic reply. A similar representation has now been made on behalf of the Society to the Commissioner of Berar, and the Commissioner, acting thereon, has issued the following order to the Deputy Commissioners under him :—

" I have the honour to ask you to bear in mind the claims of the untouchable castes to representation on local bodies, if any individual of these castes can be found of sufficient intelligence and education to undertake the duties attaching to membership. Some training in local affairs is essential for these people, if they are to gain the experience necessary to enable them to sit in the future legislative councils with good effect. Please, therefore, when making recommendations for nomination on local bodies, bear this in mind."

Mr. V. R. Shinde, General Secretary of the Society, was engaged for the last two months in organising at Poona and Nagpur Ratepayers' Associations of the Depressed Classes from amongst prominent members of these classes and intends to equip, if possible, each district in southern and western India and in the Central Provinces, with such an association so that these bodies may elect their own representatives or, failing such elected representatives, secure their nomination through Government.

* * *

ALL the news coming from the Punjab is now censored; so special importance attaches to a letter from a respectable citizen of the province, which is published in the *Leader* of May 5. This communication complains, and complains justly, that the only Indian on one of the tribunals recently created is of the rank of deputy collector. Such a

person cannot be relied upon to exercise his independent judgment on matters that come before him, when his European colleagues are of the status of High Court judge and senior district judge. Mr. Kali Nath Roy was handcuffed and marched to the gaol. In Gujranwala some twenty respectable people were similarly handcuffed and taken in procession through the town under the orders of the district magistrate. It is said that, in order to harass suspects, martial law notices are posted on the walls of their houses and they are held responsible for the safety of the posters. If the notices are tampered with, they are visited with severe punishment. All the students in the Sanata Dharma College were asked to take their beddings on their heads and marched to the fort where they were interned for the night, for the only reason that some of the posters attached to the College were removed. The students of this College, as well as those of the D. A.-V. College and Dayal Sing College are made to report themselves four times a day. Several such things find mention in this communication. An inquiry must be instituted at once and such vexatious measures stopped.

* * *

ANGLO-INDIAN papers seem to think that because the anti-Rowlatt Act agitation has been availed of by certain mischief-makers for creating outbreaks of disorders, Indians, and particularly the moderate-minded men amongst them, must now work a change in their heart and begin to love a law for which they before cherished deep aversion. The *Madras Mail* thus favours the local Liberal League with earnest advice to co-operate with the Government in dispelling misconceptions regarding the Crimes Act and deprecating all opposition to it. By the way, we have noticed placards correcting some misrepresentations of the Act, not one of which we have seen in circulation in this part of the country. The propagandist work undertaken by the Government in the vernaculars will be commendable if only they will set themselves to refute misstatements which have actually gained currency. Otherwise, the pasting up of bills will only do harm by suggesting ideas of which people had never dreamt. It is true that the uninstructed have but a vague idea of the law, if any at all, but they are not so seriously misinformed as to believe any of the fantastic stories which the vernacular placards contradict. The Moderates cannot relax their opposition to the Rowlatt Act because of the tragic events that have followed in its wake. They are

not capable of the psychological feat which the *Mail* in its generosity has recommended to them. It also advises the Moderates to separate themselves from the Extremists in order that they may be regarded as allies of Government. Let the *Mail* understand once for all that the Moderate party settle their policy in accordance with their convictions and do not set even co-operation with Government of this sort above their convictions.

* * *

IN view of Mr. Gandhi's announcement that he expects to be able to revive civil disobedience about the beginning of July next it may be useful to record here the conclusion to which the editor of the *Modern Review* has arrived after mature reflection, that "laws which are otherwise unobjectionable should not be disobeyed even though Government may enact a law really injurious to individual and national liberty and well-being. . . It is only laws in this way really injurious which may be civilly disobeyed, and that by only those whose minds are free from passion and resentment." The last-named condition, excludes the possibility of organising Satyagraha as a mass-movement, and under the first-named condition, the violation of the registration law, which is among the laws selected for breach by the Satyagrahis, becomes unjustifiable. For, as Mrs. Besant has said, this law is not only unobjectionable but useful, and, according to the test applied by the *Modern Review*, good citizens must obey it.

* * *

OF the generality of the public it may be said with truth, though it may seem cynical to say so, that those are the readiest to express approval of the passive resistance movement, without much reflection on their part, who have not the remotest idea to fling themselves into it and to share the sufferings of those whom they admire from a distance. If the test laid down by Mr. I. B. Sen were applied, *viz.*, that all those who voted for the adoption of a resolution recommending and supporting Satyagraha should be made immediately to take the pledge, we are afraid that the number of adherents of this movement would undergo a drastic curtailment. In the Bengal Provincial Conference it was found that all the Nationalist leaders like Messrs. B. C. Pal, Fazlul Haque and I. B. Sen were hostile, Mr. Sen declaring that the movement would do no good to the country. The Bombay Provincial Conference contented itself with declaring that civil disobedience as a protest was lawful. The test suggested by Mr. Sen would particularly make havoc of the Deccan Nationalists, not one prominent member among whom, and not more than ten at the most from the rank and file, have joined the movement so far, though outwardly all express burning sympathy with it. It is not pleasant to write thus, but it is useful to know the real state of things, for people are likely to be misled by the numerous expressions of approval of which one hears or reads.

MR. SEN'S test is really very serviceable, and may be extended to other movements. It explains how the Bombay Provincial Conference light-heartedly adopted the resolution of boycott of British goods as a political weapon with which to fight the Rowlatt legislation, flying, in so doing, in the face of Mr. Gandhi's advice, and took no notice whatever of the swadeshi pledge recommended by him. The swadeshi pledge involves personal obligations, which boycott does not. This is really the heart of the matter, so far at least as the Nationalist leaders in the Deccan are concerned. Again, we must offer an apology in making such a comment, but it is a fact that resolutions are often adopted at political gatherings in such a spirit of irresponsibility as may fill one with dismay. One ought to know what value to attach to these resolutions.

* * *

WE cannot understand how it profits Government to cut out portions of telegraphic messages so long as the objectionable matter is allowed to appear in print and transmitted by post. It must be a stupid policy which only causes vexation without preventing mischief. Perhaps the Censor discharges his office of suppressing whatever may appear to him as simply unseasonable or dangerously seditious, not caring in what other ways it may attain publicity. While the Censor's conscientiousness is entirely praiseworthy, the Government may take a more reasonable and practical view of the matter. They may consider if the excision of such a portion of Mr. Sastri's speech as the following, from the A. P. I. report, does good to anyone:—

"Judging from this standpoint, he (Mr. Sastri) could not withhold from the Punjab Government his stern disapprobation of the measures being taken by it. The declaring of martial law, dropping of bombs from aeroplanes, whipping in the public streets were barbarities which they thought had passed away with the autocracy of the Russian Government. Further, some of the most respected of their leaders in the Punjab were put under arrest. Though with their inadequate knowledge they could not pronounce a verdict on each individual case, he must say that it was impossible to believe without the strongest evidence of the arrests of the Editor of the *Tribune*, Mr. Manoharlal, Mr. Dunichand, and others whom he personally knew, that there was the least justification for them. It was clear that the Punjab Government were greatly overdoing this part of the business. Instead of bringing back calm, these measures were only too likely to exasperate feelings and create a rankling sense of wrong in the public mind. The Government of India which had too complacently allowed Sir Michael O'Dwyer to take these severe and barbarous measures must have its share of responsibility for the results that would follow. What would be the effect of these outbreaks on reforms? There was no doubt that they would be used to delay reforms. If the Punjab Government had intended to defeat the reforms, they could have acted better than in the way they were now acting. Whatever the intentions of Government, there would no doubt be a tendency to use the present disturbances to baulk the people of the reforms. With the promise which the Viceroy had felt himself compelled to give to services rendering the position of ministers unbearable and with the increase in salaries which the Secretary of State was granting them, the outlook was already a gloomy one."

WANTED A FULL STATEMENT.

It is clear that the Government have extended the term of office of Sir Michael O'Dwyer not merely because it would be undesirable to change horses in midstream, as some Anglo-Indian newspapers would fain have us believe, but because, according to them, a strong man is needed for the maintenance of peace in the Punjab at the present time, and in Sir Michael they have an ideal Lieutenant-Governor of the type of "martial law and no damned nonsense." No similar confidence is felt in his successor, who is known for a mild and gentle man. The *Times* has blurted it out. Taking up its peculiar rôle of a candid friend, the journal remarks: "There are times when plain speaking is required, and it is necessary to say that Sir Michael O'Dwyer's successor does not possess the same qualifications as he for dealing with open rebellion. It is essential that Sir Michael O'Dwyer be asked to remain at his post at present." Without a doubt the ruler of the Punjab is possessed in a supereminent degree of those gifts which the *Times* ascribes to him. He can be trusted to repress disorder with an iron hand as few else can be trusted, and if a display of strength were the only quality desiderated in the Punjab satrap at the present crisis, the wisdom of retaining Sir Michael's services till he has effectually extinguished all signs of disorder cannot be questioned. But we do not believe that a relentless administration of martial law is all that is required in a disturbed state of the country. If the capacity for a large-hearted sympathy and imagination is particularly required at any time it is on the occasion of a serious crisis like the present. We have only to imagine to ourselves what disastrous consequences would have ensued if, instead of Lord Canning being at the helm of affairs at the time of the mutiny, there was a man who was endowed with a double dose of those qualities of which His Honour of the Punjab is such a splendid exemplar. If, as fortunately things fall out, it is time for Sir Michael to lay down his office and if Sir Edward Maclagan, appointed to be his successor, also happens to possess just those qualities which are now called for, it is not the part of wisdom to delay the commencement of the new regime even by a single day. For very much depends upon the personal qualities of the head of Government at such a time, and the past record of Sir Michael is such that the mere extension of his rule longer than the prescribed span would by itself excite strong suspicion in the public mind. It is not, therefore, without a proper appreciation of the advantages and disadvantages of such a course that the Moderate Party's Conference came to the deliberate judgment that Sir Michael's headship of the Punjab should terminate.

The people of this country are invited to have an implicit faith in the declaration of Government that they are faced with open rebellion, and those who betray any critical spirit towards the uncommonly harsh measures that are taken to suppress

disturbances are looked upon as unfriends of Government. The Anglo-Indian prints are for the moment ringing with a denunciation of the Moderate leaders, whose particular office it would seem to be to support Government through thick and thin. It is nothing to the Government that the Moderates warned them in good time against the blunder which they committed in passing an obnoxious legislation. They might disregard the warning and, by a sequence of events, bring upon themselves trouble of a serious nature. And yet when they use brutal repression to put it down, the Moderates must not even suggest inquiry and when things like an insurrection, rebellion, and revolt, are talked of, they must not call for evidence. There is no one among the non-officials who is safe enough to be taken into confidence and no sort of indication can be given which would induce the conviction that there is a pressing danger. The Moderates see that men of an eminently meek disposition and perfect honour are being spirited away, and yet they must cherish the belief that the Government are acting wisely. Few there are in either of the Indian political parties who will not run to the succour of Government when they see that the life of the State is in peril and will not support the extreme use of force to avert the evil, but it is difficult of credence that a conflagration of the character of open rebellion has all of a sudden burst upon the country. In such a state of things it becomes impossible for Moderates, to whom most unctuous appeals are being made for co-operation, not to entertain grave misgivings of the necessity or wisdom of many of the measures that the Punjab Government are taking. The Moderate well to denounce the severity of the measures which on the facts published everyone must regard as greatly exceeding the needs of the situation. They, therefore, ask for a full statement of facts so that whatever justification there may be for the application of force may be known to the public. They also request an open and independent inquiry into the outbreaks, including the measures taken by Government. The *Pioneer* supports such an investigation, limited to the ultimate causes of the disturbances and if it is not expanded into a general inquisition into the firing upon the mob and such other acts of officials in coping with the disturbances. The anxiety of that paper to confine the scope of the inquiry to one part of the subject is intellegible, but it shows at any rate that such an inquiry is quite feasible and need not be put out of court as so many other Anglo-Indian journals do. The same course is urged upon the Home Government with regard to Egypt. Dr. Hayden Guest observes:

"The men on the spot have created the trouble and cannot be trusted to cure it. Light, a searchlight, on Egyptian affairs is what is wanted at once, and no "firmness" of military authorities can give us any confidence unless it is acting on knowledge gained impartially by men sent from England for the purpose. What the Government

should do its to dispatch a small commission to Egypt a once, with wide powers to inquire and to act. . . . It is not Gordon's head to-day that is in danger; it is honour and prestige of the British Empire in the East."

It is well that Mr. H. E. A. Cotton also has independently made the same suggestion with regard to India. The reports that are coming from the Punjab about the violence of measures used are of grave import. Practically all mob violence has now ceased, and things are restored to their normal state. It is now only the excesses committed by authorities in the exercise of force—we must regard them as excesses in the light of the information available—that are heard of. In these circumstances it is the duty of Government, if they care for their fair name, to make a full and explicit statement on the situation, and they will find that if the measures are reasonable, however strong, there will be no lack of popular support and co-operation.

EXCLUSION OF DEPRESSED CLASSES CHILDREN FROM SCHOOLS.

THE exclusion of the children of the so-called untouchable classes from public schools, which has been maintained in India ever so long, is directly contrary to the policy which the early administrators wished to introduce into this country. The Madras Government which has explored the past history of this very important question has recently issued an order which says that as early as 1854 the Court of Directors laid down the principle "that no boy be refused admission to a Government college or school merely on the ground of caste," and that this principle received confirmation in 1863 from the then Secretary of State. And yet the vast mass of Indian humanity upon which the higher castes have imposed a most degrading social ostracism is practically denied the benefits of education. It is a matter for congratulation that to the bringing about this woeful result the Government at any rate are no party, and if the children of the depressed classes are not freely admitted into the schools at present, it is not because the Government refuse them admission, but because the social prejudices of the people have not yet yielded to the beneficent policy which the Government have always been desirous of carrying out. In Madras Presidency the children of the Panchamas are admitted only into 609 out of 8,157 schools, i.e., only into 7 per cent. of the total number. This is of course as discreditable to the Hindu community as anything may well be, and also wholly wrong from the standpoint of Government's policy, for, as the order says, "it is impossible to defend or justify this state of affairs under which, in spite of a heavy and increasing expenditure from public funds, a large section of the population is practically excluded from participation in the benefits which that expenditure is intended to confer." The provision of special schools for Panchamas is possible only in a very limited number

of cases, and the Madras Government rightly hold that it is not desirable to perpetuate the division caused thereby. Probably the best part of the education of depressed classes children consists in their intercourse with the children of the higher castes, and it would be very unwise to deliberately shut them out from the wholesome influences which such an intercourse will assuredly exert. There was a time when the admission of low caste boys meant the withdrawal of the high caste ones, but that prejudice is rapidly dying out, and the railway and the steamer, which have thrown together people of every variety of social position, have familiarised men's minds to a free commingling of caste with caste. There is also a better and wider appreciation of the benefits of education, both material and moral, so that few will be found in this time of the day who will sacrifice these benefits to the luxury of keeping the depressed classes at arm's length. The Government, therefore, may well make a rule, and strictly enforce it, that in no circumstances shall a child of the supposed low castes be refused entrance into any educational institution. If such a rule exists, we suppose effect is not always given to it. It is time we taught the caste men that it is a sin against God and man to regard any one as untouchable. As a practical step to prevent the exclusion of depressed classes from schools, the Madras Government has ordered a transfer of public schools now situated in Brahman quarters or a temple to which a Panchama can have no access to a locality which will be within his reach. Such other action has also been recommended, but the disability under which the Panchamas labour cannot be wholly removed till the enlightened among the community have the courage to throw down the barriers which separate themselves from their more unfortunate brethren and learn to look upon all human beings as equals of one another.

In this connection, we may mention that the C. P. and Berar Government have decided to distribute Rs. 50,000 out of an imperial grant of Rs. 1,50,000 among local bodies for the special purpose of extending vernacular education among the depressed classes. It has been decided to apply part of this money to the establishment of vernacular schools in places convenient to a large depressed class population where it may be expected that the majority of the pupils will be from these classes, pupils of other castes and classes also being admitted to them. The C. P. Government, however, take care to add that "the establishment of vernacular schools would be without prejudice to the right of all castes and classes to admission to all schools"—a principle to which the Government must strictly adhere. They have also decided to encourage the diffusion of education among depressed classes by taking the following measures:—

Inducements to teachers to enrol and retain in schools pupils of these classes. A bonus of Rs. 2 might be paid in respect of each pupil who passed the primary examination.

Inducements to members of these classes to become teachers and undergo training stipends at special rates are already offered to such teachers while under training. Higher rates of initial pay or allowances not exceeding 20 per cent. of ordinary pay might be offered to certified teachers.

Inducement to pupils of these classes to remain in schools.—An annual grant of Re. 1 might be paid to each depressed classes pupil in the two highest classes of a primary school for the purchase of books, slates and school materials.

SELF-DETERMINATION FOR INDIA.

IN Mr. Tilak's representation to the Peace Conference a demand is made for the application to India of the Wilsonian principle of self-determination. In making this demand, however, Mr. Tilak seems more anxious to use the sonorous phrase than to obtain the substance of the demand connoted by it. One would have thought that, to give an air of completeness to the treatment of his subject if for nothing else, he would at least mention that, as a matter of abstract justice, India would be entitled to independence, her hoary civilisation supporting her claim to it better than that of any colony lately belonging to Germany. Such expectations however will be disappointed, for Mr. Tilak does not give even bare mention to this idea. Nor does he suggest a transfer of allegiance. He assumes that, even if self-determination were to be applied to India in its fulness, she must remain under foreign domination, and that domination must be supplied by England. This may be good policy, but a very bad treatment of the subject of self-determination. I cannot admire the frame of mind which prompts one to leave out some of the most important aspects of the subject merely to establish for oneself the reputation of a cautious politician. Not even to let one's mind dwell on those aspects can only spring from a faintness of heart. If, then, India is to remain under the tutelage of Great Britain, would Mr. Tilak have England administer her under a mandate of the League of Nations and render to the League an annual account of her rule? It is in that shape that the principle of self-determination has approved itself to the Peace Conference. Strangely enough, there is not in Mr. Tilak's representation even the demand to apply to India the mandatory system. Liberal newspapers like the *Nation* have strongly animadverted upon the proposed exclusion of British colonies from the application of that system. If Mr. Tilak thinks India is not entitled to it or that it is not prudent to put the demand at its highest, where is the good of making a representation to the Peace Conference, the professed object of which is to demand self-determination for India but which studiously refrains from even mentioning any of the things which alone are or can be signified by self-determination?

Mr. Tilak makes an appeal to this great principle laid down by Mr. Wilson only to demand

what is no more than the Congress-League amendments in the M.-C. reform proposals. He has not the candour, however, to say that the official proposals should stand and that certain improvements should be made in them. Nor does he boldly maintain that, now the reconstruction of the world is taking place on the basis of self-determination, the M.-C. reform proposals should go by the board and that the people should be given the freedom to evolve their own scheme. He does not make it clear whether it is a certain *quantum* of reforms on which he insists or the agency which is to determine it. His wobbling on this point is greatly to be deplored, for while the very weakness of his demand that India should determine her own form of government must defeat his object, his going to the Peace Conference over the head of the British Government will only be used by the enemies, as far as it will serve them, to turn down the reforms officially proposed. On such a vital matter decision and one-pointedness are required above every thing else. To face both ways is never more dangerous than when such tremendous issues are at stake. While the Peace Conference will turn its back upon you from the very want of courage you betray to look it boldly in the face, you will easily estrange and even antagonise the rulers upon whom you depend as a matter of fact for further progress. Mr. Tilak has indeed in his subsequent lectures declared that he does not want the M.-C. scheme to be thrown overboard; if that represents his real feelings, is he not merely trifling with the Peace Conference to approach it with a representation such as his? He wants the Conference to declare that Indians are quite capable of governing themselves, and complains that the provision of stages in the M.-C. proposals for constitutional development implies their unfitness, which is resented by Indians. But what does he himself propose in exercise of self-determination? He wants the people to decide "what speed would be safe for advancing towards full autonomy," and further on says that the process of development should be completed within a period of fifteen years. Does not this betoken, on his own showing, unfitness of Indians to assume the duties of self-government as well as the stages provided for in the official scheme? The period of fifteen years he has already in a later speech extended to thirty and has declared his willingness to extend to fifty—an excellent commentary on the manner in which Mr. Tilak will observe the mandate of the Delhi Congress. Mr. Tilak does not recognise that if the Peace Conference admits India's claim to self-determination and also admits further her fitness to govern herself, it must by its very principles grant her—not dominion autonomy but independence. Mr. Tilak's ambition, however, does not soar so high; he shrinks from demanding either.

It is unnecessary to point out the several errors into which Mr. Tilak has fallen in his description of the official scheme, e. g., he contends that the reforms suggested in the central Govern-

ment tend to make it more autocratic than now—a fallacy exploded several times before. I would, however, make one final point. Is it wise, I ask, to make it appear as if you ask for self-determination when as a matter of fact you ask for certain extensions in the M.-C. scheme? I think Mr. C. Vijiaraghavachari was quite right when he warned the Subjects Committee of the Delhi Congress against the danger of making the fate of reforms, due to us in the ordinary course of evolution, hang even in some measure upon the decision of the Peace Conference to apply to or withhold from India the application of a new doctrine, when there is at least an even chance of that decision going against us. It would have been worth the while to take the risk if in invoking this principle we were asking for a very much bigger thing; when we ask for a mere enlargement of the reform proposals officially put forward, our going to the Peace Conference with a demand, to all outward appearances, for self-determination is bound to affect our cause adversely. If the demand fails to receive recognition, as is most likely, it will unnecessarily alienate the sympathies of the British statesmen—a point with which I have dealt already. If it succeeds, even then we get in the name of self-determination what is in fact a much slighter thing than that. Why should we thus by our own act put ourselves at a tactical disadvantage? I remember Mrs. Besant maintaining that the Congress-League scheme of reforms, adopted at Lucknow, was meant only for the transitional period before the close of the war, and that after the cessation of the war India must be placed on a footing of perfect equality with the Dominions. She appealed to clause c in the self-government resolution of the Lucknow Congress in support of her contention. Hers was a wholly wrong interpretation, but it shows her anxiety to do nothing which may be regarded as tacit acquiescence on India's part in the transitional reforms as if they were part of the Peace settlement. The banner of self-determination was not then raised, but Mrs. Besant said that in the reconstruction of the Empire which would take place at the end of the war India must be recognised as a self-governing unit of the British Empire. She insisted that the Congress-League scheme was only an interim scheme, in order that Great Britain might have no excuse to plead at the Peace Conference table that the future of India had already been settled by introducing in that country an agreed scheme of reforms. That position Mrs. Besant has now abandoned, but Mr. Tilak goes to the other extreme and makes a demand outwardly for full self-determination, whereas he merely asks for a widening in some particulars of the official scheme. This is, indeed, a signing away of India's rights of nationhood. Has this sacrifice any counterbalancing advantage? Are any reforms likely to be conceded to us by an appeal to self-determination which are not likely to be conceded otherwise?

A. CRITIC.

THE INDUSTRIES COMMISSION'S REPORT.

XIII.*

THE success of the Commissioners' recommendations about the training to be given to Indians to enable them to work as foremen or assistant managers of workshops will depend to a great extent on the spirit in which these recommendations are carried out by railway management and Government and private workshops. Even after providing such facilities, there will remain the question of giving suitable posts to such trained Indians. The Commissioners recognize this factor, for they say, "the stipends and the prospects offered are not of a nature to induce the better educated classes to spend a number of years as workmen." Their recommendations, both regarding the stipends to be given to apprentices and their training, are well thought out, and if they are carried out in their entirety and in the spirit in which they are made, at the end of a few years there will be a fairly large number of persons duly qualified and quite capable of working as foremen in private or railway workshops. But if these trained men are not given the posts which their training entitles them to, and if preference is given to Europeans or Anglo-Indians of the same qualifications merely on racial ground, the training institutions and the apprentice classes will not attract the right type of middle class educated youths and the whole scheme will prove a failure. Let us hope that Government and railways will grow wiser on account of the happenings in India and the outside world and that they will give equal, if not greater, opportunities to the sons of the soil to serve in these posts, which are till now looked upon as preserves for non-Indians.

Under the heading "the training of mechanical engineers" is given a short account of the training provided at Roorkee, Madras, Sibpur and Poona, and attention is drawn to the defects in the existing system of such training. After referring to the improvements made in these methods in recent years, the Commissioners say, "But the measures adopted are inadequate and are conceived on altogether too narrow lines to meet the needs, present and prospective, of a rapidly expanding system." They repeat the complaint made regarding the absence of Indian-trained persons in the superior staff, and say, "The former (super-staff), whether assistants or managers, were men who had been trained as mechanical engineers in Great Britain." It would have been interesting to learn what was the percentage of Indians in the latter class.

The Commissioners recognise that, with the increasing development of the country's industries, the demand for trained mechanical engineers will go on increasing and they say that the war has opened the eyes of employers to the "inconvenience and dangers that arise from the entire depen-

* Previous articles on this subject appeared in the issues of Nov. 31, Dec. 5, 13, and 19, Jan. 2 & 16, and Feb. 6, 13 & 27, March 20 & 27, and April 10.

dependence of India on imported personnel for the supervision of engineering industries." As a statement of facts this is not absolutely correct, as employers began to feel all these inconveniences long ago, but they had no other alternative but to import such men to take the risk of their being found suitable for the work, and to depend upon their good-will and loyalty for the success of their factories. Large employers of skilled labour have been very severely criticised by their importing foreign experts. If the critics were aware of the difficulties which even the greatest industrialists in the country have to cope with and had realized their dependence on the support of these foreign experts—for there are practically no trained Indian experts to take their place—they would give credit to these men for subordinating their personal feelings in the interests of the shareholders of their companies who have trusted them with their moneys in these concerns and on whose confidence depends the prospects of their starting new industrial concerns. The critics very often forget the fact that the first duty of the managing agents—however patriotic they may be—is to earn increasing dividends for their shareholders and not to jeopardize their interests in attempts to train up their countrymen for high and responsible posts. The latter object is being now kept in view by many of the managing agents, but because it is given a second place they are cried down as unpartriotic and unsympathetic towards their own countrymen.

As a rule, it is no use talking of what might have been, but one cannot resist the temptation of saying that if the Government of India had been far-sighted enough, they would have adopted some twenty years back measures for the training of Indians as foremen and as mechanical engineers. Will they even now wake up and without any loss of time adopt all the proposals of the Commissioners in their entirety?

The old bogey about the unwillingness of educated Indians to submit to workshop training requiring hard manual labour seems to linger in the minds of some persons, and the Commissioners have done well in saying, "There are now numerous signs of a marked change in the sentiment, and we feel confident that if facilities are provided, increasing use will be made of them."

A separate paragraph is devoted to the expansion of the existing Engineering Colleges into technological institutes by making provision therein of higher technical instruction for mechanical and electrical engineering and by starting departments of general technological chemistry. The details are not worked out in this case as in the preceding ones. Recognising the strength of public feeling about the necessity of higher education of all kinds being connected with the local Universities, the Commissioners do not propose to take away the control of these institutions from the Universities, but make such recommendations about the internal administration of these colleges, and about giving them full freedom for fixing the syllabus,

&c., as will leave the University only the power to examine students and grant degrees. It would be interesting to learn the views of Dr. Sadler's Committee on this subject. Anyhow it is hoped that the Universities will carefully see that the rights of supervision and control which they exercise at present over all affiliated institutions are not tampered with.

The Commissioners think that these provincial Engineering Colleges even after their expansion into technological institutes will not be able to meet the growing demand of still higher trained men, and they therefore suggest that such demand for higher training should be met, in the first instance, by the creation of scholarships to enable students to get such training in foreign countries, and, in the second instance, by the creation of imperial Engineering Colleges. They do not make any detailed proposals about these imperial Colleges, but merely ask that they should be kept in sight as a goal. In the absence of details as to where these colleges should begin training, and how they are to be co-ordinated to the provincial institutes, it is not possible to give any opinion about this proposal. I may, however, say that I have a dread of the word "imperial," whether it is used in connection with "services" or with "institutes."

After giving a description of the work done at the Victoria Jubilee Institute, the Commissioners make a very useful suggestion that "the training in the Institute should be followed by two years spent in practical work before the full diploma can be obtained." They recognize that there is a difficulty in the way of finding places for them, but they hope that employers of labour will realize to a certain extent "that it is incumbent upon them to provide facilities for training the rising generation." There is a hopeful sign that some employers realize that they owe such a duty to the rising generation, and we hope with the Commissioners that many more will rise to the occasion.

A whole section is devoted to discussing proposals for providing higher mining and metallurgical education, reference being made incidentally to the existing educational facilities. Mention is also made about the proposal of the Tata Iron and Steel Company to start a metallurgical institute at Jamshedpur (old Sakchi), not only for their own men but for people from outside. The proposal is under the consideration of the Bihar and Orissa Government, who seem to have consulted the Commissioners about it. As students from all parts of India will be allowed to join the proposed institute, it is but fair that the Government of India should give a special grant for the purpose over and above that given by the Government of Bihar and Orissa.

The Commissioners' remarks about navigation and marine engineering show either that they have not realised the importance of this branch to the future trade and commerce of the country or that they had not sufficient time to thoroughly examine the whole question. The reason given by

them for their inability to submit any definite proposals, *viz.*, that they were "unable to obtain any authoritative or helpful information as to the lines on which the subject could be taken up" does not appear to be quite valid. A strong Commission like the present one could have easily got all the information on the subject if they had set their heart on it. They need not after getting all the information have made any final detailed recommendations, but might well have made tentative proposals based on the information placed at their disposal. The Government should lose no time in appointing a committee mentioned in the report to inquire into the question of establishing schools for navigation and for providing training ships. Not only in the interest of this country, but in that of the Empire, is it necessary to have as large a number of trained Indian navigators as it is possible to train up in the near future. As the Sydenham College of Commerce, the only institution of the kind in the country, was only started in 1912, and it is still almost in an experimental stage, the Commissioners do not give any definite opinion about its utility or suggest alternatives except that they want the Universities to have much less voice in the affairs of the College than what they have at present. This shows that either the Commissioners know little of the stimulating influence of an University on its affiliated colleges or that they have a strong prejudice against the existing Indian Universities. Again, referring to the question of making provision of teachers for industrial and technical education, the Commissioners make proposals necessitating radical alterations in the existing system of exercising control over technical and industrial education which will be examined in the next article.

L. S.

THE REFORM SCHEME.—IV. PROVINCIAL BUDGETS.

THE commonest criticism of the budget procedure of the provinces has been that under it the transferred heads would be starved. It is even supposed that reserved heads might go on swelling, leaving little money for schemes of social advance in education, sanitation, &c. Personally I see nothing that warrants such an outlook. There is no reason why the provincial executives would be more callous simply because the scheme is passed. At present the transferred heads are provided somehow and they will get at least the same allotment under the new arrangements. As for new taxation the ministers are empowered to levy new taxes. What will happen, however, is that the odium of the new taxes will be thrown on the ministers. But here is absolutely no reason why the ministers should fight shy of such a task.

When, however, we come to the assurance with regard to the budget, "that no Governor is likely without reason to disregard the wishes of the Council," we are again inclined towards scepticism in the matter of believing the pledges given by constitution-builders. As Dadabhai has shown, there is many a slip betwixt the cup of the pledges and assurances of the British statesman and the lip of the Indian people. Assurances re-

main on the statute-books or are explained away by pettifogging. In practice the local Governments in the past have emasculated many salutary laws promulgated by the supreme Government. Lord Ripon's famous resolution of 1882 on local self-government is a case in point. We sincerely trust that British statesmen will realize the moral effect produced on the people by a disregard for the pledges given in State documents.

One guarantee against the executive council appropriating too much to itself at the expense of the transferred heads, in the opinion of the Report, is the periodic review by a Commission of all the dealings of a Government. The opinions of the Moderate as well as Radical politicians which I have read so far tend to distrust this guarantee. It is believed that the prospect of a distant scrutiny will not operate as a steadying influence either on the council or on the Government. To read between the lines, one can also discern a general apprehension that unless the personnel of this Commission is chosen with the greatest care there is the possibility of this Commission taking a lenient view of the doings of the executive part of the Government and concentrate the whole criticism on the doings of the council. We need not here pause to analyse the reasons of such a belief; but there is no doubt that such a belief exists.

The proper guarantee against the ill-conceived action either of the Government or of the council is not a Damocles' sword of a Commission hanging over their heads, but the character of the personnel of the two parts of the future Government. From whatever route we reach the goal of responsible government, the main guarantee of the successful working of any part of the machine is a genuine desire to co-operate and a thorough sympathy with the spirit of the constitution among those who tend the machine. If this spirit is not imbibed by the future Governors, councillors and ministers, no amount of paper guarantees and rigid rules of administrative procedure will succeed in avoiding a series of *émeutes* leading to a breakdown.

PERIODIC COMMISSIONS.

The periodical review of the administrative machinery by a Commission appointed by Parliament is an indispensable link in the chain of events leading to complete responsible government. The Report is conscious of the importance of the authoritative character of the Commission. The abortive nature of many of the Commissions in the past has naturally made Indians very distrustful of Commissions. However, with all their defects, Commissions cannot be done away with. If all the items of administration have to be reviewed, including the work of the Government of India, in the interim and the whole machinery has to be readjusted to new standards and new ideals, a Commission deriving its authority from Parliament itself is the only body which will have the necessary weight of authority. These periodic inquiries will keep the Parliament in touch with Indian matters. At present barring the sleepy performance of the reading of the report on the material and moral progress of India, Parliament is hardly ever conscious of any document which would trace the evolution of political progress in India. As a rule it is presumed that every thing is best in this best possible world, with an optimism that would put to shame even the optimism of Leibnitz.

Two things, however, are necessary from the Indian point of view. The personnel of the Commission must be such as to be able to give satisfaction to Indian opinion. The President espe-

cially is required to be a politician free from an anti-Indian bias and with a decided sympathy for liberal institutions and impartial enough to hold the balance even between the Government and the people. Secondly, as the *Times of India* remarked recently in connection with the Railway Board, a small number of Commissioners is much better than a larger number, not only on the score of economy but even from the point of view efficiency. Three real experts can do more solid work than half a dozen men who are not half as expert. If these precautions are taken no sane Indian politician would take any objection to the appointment of such a Commission.

A GENERAL VIEW OF PROVINCIAL MACHINERY.

Taking a general view of the provincial machinery under the new scheme the following conclusions emerge. The complete separation of provincial finance makes for real progress. A larger devolution of authority and freedom from interference at the hands of the Government of India are also in the direction of complete provincial autonomy. The diarchy in the executive and the legislature is not very objectionable, provided that most of the heads are 'transferred.' The discretionary powers of the Governor are too wide; hence an appeal ought to lie to some other power on most of the points of difference between the Governor on one side and the minister and the council on the other. The power of intervention by the Government of India should not be used except in grave situations. Certified legislation should be an exception and not the rule. The Governors should be always responsive to the will of the council and should be selected with a view so ensure the smooth working of the new constitution. In the budget the 'certified' allotments should be few and far between, and the budget should be framed with a view to meet the larger demands for schemes of social amelioration and not simply with a view to secure 'peace, order and good government.'

Now, isolating only the provincial scheme, what are we to say about it? Is it disappointing and unworthy, to use the expressions of the Radical politicians or is it perfectly satisfactory or something midway between the two? With the guarantee of a succession of liberal-minded Governors and with the several corrections which I have indicated in their proper places, I would pronounce this part of the scheme to be a good stepping stone to responsible government, provided there is a genuine desire to reach that goal. It is not perfectly satisfactory if the standard by which we judge is the one set by the Congress-League scheme. But it is sufficiently democratic for our present purpose. It presents the strongest points of resemblance to the German constitution in its actual working, meaning of course not the present constitution but the one in operation for the last forty years before the war. It gives an irremovable executive with a representative assembly influencing its decisions, but not able to coerce it into a complete submission. Most of the Indian politicians take the British constitution as their model. But as the war has shown, the British constitution has proved itself very defective on account of the preponderance of party government in it. If, therefore, parliamentary responsibility of the English type be not regarded as the ideal for India to follow, the provincial scheme has the merits of being more stable than a scheme in which the executive would have to resign after a vote of want of confidence or after being defeated on an important measure. The Governor here would correspond to the Imperial Chancellor in the

Reichstag. He must give an account of his administration to the council when a debate is forced upon him by the council; but an adverse vote does not unseat him. The only thing is that he must obey the rules of the constitution which in the case of India would mean the Parliamentary statute. Of course the analogy is not perfect, because in India the franchise would be fairly narrow, while in Germany members of the Reichstag were elected by universal suffrage. What I want to indicate is that the provincial scheme would liken itself for the time to a constitution in which there is no parliamentary responsibility and yet in which the Governor would be amenable to the discipline of an elected—of course in the present case partly elected—assembly.

Let us pass now to the Government of India.

THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

As we have remarked in a few places, candour is a virtue eminently displayed in the M.-C. report. There is very little of the attempt to whitewash official doings and to justify the *fait accompli*, that has characterised many of the State documents in the past. In accordance with this the signatories of the report preface their remarks on the Government of India with a candid admission of the slow-moving character of the machinery of the Government and the radical defects in its constitution. The principal causes assigned are the necessity of a double reference to local Governments and the India Office, insufficiency of staff, and the bureaucratic character of the Government itself.

It is believed that, with greater provincial autonomy, the Government of India would be freed from half of its routine which, with a highly centralised system, they were compelled to do in connection with superintending the details of the administration. In commenting on the insufficiency of staff there is drawn a comparison between the departments in England and the departments in India, and the latter are said to have a staff which, with the exception of the three Secretaries, is purely clerical. The remark causes a smile. Whose fault is it that the departments in India did not contain men on whom a larger responsibility could be thrown. We suppose the Government have to thank themselves for this state of affairs. If more Indians had been trained to its higher and more responsible work instead of being trained to be mere Babus, the permanent staff of the departments of the Government of India would have been as efficient as the staff at Whitehall.

With regard to the bureaucratic character of the Government very little need be said. The theme has become a hackneyed one. The fault of such a Government is that it is impatient of criticism. With a suppression of criticism it is bereft of any outside assistance in gauging the needs of the people, in inaugurating new policies and reviewing its own performance.

In the executive council it is proposed to add one more Indian member. If the total number of members is reduced on account of the changed relations with provincial Governments this would be regarded as satisfactory. But if the portfolios are nine as at present or are increased to ten there ought to be an addition of two more Indian members.

It is premature to say anything about the nature of the franchise and constituencies for electing members to the Indian Legislative Assembly till the report of the Committee is published. But it must be said that the difficulties about direct election ought not to deter us from

pursuing a rational scheme of direct election. In indirect election the diversity of views, on which the report relies so much to make the Assembly true representative, will be found unattainable. Members elected by the elected members or the non-official members of the provincial councils cannot be said to be as representative of Indian opinion as those elected by constituencies with a special eye to their fitness for the higher council. It is true that according to direct election the experience and training of the provincial councillors would remain unutilized for a time. But this is preferable to the weak sense of responsibility which is felt towards their real electorate by men elected by the indirect method. Indirect election frustrates the very object of democracy.

IMPERIAL LEGISLATION.

In order to enable the Government of India to 'obtain its will in all essential matters' and to pass legislation to which the Assembly is unwilling to give assent, it is proposed to perpetuate the official *bloc* in a second chamber, which shall be the only legislative authority with regard to 'certified legislation.' The Congress-League scheme makes no provision for such a contingency. It provides that laws passed by the council may be voted by the Governor-General, but it makes no provision for the affirmative power of legislation. As far as I know, the Congress-League presumes that the supreme council will always be amenable to the advice of the executive and that a contingency like the one anticipated by the M.-C. report would never arise. Rather it is meant that if such a contingency arises the executive ought to bow to the will of the council. But in that case the Government of India will have been responsible to the people. What then becomes of its responsibility to Parliament? As the M.-C. Report regards this responsibility to Parliament as a postulate not to be questioned, it would appear to be futile to discuss this point. But since the constitution of the Government of India is the pivot of Indian politics and this part of the M.-C. Report is made the butt of the strongest criticism, it is worth while to say something about it.

We might begin by means of an illustration. The Government of India thinks that they cannot fulfil their obligations to Parliament and carry on administration without the Rowlatt Act. The council, as it would be constituted in future with an elected majority, would not, let us suppose, consent to pass the measure. According to the Congress-League scheme the executive ought to administer the Government without it. Now whether the executive is right in its view or hopelessly wrong, it would be right in refusing to be held responsible for the government of the country without the instruments that it demands. Now, even according to the Congress-League scheme, the executive is not to resign; in fact it is not removable. So we come to what may be really an anomalous position and the only way out of such an impasse will be for the executive to adjust, advise, expostulate, and ultimately compromise.

From this illustration it is clear that till complete responsibility is granted the M.-C. scheme is right in devising some sort of method for securing affirmative power of legislation. Now we ought to see whether they have devised means for the purpose which we can at least tolerate. There is no doubt that the Council of State would be a weighty body as more than one-fourth of its members will be elected by the non-official members of provincial councils and twenty-five, *i. e.*, one-

half, would be the *élite* of the officials. For a long time to come, this Council will be lacking in the dignity of the second chambers or the senates of the European countries. But with all that, it will fulfil the purpose for which it is intended, namely to serve as the sole legislative chamber for 'certified legislation' and for emergency legislation when the emergency is so urgent as not to allow time enough for passing a legislation through both the chambers. In the case of non-certified legislation the Council of State will not be able to obstruct the will of the representatives, because with a joint session the non-official members of both the chambers will be in a decided majority. If, therefore, the 'certified' legislation is exceptional and non-certified legislation the rule, the Council of State may be tolerated by Indian opinion.

V. N. GODBOLE.

SELECTION.

THE ALL-INDIA MODERATES' CONFERENCE.

A MEETING of the committee of the All-India Moderates Conference was held in Calcutta on Sunday last (April 27) under the presidency of the Hon. Surendranath Banerji. The committee considered the present situation in the country created by the passing of the Rowlatt Act, the passive resistance campaign, the disturbances of the public peace at several centres, and the measures taken by the Government in the Punjab. The committee also considered the position in relation to the Reform Scheme. Certain conclusions were arrived at as a result of the discussion and a sub-committee was appointed to consider and issue a draft statement laid before the meeting and approved by it in the main. The conclusions are embodied in the resolutions quoted below. The sub-committee met on Monday and passed the statement which will be published. The President was asked to communicate the statement to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State and also to send a telegram to the Viceroy and a cablegram to the Secretary of State.

1. The committee deplore and reprobate the recent breaches of the public peace in different parts of the country involving loss of life and personal injury, destruction of public buildings, and interruption of communications, and urge the public to support the Government in all reasonable and necessary measures for the maintenance of law and order. While realising the necessity for dealing with firmness and promptitude with all outbreaks of violence, the committee appeal to the Government to adopt a generous and large-minded policy of conciliation.

2. In the opinion of the committee the information so far published by the Government regarding the situation in the Punjab is evidently incomplete and it is necessary that the Government should immediately publish a full statement of all the facts upon which their action is based to enable the public to form a correct opinion as to whether the measures taken by the authorities are justified in the interest of public safety.

3. (a) On the basis of the available information published by the Government itself the measures adopted appear to the Committee to exceed in severity the limits of what is required for the restoration and maintenance of law and order and the committee feel constrained to endorse the general disapproval of them. (b) The committee would strongly deprecate the employment of force and repression beyond the necessities of the situation as it is bound to alienate public sentiment and prejudice the cause of good government.

4. (a) The introduction of martial law and the various orders promulgated thereunder, the method of their adminis-

tration, the deportation of some and the arrest of other prominent public men for no known or stated reason, the whipping of men in public, the disgracing of public men in Gujranwalla, the use of machine-guns, and the dropping of bombs from aeroplanes, the harsh treatment of students, and the orders relating to railway travelling, public and private conveyances, and various other matters, have filled the public mind with humiliation and indignation. (b) And in the opinion of the committee it is essential that there should be a public investigation of all the facts referred to above by a mixed committee of officials and non-officials with a view to reassure the public mind and to restore mutual confidence between the Government and the people in the affected areas. (c) The Committee should further inquire into the administrative methods and measures followed in the Punjab during the last few years and endeavour to ascertain whether and how far they have led to the present situation.

5. (a) On the facts published by the local Government the committee consider that the continuance of martial law is not justified. (b) The committee are also of opinion that among other things required for the re-establishment of normal conditions it is necessary that the assumption of office by the new Lieutenant-Governor should not be delayed.

6. In the opinion of the committee it is necessary that the Government should arrange for a public inquiry by a mixed committee of officials and non-officials into the circumstances in which the crowds were fired upon at Delhi and Calcutta.

7. In the opinion of the committee it is necessary and desirable that the restrictions placed on Mr. Gandhi's movements should be withdrawn.

8. The committee are of opinion that the campaign of

passive resistance against the Rowlatt Act which has now been suspended should not have been started at all in the existing circumstances and should be abandoned.

9. The passing of the Rowlatt Act in the face of the unanimous opposition of the Indian public was an unwise step and the Committee appeal to the Secretary of State to advise His Majesty to disallow it.

10. In the opinion of the committee any attempt to whittle down the reforms embodied in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report or to delay their introduction would create a sense of profound disappointment and widespread discontent, impair public confidence in the sincerity of the intentions of Government, prejudice the cause of good government and progress, and be altogether disastrous to the best interest of the country.

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