

# The Servant of India

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## Topics of the Week.

### Indian Opinion on the Despatch.

THE Government of India Despatch on constitutional reform published last week had, quite deservedly in our opinion, a hostile reception in this country. And no wonder. When even the *London Times* condemns it as "altogether too narrow" and Lord Peel as "somewhat out of date," no more words are needed to bring out its reactionary nature. To Congress circles with their gaze unalterably fixed on independence, the despatch, as pointed out by the *Bombay Chronicle* which characterises it as "a constitutional fraud," is "in every sense untouchable." The feeling of the more sober sections of political opinion, however, is reflected in the resolution passed by the Deccan Sabha of Poona, last week and communicated by cable to its President, the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri. While the Sabha recognised that it was an advance on the Simon recommendations, the proposals contained in the despatch were disappointing and inadequate to meet the needs of the present situation. The only thing that could ease the situation was, in the Sabha's opinion, the immediate conferment of Dominion Status on India. In the Indian Press the despatch has been almost universally commented upon adversely. The *Times of India* criticises it for "its hesitation and its apparent contradictions," and about the reference in the despatch to the necessity of preparing "the foundation for full responsible government," asks :

Why then talk of preparing foundations if they have been in existence, and have been steadily built upon, for many years past? We are not quibbling over a wrong, or carelessly used, metaphor: we are endeavouring to demonstrate at least one reason why the despatch has failed to gain popular approval and the reason is the hesitating attitude it betrays. If the object in view is obscured in uncertainty one cannot expect the proposals for its attainment to command widespread confidence.

The *Amrit Bazar Patrika* is apparently voicing nationalist view in Bengal when it says that the despatch is

only another edition of the Simon Report. The spirit is the same, Suspicion, distrust, desire to perpetuate British domination and encouragement of the disintegrating elements and finally the denial to India of the right to freedom run through the pages of the despatch as in the Simon Report.

The proposals embodied in the despatch strike the *Leader* as "hopelessly reactionary" and, in its opinion, "will not allay the present discontent. They are grossly inadequate to meet the needs of the situation. They concede neither Dominion status nor responsible government which nationalist India has been demanding with one voice." "Stone for bread" is the verdict of the *Tribune* of Lahore which thinks that to put forward these proposals at a time when India has made up her mind to have nothing less than full responsible government is "either to mock her legitimate aspirations or to insult her understanding." The *Hitavadi* which must be presumed to speak for the C. P. and Berars says: "The Government of India's proposals neither embody the National Demand nor give effect to the promise made by Lord Irwin" on July 9 last and repeated in the course of the Sapru-Jayakar negotiations with Congress leaders. Further, in its opinion,

The reform proposals that Lord Irwin's Government have made out at the root of the principle which they have so ostentatiously defined, namely, that the new system must be based on the willing consent of the people.

Indian Christian opinion as represented by the *Guardian* regards the Government of India's proposals as "halting and unsatisfactory," while the more communalistic Muslim opinion, to borrow the words of the *Muslim Outlook*, looks upon the Despatch as "extremely disappointing." The *Mussalman* of Calcutta rightly thinks that the despatch will "in no way satisfy the aspirations of Indian nationalists." It proceeds :

What has been recommended or suggested is neither Dominion status nor self-government for India, though it is only fair to admit that the despatch is in some respect

an improvement on the Simon Report. The days are long past when Indians would have been satisfied with an instalment of constitutional reforms giving the people some power here and there.

But let us not forget Sind, where the general view as expressed by the *Observer* is that the proposals in the despatch are inadequate for present needs. At the same time the paper frankly acknowledges that "there is no dishonesty but only excessive caution about the report."

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#### Confused Counsels.

WITH the laudable desire to enquire at firsthand into the no-tax campaign in Bardoli and Borsad talukas of Gujrat, the Indian Merchants' Chamber deputed a Committee of its President and Secretary to tour the areas and submit a report. The Report was duly published along with a letter of the Chamber to the Government of Bombay. The Committee state that the reason why the cultivators refused either to pay up the land revenue or even to promise to pay it some months hence was that they had no orders from Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. They would pay up only when these were released and sanctioned the payment. They did not plead for partial or complete remission of their dues on the ground of the phenomenal fall in prices of agricultural produce and the consequent fall in their incomes. And yet the Indian Chamber pleads that the conduct of the cultivators calls "for sympathetic action with a view to remission, wholly or partially, of land revenue dues". The Chamber is not fair to itself, or the Government or the tax-resisters when they propose that Government should remit land revenue on economic grounds which are not urged or acknowledged by the tax-resisters themselves, who, on the other hand, base their action entirely on political grounds. If the cultivators had asked for remissions on account of fall in prices, they have a good case for favourable consideration, though in that respect the consideration need not be restricted to the particular talukas of Gujrat. The fall in prices has affected adversely the cultivators all over India, and a general scheme of remissions will be necessary.

Another recommendation it makes is that Government should not demand the payment of land revenue before the customary date, viz., January next. The Committee admit that Government did not insist on immediate payment but offered the alternative that cultivators should promise to pay at a later date. It is obvious that it was only when they neither asked for remission on account of fall in prices, nor paid up their dues nor even promised to pay later on that Government took steps to realise their dues. The Chamber took the trouble to assure the Government that "they neither endorse nor approve of the non-payment of taxes for political purposes." They would have done some real service both to the Government and the unfortunate cultivators, whose self-imposed sufferings and tribulations have moved them, if they had advised the cultivators to abandon their policy of non-payment of taxes for political reasons and to seek remissions on economic grounds.

We are at one with the Chamber in protesting against the police excesses in the realisation of revenues. We wish the Chamber had something to say to the political leaders who thrive on the sufferings of the poor and who were responsible for the pitiable sufferings of the cultivators who committed the *Hijab* to an Indian State territory. It is significant that it was only some agriculturists, but no traders and working men and women, that migrated, and that in fairly big villages and in the town of Bardoli itself, the headquarters of the no-tax campaign, there was hardly any sign of people desert-

ing them and seeking political salvation elsewhere. A Congress worker in the Surat district explained on another occasion that the cultivators were less sophisticated than the trader and the town-dweller. Here is some exploitation of the poor, unsophisticated, rustics and that by the Congress.

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#### Madras Council's last Session.

WE cannot congratulate the Governor of Madras on his refusal to allot any time for non-official business during the last session of the Legislative Council. The fear that the time, if given, would be utilised to bringing up inconvenient questions like excessive use of force by the police in their dealings with the Civil Disobedience Movement, the official dislike of the Gandhi cap and the National Flag to the extent of their banning them as illegal, must have, we are afraid, considerably influenced the Governor's decision. But it is needless to say this is nothing but suppression of public opinion which is sure to find opportunities for expression even under stringent restrictions. It is, therefore, not the part of wisdom or statesmanship to try to thwart it by putting unnecessary obstacles in its way, which is what the Governor of Madras must be said to have done in this case.

But even this brief session was availed of to draw attention to the police having exceeded the minimum force necessary in their handling of crowds in connection with the Civil Disobedience Movement. The adjournment motion was of course talked out and Government seemed fearful of accepting the mover's challenge to press it to a division and accept the Council's verdict. The general feeling was that though the Government had to deal with a lawless movement, they need not necessarily resort to lawless methods in doing so. In this connection attention was also drawn to a remark by the Governor in the speech he made in opening the session to the effect that Government will use "all the resources in their power" to suppress the Civil Disobedience Movement. Whilst those who found themselves in the Council could not quarrel with the Government in their desire to put a stop to the movement, they blamed the Government for wishing to do so by "all the resources in their power" and not necessarily by all "legal" resources. The frequent use of the *lathi* by the police against satyagrahis was severely condemned by the mover who would have no objection to people considered to be engaged in an unlawful act being judicially tried and consigned to prison, if found guilty. The official answer to this was that if they did so, there would be more prisoners on their hands than there are jails for. The obvious conclusion to be drawn from this state of things would be, as pointed by the mover, that the Government had lost the confidence of the people. It appears from what the mover stated that despite the well-known High Court judgments holding the use of the Gandhi caps and National Flags to be legal, all those convicted by lower courts for those offences were not let off on the ground that the parties concerned had failed to appeal. The Government may be technically right in its attitude: but does it argue much respect on their part for the judgment of the High Court? There was a general complaint that the wise policy that every case of firing should automatically be followed by an open inquiry had been consistently ignored. The Home Member's reply to the debate appears to have been more lengthy than satisfactory. We do not see what would have been lost if he had given in to the demand for an inquiry; but he tried to justify without success the Government's refusal to institute one. Even in regard to other matters brought up in the course of

the debate he cannot be said to have come out with flying colours.

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#### Provincial Women's Conferences.

THERE is much to be said in favour of the practice by which the annual sessions of the All-India Women's Educational Conference are preceded by Women's Conferences in the different provinces. Apart from the awakening of public interest in the work of the Conference which this occasions, it also prepares the delegates to consider beforehand the subjects that come up for consideration before the parent organisation in an informed manner. This is an advantage which many of our older organizations in other fields lack, which is a matter for regret. Such provincial women's conferences are at present being held in different parts of the country and their proceedings are full of interest to all those who believe in the all-sided progress of the Nation. Since its birth the scope of work of the parent body and along with it that of the constituent organisations has been considerably enlarged. It is no longer a merely "educational" conference, for it is sometimes known to discuss such social legislation as the Sarda Act, matters like the promotion of swadeshi, the charges against the personal honour of the Maharaja of Patiala in the well known pamphlet, "The Indictment of Patiala," etc. which have nothing to do with education. Our Muslim sisters are apparently more broadminded than our Muslim brethren, for they are showing a commendable tendency to work shoulder to shoulder with their Hindu sisters in the matter of the uplift of Indian womanhood as a whole. Thus we find that the chairman of Reception Committee of the Madras Conference was a Muslim lady, Rahmut Unissa Begum Sahiba, who deplored both the quantity and quality of our elementary education. She pleaded for a course of education suited to the special requirements of girls by the inclusion in the curriculum as compulsory subjects of such subjects as house-hold management, sewing, netting, crochet work and spinning. As regards higher studies she considers the present common courses for boys and girls as unnatural and suggests suitable amendments. H. H. the Junior Maharani of Travancore who presided emphasised the present economic dependence of women, the evil effects of the *pardah* system, child marriage, enforced widowhood and similar other disabilities which bar women's development. In this connection she also referred to the labour of the Mysore Committee whose recommendations, if carried out, would make women virtually the equals of men. This she wants done in British India and to this end would like the Conference to be even more active than in the past. With a view to prevent the present educational waste occurring in the initial stages of primary education owing to only a slight proportion of the girls entering the infant class succeeding in reaching higher standards even of the primary stage, a special course of training for the teachers of the first three classes was recommended. How the same would improve matters without the introduction of compulsory education and whole-hearted co-operation on the part of parents and guardians in the matter of sending their children to school is difficult to see. The Conference also asked for the abolition of corporal punishment to children in schools. This demand too is by no means out of date, seeing that cases in which school masters are hauled up before the courts for belabouring children in their charge have not become a matter of history. We also echo the Conference's request for the possibilities of the greater use of the cinema as a means of educational expansion, being looked into. The Bombay Conference did well, in our opinion, in deprecating all attempts at curtailing the scope of the Sarda Act.

## Articles.

### INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL.

PREOCCUPIED as the Government and the people of India are with the constitutional problem of India, it is likely that the grave danger that is threatening the Indians in the Transvaal may not receive the attention that it deserves. The Imperial Indian Citizenship Association has, therefore, done well to wait in deputation on the Government of India and elicit an expression of opinion of the Member in charge, Sir Fazl-i-Hussain. The Government of India, Sir Fazl-i-Hussain assured, were doing their utmost, and they were not without hope that reason and justice would ultimately prevail. It is however rather disappointing that he was not more explicit, though his reticence is understandable in view of the delicate negotiations in progress. With reference to the amazing statements of white supremacy recently made by Gen. Hertzog and Mr. Piet Grobler, Sir Fazl did not mince matters but gave full expression to the feeling of the people of India when he said that he felt "astonished and, to be frank, horrified" at these sentiments.

The idea of white supremacy is at the back of the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Bill. Before we deal with the object of the Bill, we may take note of the procedure followed by the Union Government in promoting it. Apart from the obligations that attach to membership of the same Commonwealth, the Cape Town Agreement recognised that the Indian problem in South Africa was to be tackled in common by the Governments of the Union and of India, and it was for the express purpose of securing "continuous and effective co-operation between the two Governments" that the Government of India willingly consented to station their Agent in South Africa. It will be gratefully acknowledged that, though on account of Parliamentary exigencies, the sittings of the Select Committee appointed in February last could not be postponed till the return to South Africa of the permanent Agent, Sir K. V. Reddi, the Union Government gave every facility to the Ag. Agent, Mr. J. D. Tyson and his Secretary to watch the proceedings of the Select Committee and to tender evidence. In view of the specific undertaking in the Cape Town Agreement referred to above, the Union Government would have done the right thing if they had taken the Government of India into confidence before they publicly sponsored the recommendation made by the Select Committee. When once the Union Government get committed to a policy to which the Indian Government must in the nature of things strongly object, "effective co-operation" between the two Governments becomes much more difficult, if not impossible. The Government of India's co-operation will be available to the Union Government in the latter's endeavours to raise the permanently settled Indians to "western standards of life," the basis of co-operation stipulated by the Union Government themselves; their co-operation will not be forthcoming for the

purpose of insulting, humiliating and eliminating the Indians in South Africa.

Though the terms of reference of the Select Committee were specific and limited in scope, the whole question of Indians in South Africa was brought under review and evidence totally irrelevant to the issues on hand was allowed. The terms referred to the situation created by the technical violation of certain restrictive laws by Indians, but the evidence covered the whole ground, the desirability of Indians' existence in the Union, their character, habits and what not. Charges were freely levelled that Indians were undesirables, that their presence was harmful to white prestige and white racial purity, that they engaged in unfair competition and stood in the way of white advancement, that they revelled in fraudulent bankruptcies, that they evaded laws, that their proximity led to depreciation of white property, that there was an influx and infiltration of Indians, that they violated the Cape Town Agreement and so forth.

With infinite patience and pains-taking research, Mr. Tyson rebutted and refuted the baseless charges. In a comprehensive Memorandum he quoted facts and figures and the findings of South African authorities themselves that there was no influx or infiltration of Indians, that an ever increasing number of Indians in the Union was becoming a South African community and that the total number of Indians in the Transvaal bore a very small proportion to that of the white community. He produced figures to show that far from increasing, the number of Indian traders was decreasing, and successfully challenged the figures produced in the contrary interest. Socially the Indian caused no problem: no Commission and Committee which investigated the matter before has ever said he was. And he added with telling force that "if 17,000 Europeans in India can maintain their own standards of civilization amid a population of nearly 320,000,000, it seems grotesque to suggest that the existence of nearly 13,000 voteless Indians can be a menace to the civilization and standards of living of 600,000 Europeans in the Transvaal." He went on to say: "My own experience is that from the social point of view the Transvaal Indian is content with the society of his own community. On rare occasions when he has social relations with Europeans, as for example at the meetings of the Johannesburg Indo-European Council, nothing but good has resulted." Along with Indian witnesses and Prof. J. M. Watt, Chairman of the Indo-European Council in Johannesburg, he vigorously denounced compulsory segregation of Indians. Even when as long ago as 1885 segregation was contemplated it was meant to operate for residential purposes and for sanitary reasons only, but not for trading and occupation. Even that justification does not exist today. A rabid anti-Asiatic who gave evidence before the Committee said: "In fairness to the Asiatics I must say that we find that they are fairly clean." The Lange Commission had denounced compulsory segregation of Indians. And the Cape Town Agreement led to the abandonment of segregation and the promise to

uplift Indians to western standards of life. Segregation would "degrade the Asiatic", said the Lange Commission, "and react on the European."

There is another class of grievances which the Anti-Asiatics are not ashamed to proclaim but which have only to be mentioned to be laughed out of court in any decent society. It was, for instance, complained that Indians purchased houses in European areas "with a view to living amongst the European on an equal footing"; that the employment of white women in Indian shops would eventually result in the loss of "their sense of superiority over the Asiatics", and that "where an Asiatic gives credit to the young people it had a bad effect, because immediately they owe him money he treats them as social equals." It was another grievance with the whites that the poorer class among them persist in trading with Indians: "It is the poor man who deals with the Indian and he will tell you straight that he has only so much money to spend and can get plenty of credit from the Indian and can buy there cheaply, so he is going there. These are the people who are going to drag us down with themselves and we should guard against them." A grievance against the State was the "difficulty" that the Licensing boards "have been unable to refuse a license on the ground of colour." Another "difficulty" was the attitude of the judicial courts in the Union. Mr. Justice Krause had said in a judgment:

It is a sound principle of interpretation that where the legislature deprives a large section of the community of their rights as citizens that the law has to be strictly and carefully scrutinised. The law should be so interpreted that the citizen is not deprived of greater rights than it was the clear intention of the law-giver should be taken away. Where there are vested rights, it is the presumption that the legislature intended to respect these, unless there is an unequivocal intention expressed to the contrary.

Yet another complaint was that the "effect of cases fought out in the Courts has mainly been to entrench the Asiatics more firmly than ever amongst the Europeans by defining rights on their behalf which hitherto were never defined."

Coming to the immediate task entrusted to the Select Committee, it was pointed out that in so far as Indians transgressed the restrictive laws deliberately the Municipalities and the Government were parties to the illegalities. It was pointed out that the laws contained penal clauses and the duty of enforcing the laws was definitely laid on the Mining Commissioner. But neither the Municipalities nor the Government insisted on the efficient enforcement of the laws, for which humanity they may well take credit. Another charge was that they took advantage of loopholes in the anti-Asiatic laws to get round them and defeat their objective. Inasmuch as their actions were legal and were upheld by the judiciary of South Africa no stigma can attach to them.

Indians have been charged that they did not respect the anti-Indian wishes and the policies of the whites. Indians cannot be held to something to which they were not a party, and to the anti-Indian laws now under consideration they were never a consenting party. They were parties only to

the Gandhi-Smuts Agreement and the Cape Town Agreement and these they have respected. They had only agreed to the restriction of further Indian immigration and to the surrender of political rights and to voluntary repatriation, and they have not gone back on them. It was the Union Government that went back on their promises. The promises of Gen. Smuts at the Imperial Conference in 1917 and of Mr. Burton in 1918 have been forgotten and the more recent promise contained in the Cape Town Agreement is being deliberately trampled under foot.

The question to be considered now is not whether anti-Asiatic laws conceived as long ago as 1885 but never strictly enforced, should now be enforced and the rights which in consequence grew up should be expropriated, or whether these anti-social laws should be repealed or at any rate suspended in practice, as they were all these years, or at least the vested rights should be protected. The Union Government's proposals are designed to compulsorily segregate Indians and in effect expropriate their vested interests, to revert to the intentions of 1885 and enforce the restrictions rigorously and retrospectively.

The full extent of the persecution of Indians in the Transvaal will not be realised unless it is remembered that the Registrar of Titles and Rand Township Registrar said in evidence before the Select Committee that :

There were no townships in the proclaimed areas where Asiatics are free from impediments as to occupation and ownership because there is always a restriction in the title ... I know of no case of a township on a public digging with no restriction in the title.

Which means that neither the Government nor the Municipalities can set apart locations for Indians in the townships where they now live; they must be deported to distant areas. No more effective, if diabolical, method could be invented to expropriate without compensation Indians with vested interests and "squeeze" them out of South Africa. Assisted emigration will entail some expense to the Union Government but this method of segregation will save them the expense while ensuring the riddance of Indians; and on the top of it, it will profit the European merchants who can buy up Indian stocks for a song and capture their custom. If these be the western, civilized, Christian standards of conduct and public polity, well may the world be saved from them. Gen. Hertzog pleads for the entrusting of the hegemony of Africa to such as he!

Utterly black as is the prospect, we still retain the hope that wiser counsels will prevail. The very enormity of the crime that the Union Government propose to perpetrate must make them pause. The presence in South Africa of the Agent of the Government of India will ensure that the grievances of Indians in the Union will not be overlooked but will receive due attention. And in Sir K. V. Reddi we have an Agent who can be trusted to do his utmost in the cause of justice and fair-play, and he can count on the full support of united India, people and Government, in the representations that he may make to the Union Government.

### FRAMING THE ISSUES.

THE first plenary session of the Round Table Conference concluded last week. The speeches were of a high order and helped to clarify the issues. The result marks an epoch. Two great issues emerged out of the discussion and a friendly atmosphere, which is even more important for immediate purposes. There was hardly a jarring note and the Prime Minister's speech completed the harmony and left a glow of satisfaction and hopefulness.

The two great issues were Dominion status and federation. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru opened the debate with a magnificent and telling speech in which he powerfully advocated both. He claimed for India Dominion status which he defined as a "status of equality with the other free members of the British Commonwealth, an equality which will give it a government not merely responsive but responsible to the popular voice." The central Government must, he insisted, be made responsible to the central legislature. He warned that responsibility in the provinces unaccompanied by responsibility in the centre would inevitably lead to a break-down of governmental machinery under a week. He then reviewed the obstacles to that change advanced by the Government of India in their Despatch and exposed their utter hollowness and insincerity. Was the handling of law and order by the present Government of India during the last twenty-five years a satisfactory record? Every now and then since the Partition of Bengal in 1905 extraordinary powers had to be resorted to and thousands of people of high character and education had to be shut up in prisons. No Indian Minister could have made graver blunders than the Government of the "Steel-frame". It was nonsense to pretend that no British Officer would serve under an Indian and that therefore the Army could not be transferred. To-day scores of British Officers are serving under their Indian superiors in civil employ and in the past British Military Officers freely served under Indian Princes. He, therefore, pleaded that no racial element or prejudice should be introduced into the question. Indianization will be conditioned more by practical considerations than by racial ones. When the Government of India decline to countenance the transfer of finance to Indian Ministers on the ground that, in the absence of a Reserve Bank, political bias would be introduced into finance, it may be asked if the Government of India have themselves set that high standard of finance and whether they did not manipulate the financial policies of the country for the benefit of Britishers. And does it rest with them now to lecture the Indians and read them sermons? By all means let steps be taken to divorce finance from politics: the Dominion Government of India will do this better than its predecessor.

Lord Peel attempted to save the Government of India's position, and referred to the Indian National Congress resolutions regarding repudiation of debts, as a justification for marking time. He denied that under the present regime Britishers had obtained monopolies and privileges. Messrs. Sastri and Chintamani and Sir Phiroze Sethna, among others, so

vigorously and convincingly refuted the pless of Lord Peel that the Prime Minister ruled that Lord Peel was sufficiently answered. Mr. Sastri pointed out that the Congressmen were not the enemies of Great Britain and that if their political grievances were removed they would be friends again.

The representatives of the minorities, including the Moslems, the Depressed classes, Indian Christians, and for a wonder, the Princes, all unanimously supported the demand for Dominion status. The unanimity of the demand made a deep impression, and it may be taken that the question whether India is to have Dominion status or not is closed. The only question to consider now is how this demand should be implemented and put into an Act of Parliament.

The second great issue that has emerged out of the Conference is the federation of India. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru advocated it and invited the Princes to join it. He had three reasons to support his proposal. The inclusion of the Princes would furnish a stabilising factor in the Indian constitution, start at once the process of unification of India and furnish the Dominion Government of India with practical experience in the sphere of defence, which is wanting in British India today. Mr. Sastri, who was a staunch advocate of the unitary system of Government, crossed the floor, as it were, and owned himself a convert to federalism. The other representatives of British India, and of the British Parties, of Europeans in India, unanimously acclaimed the idea. The Princes themselves sprung a surprise by readily falling in with the proposal and by lending their support to the demand for Dominion status for India. The attitude of the Princes gave an absolutely new turn to the task of the Conference and enemies of India who hoped that the presence of the Princes would act as a break on the British Indian demand, and perhaps lead to a break-down of the Conference, must be sorely disappointed. The Princes have played up well.

What could have moved the Princes to this new orientation? It is obvious that they are no less discontented and dissatisfied with the present Government of India than the people of British India. Considering that every one of the Indian delegates was chosen by the Viceroy himself, it is significant that there was not one among them, Prince or politician, who had a good and kind word to say of the present system of government in India. It must give some food for melancholy thought to the bureaucrats in India! Even Dr. Ambedkar, representing the Depressed Classes, demanded Dominion status and refused to hang on to the bureaucratic regime. The first great achievement of the Conference is the unequivocal condemnation of the present system of government in India.

It should however be remembered that the objective of the Princes is to get rid of supervision from the Government of India so that they may be unchallenged autocrats in their own States; they do not propose to transfer power to their subjects. The change they desire will not lead to democracy in their States but will entrench their intolerable autocracy more firmly, whereas in British India

the change will lead to a widening of the incipient democratic basis of government. We hope this vital difference between the demands of the Princes and British Indians for freedom from outside control will be remembered when the lines of the new constitution are laid down.

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## Our London Letter.

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LONDON, NOVEMBER 1

PARLIAMENT has reopened with its main mind on Unemployment. The Prime Minister has announced that the time of the House of Commons until Christmas will be devoted to Unemployment measures, including a bill to raise the school-leaving age to 15, a bill to facilitate land settlement by the unemployed, and a bill to authorise borrowing for the Unemployment Insurance Fund. On all sides of the House there is a feeling that this programme is inadequate. Mr. Lloyd George, for the Liberals, has urged big emergency measures, Sir Oswald Mosley has propounded a comprehensive scheme based on the idea of increasing the home and empire market by raising working class standards and protecting it from world competition. The Conservatives have tabled an amendment condemning the failure of the Government on Unemployment, and the I. L. P. group also has an amendment urging that Socialist reorganisation rather than Capitalist rationalisation should be the policy of the Government, and that it should concentrate upon raising working class standards.

The Liberal Party has significantly refrained from tabling any amendment and there is evidence of an understanding being reached between the Government and the Liberals with a view to securing the support of the latter for a considerable period. The King's speech includes a reference to a measure of electoral reform which is believed to foreshadow the introduction of the alternative vote in constituencies where there are more than two candidates. The Liberal Party has no future unless it can obtain electoral reform, and it can, therefore, be counted upon to support the Government during the two years necessary to place this bill on the Statute Book. It is certain that the House of Lords will throw it out, and the veto of the Upper House cannot be overcome until the bill has been presented to it during three sessions.

This development would seem to guarantee the maintenance of the Government but there are other events which will possibly upset its plans. Whilst Liberal support may be secured, the support of the I. L. P., and of "left" Socialists within the Labour Party is being steadily lost. The growing Unemployment figures are creating a political psychology impatient with the febleness and futilities of the Government's policy, and before long the Government is likely to be overwhelmed by the force of this feeling.

Whilst Parliament is thinking about Unemployment other events are occurring of profound political significance. The Press of this country is giving most attention to the economic discussions of the Imperial Conference; they are not likely to yield satisfactory results, and of much greater permanent importance are the discussions regarding the constitutional relations of Great Britain and the Dominions. The Dominions are asserting their right to practical independence. Already it has been agreed that their Governments shall have the right to nominate direct to the King names of the statesmen whom they desire

to receive as Governors General. They are also pressing their right to secede from the Empire if they so desire. It may be that a formal decision may be avoided, but a formula is likely to be reached, meaning the same thing.

The shadow of the forthcoming Round Table Conference is also stretching out across our political thought, and the mood in the House of Commons is to say nothing about India, although some die-hard Conservatives have placed an amendment to the Address mildly criticising the transference of the issue of India from Parliamentary control to the Round Table Conference, and condemning the Government for not making the Simon Report the basis of the Conference. So far there have been only two incidental references to India in the speeches. The mover of the Address, Mr. S. C. Charleton, an ex-engine-driver, remarked that the complexities of the Indian problem and the delicacy of the situation require discreet silence until the Round Table Conference had concluded its proceedings, and this view was subsequently endorsed by Mr. Stanley Baldwin.

I need not say that many of us who are interested in India cannot take this view. We cannot be silent whilst the repression in India continues, and we shall persist in urging that a basis of agreement to include Congress representatives shall be found. As preliminaries to the R. T. C. there is much discussion among the Indian representatives. The princes are, apparently, prepared to associate their states with a Federal Constitution, but they insist on their Treaty Rights with Great Britain and upon non-interference with the internal affairs of their states. Indian Liberals at the Conference are doing their utmost to secure agreement, particularly on the communal issue, so that they may come to the Conference with a practical scheme for Dominion Status. A great deal will depend upon the recommendations of the Government of India itself. Evidently Lord Irwin's despatch is a long document because the Prime Minister has announced that it will shortly be published in similar form to the Simon Report. It is generally believed here that the Government of India will recommend self-government in the Provinces, and a system of dyarchy for India's National Government.

There is, frankly, not much hope in informed quarters of a successful conclusion to the Round Table Conference and it is felt that only a full recognition of her right to self-government will gain a settlement in India itself. In view of the personnel of the Round Table Conference such outcome is unlikely.

A. FENNER BROCKWAY.

## Reviews.

### THE STORY OF CIVILISATION.

THE STORY OF CIVILIZATION THROUGH THE AGES. By CHARLES RICHEL. (Trs. BY FRED ROTHWELL.) (Allen and Unwin, London.) 1930. 20cm. 115 p. 3/6.

THIS is a great little book which, to quote an ancient Tamil poet's picturesque phrase, "packs the Seven Seas in a mustard seed." Here, the eminent ex-Professor of Physiology in the University of Paris recounts to children the tortured and tortuous story of civilization already familiarized to the general reader by Mr. H. G. Wells and Mr. Van Loon. Written under the auspices of the French "Conciliation Internationale", M. Richet's survey, like Wells's, is humanist and international in its aim—virtually a votive offering at the temple of World-

Peace that is yet to be. It was Condorcet, a Frenchman and one of the greatest at that, who in his darkest hour, while in hiding and momentary expectation of capture and death in 1794, wrote the first great conspectus of civilization pointing the way to world peace and international justice—*Progress of the Spirit of Man (Progres de l'Esprit Humain.)* It was the Bible of Peace and a prophecy of Hope, and the present work, written by a countryman of Condorcet, incarnates something of his spirit.

Scholarship apart, philosophical insight into history is the primary qualification for such a work, which the author possesses in abundant degree. In simple sentences he scatters gems of wisdom, summarizing the inwardness of epochs and movements in a manner that his young readers can understand :

Ideas that are complex in the mind of the great men who give expression to them become simple once they permeate the soul of the people.

Remember, too, a fact which all history proves, that conquerors always end by being conquered in their turn.

One would be vainly searching in stodgy books for such a seasonable thought as the following about the American War of Independence :

It was the intervention of France that determined the victory of freedom... One of the men who do most honour to France, the Marquis de Lafayette (1754-1834), manning a frigate at his own expense at the age of twenty, set sail for America and placed himself at the service of the Americans, i. e., of freedom and right... In things moral, however, as in things material, nothing is ever lost. A hundred and forty years afterwards, France, struggling against a powerful empire, was to receive the same succour that she had given once to America, and America in her turn was to cross the ocean and fight in the cause of justice.

And this about the fall of the Bastille :

The capture of the Bastille was a great historical event, for things are but symbols, and facts have no importance except in so far as they represent ideas.

We have so far canonized the book without the aid of the devil's advocate. Now for that functionary. The author's learning, like that of many others who have attempted this theme, shows a big hiatus—a complete ignorance of ancient India and China. The book has chapters on Egypt, Greece and Rome, but none on India or China: it has others on Christianity and Islam, but none on Buddhism. "The Vedic poets," said Max Muller, "had arrived at a conception of the godhead which was reached once more by some of the Christian philosophers at Alexandria, but which even at present is beyond the reach of many who call themselves Christians." The *Rig-Veda* in its ethical thought anticipated both Buddhism and Christianity: "The riches of one who gives do not diminish... He who, possessed of food, hardens his heart against the feeble man craving nourishment, against the sufferer coming to him (for help) and pursues (his own enjoyment even) before him, that man finds no consoler." (*Reg-Veda*, viii, 6-5). Buddha preached universal compassion. But what of that? European scholarship has made up its mind that the East has been steeped in Cimmerian darkness from remote antiquity and there is an end of the matter. If an Indian or Chinaman, pretending to better knowledge, ventures on a protest, of course, he is talking from nationalistic bias or a foolish adoration of that past or sloppy sentimentality, the cure for which is a sounder training in the school of historical criticism!

Through his several chapters on The Feudal System, the Renaissance, the Expansion of Europe, the Reformation, the French Revolution, the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries, M. Richet traces the com-

plex pattern of that uneven web woven by the shuttle of man's spirit on the loom of Time, its colours ranging from the scarlet of war and persecution to the mauve of science and growing fellowship. The Middle Ages, however, with their bewildering contradictions of high faith and murky superstition, of law and anarchy, of saintliness and brutality, of learning and obscurantism, all intercrossed to make a "spotted world", has defied the author's analysis. The thirteenth century saw the birth of popular representation (of Cortes, Diets, States-General, Parliaments) and civil jurisprudence. The Franciscan and Cistercian friars penetrated into remote wilds with a new light and life. The Orthodox Church was being insidiously sapped by several Mystical, Sceptical, or Puritanical sects like "the Waldensians, Albigensians, Petrobussians, Poor Men, Anti-Ritualists, Anti-Sacerdotalists, Manichaeans, Gospel Christians, Quietists, Flagellants, Pastoureaux, fanatics of all orders." In this and the preceding three centuries, countless saints vivified and animated potentialities of goodness, which but for them would have lain dormant. The Arabs acted not only as the carriers of merchandise but also of philosophy, medicine, mathematics and other sciences from India. Schoolmen like Abelard, Aquinas, Albertus Magnus and others, though much of their learning was arid, raised it to high prestige. But to all this not a word of reference do we find in this book. Similarly, the chapter on The Nineteenth Century omits all mention of the exploitation of the coloured races by the white and the sordid game of grab followed by the European Nations in Africa, China and the Orient in that century.

Besides, one might dot a few i's and cross a few t's. That heterogeneous library called The Bible is described as "a grim though sublime poem." The sentence about China, "She is torn by anarchy, and Europeans are acquainted with scarcely more than the seaports of this vast territory" may be modified into: "She is torn by anarchy, and Europeans who occupy about forty of the cities and control most of the seaports of this vast territory still continue to exploit it and keep a strangle-hold on its finances." Another sentence on p. 91, "universal suffrage is now everywhere legal, except in Asia, (China and Russia)", apart from its inaccuracy, does not touch the fringe of the question. To what extent democracy is more than a facade in many of the countries that have formally adopted it?

These are but sun-spots in a work inspired by a lofty ideal, presenting a great theme with noble simplicity and ending with the message: "The task of our age is a simple one: to give might to right, to remove might from that which is not right, and to substitute truth for error." While the book can be read with profit by students of all ages, the Bombay University cannot think of a better text-book for First Year Arts, for compulsory reading in world-history, after the present curriculum is revised.

R. SADASIVA AIYAR.

#### AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATION.

**YEAR BOOK OF AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATION, 1930.** Ed. by the HORACE PLUNKETT FOUNDATION, London (Routledge, London.) 1930. 21 cm. 576 p. 10/6,

**AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATION IN CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.** By MARGARET DIGBY. (Routledge, London.) 1930. 21 cm. 274-369 p. 3/-

THIS is an annual publication brought out by the Horace Plunkett Foundation, an organization which many people look to as a bureau of information on

co-operative matters. It is a world survey of co-operative progress during the last one year. It is out of the question to give an adequate idea of the co-operative activities in all the countries dealt with in the year book, in a review of this kind. All that can be done, therefore, is to notice the more important phases of co-operation in certain parts of the world.

As a result of a study of conditions in West Indies in 1927-28, we are told that the comparative absence of any effort for co-operation in most of the islands is no doubt due to the fact that while the science and practice of agriculture for many years have had the attention of a large force of experts, the economics and business methods of the industry have been almost ignored. The islands are said to be in a state of transition from "Plantocracy" to peasant proprietorship. Economic progress and political stability alike rest now on the family farm, and it has been recognised that co-operation is the key to the prosperity of peasant agriculture. In Trinidad, the Cocoa planters' association has been doing excellent work, and the Agricultural Bank, financed by the Government which gives loans not on the value of the land but on its production, fulfils all the requirements of agricultural mortgage credit. It is said that in Tobago, as in several other islands, co-operation is instinctive in the native population. The principles of co-operation have been successfully applied to the marketing of bananas in Jamaica and it is said that the organisation composed of the peasants and planters on equal terms, without any colour line, has been working very satisfactorily. Attempts are being made to attract Indian emigrants to settle in British Guiana, and the scheme includes the establishment of a co-operative system.

Advances have been recorded in certain lines of activity in England, like the marketing of eggs, and the production and sale of wool. Societies for the co-operative purchase and distribution of agricultural requirements are noticed in South Wales. The scheme for a school of rural life in Scotland is very interesting as showing how efforts are being made to establish an institution which will be "a practical school of agriculture and of the arts of rural life for the sons and daughters of farmers." The co-operation movement in the Irish Free State is not said to be in a very satisfactory condition on the whole, whereas the outlook in Northern Ireland is said to have visibly improved.

Co-operation in India has been discussed with reference to the different provinces. This movement is said to have been thought of by the Government as a possible means of relieving the Indian agriculturist of his indebtedness. Originally only credit societies were contemplated but later the movement was widened to include all kinds of co-operative activities. Still, credit remains the main feature of the movement. While the working of individual societies remains in non-official hands, the supervision of them rests in the hands of Government which has a separate department for the purpose. Punjab has the reputation of being most advanced co-operatively. A large number of societies exist which are run for the special benefit of certain communities. The danger underlying this is being recognized and the village is being organised as a unit irrespective of communities. There are thrift societies exclusively for women in this province. Better farming societies to enable the members to work their farms with greater efficiency are seen in Bombay and in the United Provinces. The co-operative credit movement in Burma has practically collapsed and no hope is held of progress until all the bad societies have been liquidated and a fresh start made. The movement in India has remained mainly a Government enter-



prise and has not been a spontaneous growth. It is regretted that the Royal Commission has thrown its weight on the side of strengthening of official machinery. What is really required seems to be, firstly, education of the farmers into a realization of the necessity of co-operation and the advantages attached to it and, secondly, the training and encouragement of non-officials to take up this work. If educated young men are induced to take to farming, the necessary material will be available for undertaking rural betterment work of all kinds.

Both in Canada and Australia, Co-operation has achieved notable results. New Zealand shows what can be done in this direction by the success of its Producers' Co-operative Marketing Association and its Co-operative Dairy Company.

Czechoslovakia is one of the states which were created after the war. A drastic change was effected with regard to land and its ownership, resulting in a better distribution of land, a reduction in hired labour, and the raising of the standard of rural life. Co-operation here cannot be described as state-controlled. The Co-operative department keeps in close touch with co-operative unions, but leaves all organizing work to them. On all sides, evidence is available to show that co-operation has succeeded in all directions.

The history of agricultural co-operation in France shows the good results that can follow well-directed activity by the Government. The credit society has taken root only very slowly as the French peasant is not in the grip of usurers and he is very reluctant to make his private affairs public. Such organizations as agricultural syndicates and agricultural benefit societies where co-operation plays the least part have succeeded quite well.

In Switzerland, co-operation has achieved excellent results in the dairy industry and the wheat industry, but little progress has been made on the credit side.

We find a very lucid account of the Bucharest Congress of 1929, when for the first time co-operative questions received thorough discussion and important resolutions were passed. A very useful review of books bearing on Agricultural Economics is given, as also a summary of agricultural legislation in various countries, and an exhaustive bibliography of agricultural co-operations. Workers in the field of rural economics will find plenty of useful information in this book.

GUNDAPPA S. KURPAD.

### ECONOMIC BASIS OF PEACE.

**THIS WORLD OF NATIONS. FOUNDATIONS, INSTITUTIONS, PRACTICES.** By PITMAN B. POTTER. (Macmillan, New York.) 1929. 23cm. 366p. 17/-.

"To make this world more enjoyable" seems to be the purpose for which this book has been written. It is a noble aim and we sincerely hope that the author's desire may be fulfilled. Obviously one of the most essential requisites to attain this end is to make this world secure for peace and free from the paralysing influences of fear.

The author offers to the reader a concise survey of the origins of nations, how this world of nations has come into being, and an account of the close relationship that today exists between them. Up to very recent times international intercourse was of a spasmodic nature. Circumstances have changed the whole purview of national aspirations forcing people to think of world-wide contacts. "To-day when the ideal of cosmopolitanism receives less

honour actual development renders cosmopolitanism inevitable. We prate about nationalism, but the technique of modern life produces an opposite result. In other words, contemporary cosmopolitanism is objective, not a thing of the mind. It is a matter of scientific and economic activity, not of theory. People live a world life without intending to do so and even without knowing it. The pen with which this is being made out is of rubber from Brazil or the East Indies, the jacket which the writer is wearing is Scotch tweed, this building is Spanish in its architecture, and all about this spot, in all human certainty, are elements contributed from many foreign sources of which the writer is entirely unaware. Cosmopolitanism to-day is not so much a beautiful ideal as it is a brutal fact." ( p. 59. )

These world contacts do very often lead to serious conflicts. The things which bring remote nations into close trade relationships, the oil-can and cherry blossom, turn eventually into bones of contention or give rise to international complications and instead of uniting they separate and divide "this world of nations". An inquiry into the various methods for settling disputes of this kind forms the main theme of the book. International law, diplomacy, treaties, arbitration, conferences and federation, all are examined in detail. The League of Nations is given the attention it deserves and three full chapters are devoted to study the constitution, activities, and the nature of the political organism of the same. The writer examines the arguments put forward in the U. S. A. against membership of the League. "The Senate of the United States failed to approve the Covenant in 1919-20 partly for personal and partisan reason but partly and mainly, as far as a decision was made upon the merits of the controversy, because of provisions in the Covenant looking to forcible action for guaranteeing possessions and rights of members and preserving peace. Such provisions would make heavy demands upon every member of the State. Perhaps that demand would be too heavy for us even if it would be borne by the European nations, specially the Great Powers, who would be most intimately concerned and most directly called upon to discharge such a function." The author seems to be concerned with the defence of the isolation policy of the U. S. A. We have to confess we are not impressed with the logic of his argument. Other nations, the writer contends, have been forced into the League by national prestige, if not by more unworthy motives. Is the U. S. A. too superior to fall a victim to such impulse of action? The book is spoiled by constant references to the greatness of the U. S. A. Many readers are sure to consider such unnecessary self-adulation as most irritating.

The desire to defend the policy of the United States reaches a climax of verbal quibble, in p. 239. Dealing with the relations which have existed between the States and Nicaragua during the last few years, we are seriously told that the States' military operations in the latter country cannot be characterized as war because "war by the United States in Nicaragua would involve action by the full force of the United States to subdue and occupy the whole country and to capture and destroy all the forces and the Government of the nation." If such definition of war were accepted, it would be hard to decide when a nation is really at war with another.

Criticism of more serious nature should be passed against certain expressions in the last chapter of the book. We are told that "the factors which determine the cause of events in international affairs are the facts of geography, economics and social psychology. Oil and cherry blossom, and men's reactions thereto, rule the world. Abstract ideas or unfounded theories have little power. . . . What shall become of this world

of nations in the future depends mainly upon developments in this field of material and sensual life." Abstract ideas need not necessarily be unfounded theories. We believe that this world is ruled by ideas. Material developments play their part in the production of an enjoyable world. We are, however, convinced that joy is a mental and spiritual quality of the soul. We wish to see economics fully developed, but human welfare will never be achieved by economic prosperity only. It requires other ingredients besides money and material advancement. The author, it seems to us, has failed to take into account these other ingredients and factors in human welfare.

P. G. B.

### AL. SMITH ON HIMSELF.

**UP TO NOW : AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.** By ALFRED E. SMITH. (The Viking Press, New York.) 1929. 24cm. 434 p. \$ 5.00.

THERE is much truth in the saying that "great men are not seen in the making; they arrive." Alfred Smith, as he confesses it, is a man who worked his way up by patiently putting the necessary stitches to the details of life. He lacks that large vision and stature which characterize those who made bid for the Presidentship of the United States. The Smiths are good Catholics subject to the limitations imposed upon them by a religion which does not give quarter to a great mind. The boyhood of Alfred is spent in planning newspaper routes so as to find sales for the one-cent papers of the day. As he grew up he received his first civic appointment as a clerk in the office of the Commissioner of Jurors. Favoured by his political destiny he made his mark as an amateur stage-actor and then entered the party parades. It is not known what attracted him to the Democratic party but he did keep step with it in tune with its wet notions, calling down curses on the heads of Republican leaders. He also joined in the unrestrained merriment of an election day. His official position as a process-server in the office of the Commissioner of Jurors brought with it the loathsome attention of the people. Later he rose in rank and became an investigator in the same office. Now for the first time he entered the Tammany Hall as the upholder of its political prestige and he found himself swimming with the tide of party politics. A stage then arrived when he was elected to the State Assembly and thereafter he clung to the ladder, rising as high as his merits carried him and no further. In the State Legislature, with all the fastidiousness of a steady brick-layer, he helped to lay the fabric of social legislation. As a reward for this benevolent service, five times he became Governor of the State and almost threatened to be King Smith. Inspired by a higher ambition he now cast his eyes longingly at the Presidential Chair but his powers which he over-estimated failed him at the polls. It is, however, as an Assembly man, as Senator and Governor, that Smith earned his laurels. It would have been well for him if he had not asked for the Moon for then the joy of having done material good would without question have been his. A dutiful son, a faultless husband, an affectionate father and a good church-goer, he was all that there was need to be to make him "The happy warrior" that he was. But his sympathies were not so far-flung as to fit him for Presidential honours. From its very nature the high office of the President of the United States is reserved for such as are formidable. It is however enough for Alfred Smith that he has given good account of himself within the limits of his personality. The liberal benefits which the New York workman derives from the Compensation, Housing and other Labour acts are his giving.

For the very parks he moves in, he is indebted to Alfred. The American Negro perhaps bears him a grudge for this reason that Smith neither takes pity on him nor even so much as notices him in his book. And herein lies the difference between him and Hoover in whose large heart there is more than room for mere skin affinities. The world of tomorrow needs outstanding men whose statesmanship is as ample as the horizon and it is no fault of Smith that his little faith did not take him beyond Albany. Too personal in conception, his autobiography steers clear of the contending issues of American politics and their impact on international affairs. For all its pomp, there is nothing in the book to take it beyond the domestic library of the New York State.

K. VENUGOPAL RAO.

### SHORT NOTICES.

**HANDBOOK OF THE STATE OF NORTH BORNEO.** (British North Borneo Co., London.) 1929. 21 cm. 142 p. 2/-

THE handbook is mainly intended for would-be settlers, to whom the information given therein will doubtless be welcome. The country is not yet fully developed and we read in Chapter XIII headed "Openings for Capitalists and Settlers: Land Terms" that "there is sufficient land of the finest quality available to meet all the requirements for many years to come of settlers possessing capital." An idea of how much capital is needed is also given. "A sum of £ 6,000 is the minimum required to undertake the cultivation of any tropical product; this figure includes the living expenses of the planter at £ 350 per annum for five to six years." The country seems to draw its labour supply from China, so that relatives or friends of existing settlers, should they desire to settle in North Borneo, are given free passages from Hong Kong and are allotted small holdings on easy "settler's terms." We observe from the Census returns printed in the Handbook that the natives of India and Ceylon in that country number nearly 1,200. We are also interested to learn that a number of Indian statutes have been adopted as law in North Borneo, of course, with suitable modifications. The administrative head is the Governor responsible to the Court of Directors in London. There is a legislative council which consists of nine official and five unofficial members, three of these to represent planting interests and two Chinese interests.

D.

**LOYAL INDIA. A SURVEY OF SEVENTY YEARS (1858-1928).** By PERCY H. DUMBELL. (Oxford University Press, Bombay.) 1930. 22 cm. 243 p. 12/-

THE author's one great ambition in childhood was to join the Indian Civil Service. Owing to uncontrollable causes however this could not happen. But he retained his interest in this country throughout his life and while working in the India Office was an interested observer of the Indian scene. It is such a gentleman who has brought out a collection of constitutional and other documents relating to India under the above title. Their selection is apparently made with a view to bring out the great strides which India has made during the last seventy years in her journey to her constitutional goal. We are sure the book will be full of interest to all students of the Indian constitution.

A.

## Miscellaneous.

### MR. SASTRI'S SPEECH AT THE R. T. C.

*The following is the text of the speech of the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri at the Round Table Conference on November 20.*

Two ideas have emerged from the debates to which we have listened, which now dominate our minds. One is Dominion Status for India as the natural outcome of India's constitutional evolution, and the other is federation as a proper form for the future polity of India including both British India and the Indian states. The latter idea is comparatively new. I have struggled for Dominion Status for some time. At last it seems to have found acceptance from the spokesmen to whom I have listened, both of Conservative and Liberal parties. The idea of federation, I must confess, is comparatively new to me. I struggled hard against it until the other day. Now I confess I am a convert. I have listened both in private and at this table to the Princes and their spokesmen, who have brought me round to their view both by the sincerity of their declarations as to Dominion Status and by the tone of restraint and moderation in which they have spoken in terms of federation itself. It only remains for me to say one word of caution. Great ideas thrown together into the arena of politics sometimes work together and co-operate with each other upto a certain stage, but may tend when pushed each to its consummation to collide and even weaken each other. I do hope that in the deliberations of the committees, to which we shall consign these great topics, nothing will be done on the side of those who care for federation more than Dominion Status, to weaken the latter, just as nothing should be done on the side of those who care for Dominion Status more than federation to weaken federation.

The idea of fear which is in the minds of many British people when they contemplate a large advance in constitutional status, is that any polity that we may construct here or that we may lay the foundations of, may pass as respects its machinery into the hands of those who now belong to the Congress party and who brought about a serious situation which led to the summoning of the Round Table Conference. I do not think the fear unreasonable; it is natural. I think we who speak for India are under the obligation to meet that fear, ought in earnest to try to convince the British people either that the fears may be countered by cautionary measures or that the fears have no foundation in fact. Much has been said by my friends who spoke on this side about very large and considerable sections of the population whom Congress propaganda has not touched so far, who remain loyal to the British connection and who may be trusted when there is serious danger to stand by the British flag at all costs. May I add another source of comfort? Who are these people from whom we fear disturbance? No doubt they have caused trouble so far. Are our measures here not designed to conciliate them? Are these not pacificatory steps that we are taking? Are they not calculated to win over once more their hearts to ways of loyalty and ordered progress? They are not hereditary criminals, savage and barbarian hordes and sworn enemies of Great Britain or British institutions. They are men of culture, men of honour, most of them men who have made their mark in the professions. They are our kinsmen both in spirit and blood. It is a sense of political grievance that has placed them in this position, which we view with so much

distrust and so much disapprobation. Remove the discontent and you will find them alongside you, working the new constitution we shall frame to the highest use, drawing from those new institutions that we frame all the benefit of which they are capable.

The toils and trials of public life are well-known to us all. I have been on the side of law and order. I have never been within the proximity of the jail, but I am a political agitator. I know how near I am to those whose methods I join with you in condemning to-day. Often in my life has Government viewed my activities with suspicion and set spies upon me. My life has not been one of unalloyed happiness; my way has not been free from thorns. And, Mr. Prime Minister, your experience is not altogether foreign to them. Let us not be carried away in this matter too much by a sense of self-righteousness. Very little, indeed, divides those who now champion law and order and those who, impelled by the purest patriotism, find themselves on the other side. Adopt measures born of conciliation, set the constitution of India in proper order, and we, whom this political difference has unhappily divided, will find ourselves once more co-operators for the welfare, contentment and ordered progress of India.

Therein lies the strength of the situation to-day. Our enemies are not bad men; they are good men whom we have alienated by unfortunate political happenings. It is easy to bring them round. Let us make an honest attempt and, by God's grace, our work shall be rewarded both here and in India. We shall find India once more, not only happy within her borders, but a contented partner of the British Commonwealth.

## Correspondence.

### INDIA'S CONSTITUTIONAL OUTLOOK.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—Most of the participants in recent discussions on Indian Constitutional problems seem to have laboured under a strange obsession. Writers of almost every shade of opinion have taken the British parliamentary government as the model for a politically autonomous India. The soundness of the British system has been taken too much for granted and indeed I suppose in many quarters it is assumed as the only workable type of democratic government. The Montagu declaration of 1917 has also tended to limit the constitutional vision of the Indian public to the British system; for constitutionally responsible government implies a Cabinet system. Readers of Lord Ronaldshay's *Life of Lord Curzon* are aware that the insertion of the words "responsible government" in the Montagu declaration was an after-thought; probably their constitutional implications were not fully weighed when Lord Curzon substituted them. But they had the effect of committing India to a particular line of constitutional development.

I am not a hostile critic of British parliamentary government *per se*. It has its remarkable advantages; it has served the British people eminently well; it has evolved slowly and steadily in British Isles and has there come to stay. I am only seriously sceptical if in India the cabinet system would produce the same results. In the first place, the machinery of cabinet government can only work on a party gear. Political parties with mutually exclusive programmes of government have yet to grow in India.

And I for one do not think that the working of cabinet government will create political parties. It may create caucuses, cliques; indeed, we have seen ample exhibition of such party spirit in some provinces even under the present state of things. It is useless to rely on the present-day political parties to evolve the cabinet system. As any penetrative critic will realise, between the political parties representing various shades of nationalist opinion and the constructive political parties with different plans of government there can be no analogy. The former does not lead to the latter. To embark India on a system of party government without any parties to sustain and work it is a leap in the dark. Even assuming that after a transfer of power to Indian representatives political opinion may in the long run crystallise into party principles, the fact still remains that in the initial years of transition a removable parliamentary executive cannot work with success in India. To command a substantial following in the legislature is not the same thing as to be the leader of a political party. Personal influence may be brought to bear for many reasons other than a common political faith or agreement in a given line of administrative policy. It is my conviction that in the absence of principles to knit and determine the party organisation, a system of responsible government will throw open the political field to personal aggrandisers with largest purses and fewest scruples, intellectually bankrupt and politically inept.

There is also to my mind a stronger argument against parliamentary executive in India, apart from absence of party organisations. Long years of bureaucratic rule in this country have left the Indian politicians hungering for political power; it has bred in them a profound distrust of the executive, an intolerance to give it the least latitude. It is easy to see how in these circumstances the fate of a parliamentary government is sealed in this country. To surrender all its potential powers to the executive except that of dismissal is an attitude which no Indian legislature would easily persuade itself to adopt. On thousand points the popular representative would find it difficult to resist the temptation for effective interference in the administration. He would not, in short, content himself with merely contributing to the formulation of the policy of the government or playing the role of an impotent custodian of his country's interest. Ninety-nine per cent. of the Indian politicians will hear with dismay that even under an autonomous government they, as members of the legislature, cannot raise the expenditure of the state under any head even by a rupee or, as a matter of fact, initiate any important legislative proposal. It is, therefore, my contention that the constitutional arrangement known as parliamentary government is wholly out of accord with the cherished political notions of our average politician. His constitutional outlook is fundamentally different from that of a Britisher. He would resent having merely to back up the decisions of men in office or even to waste energy by a parley of words of which he has had his fill under an alien government. The Indian politician would like to reserve to the legislature itself the power of initiative, the freedom of action and a far larger measure of administrative responsibility than the British system allows. For good or evil the Indian is a jealous and power-loving legislator and the cabinet system, if introduced, will not thrive.

In discarding the parliamentary executive one need not despair of the constitutional future of

India. Other models are there to choose from and adopt. Meanwhile, let Indian political opinion recognise that responsible or even the so-called democratic government is not the last word in modern political evolution.—Yours, etc.

K. M. PURKAYASTHA.

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