

# The Servant of India

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## Topics of the Week.

### Renewal of Ordinances.

THE new Ordinance which is to take the place of Ordinances I, II, III & IV of last year and which is to be called the Special Powers Ordinance, 1932, as now been published. Indians will now have the great advantage of all the special powers which are to be in force embodied in one Ordinance instead of in our separate ones as before! For the rest, all the old powers are repeated except two or three which are of a very insignificant character. It is true that among the powers conferred by the Ordinance only one will come automatically into force over the whole country at once, viz. that relating to the proclamation of martial law. The rest have first to be extended by the Governor General in Council and then brought into force by the Local Governments. Although this makes it possible for the Ordinance to have a circumscribed scope, who can dare to hope that it will in fact be applied sparingly or even discriminatingly? If Sir Samuel Hoare does not care to keep in even with people who, notwithstanding many discouragements, kept their faith in the R. T. C. and opposed the civil disobedience movement, it is not to be wondered at that he should be unwilling to drop warlike measures in dealing with those who are at "war" with him. He sees no need for a conciliatory approach towards them. Why should he when he is prepared to make enemies of those who have never swerved from the constitutional path? At the present moment it is doubtful if even the constitutionalists will persevere in their attempts to bring contentment to India by scouring for it the full measure of constitutional development which is possible in the existing circumstances. Even supposing that measures are taken by Government to allay discontent that is rife among them by restoring the integrity of the Conference method, it is clear that these measures will not have a widespread pacifying effect on the country till the

Ordinance regime is brought to close and a chance given to Congressmen to return to their normal course and take a hand once again in the discussions on the future constitution.

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### Sind.

THE Hon. Mr. A. F. L. Brayne, Chairman of the Sind Conference appointed to try to overcome the financial deficit which Sind as a separate province would face, according to the Irving Report, has issued his report. He found that those who favoured separation were all Muslims and those who opposed it were all Hindus, and while the former attempted to prove that, given certain conditions, Sind might be a surplus province, the latter as doggedly attempted to prove that Sind would be faced with a heavier deficit than the one disclosed by the Irving Committee. In their anxiety to peg up the revenue of Sind, the Muslim members went so far as to turn down prohibition and to agree to develop excise revenue, subject, of course, to the face-saving proviso that it should not cause injury to the cause of temperance! Mr. Brayne's own estimate, after making many allowances on both sides of the budget, amounts to the basic deficit of Rs. 80 lakhs, on the 1st April 1933. With the rapid development of the Sukkar Barrage, it is anticipated that the deficit would disappear from 1944 onwards. This is contingent on the efficiency of the Sukkar Barrage being maintained at its present high level.

Purely from the financial point of view there is no case for the separation of Sind and its constitution into a new province. If finance were the sole or the chief criterion, the best course will be to postpone the question till 1944, and then reopen it. As a matter of fact, the Indian problem is already sufficiently complicated without Sind adding to its complexity. When the primary question of the transfer of power from London to Delhi has been achieved, there will be time enough to look into the question of the delimitation of provinces on linguistic and other considerations.

But the Muslims will not have it. They fear that under Home Rule the Hindu majority in the central government will not look kindly on the separation of Sind solely with the purpose of creating a province with Muslim majority as a counterpoise to the provinces with Hindu majorities. Their hope has the best chances of materialisation while still political power rests with Britain and Britain feels like stopping at nothing to please the Muslims.

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### Lowering of Bank Rate.

THE discount rate of the Bank of England has now been reduced to 2%. At the time England went off the gold standard, the rate was 6%. Since then it is being successively lowered, and latterly the reductions have been rapid. On 21st April last it was brought down from 3½% to 3%; on 12th May it was

lowered to  $2\frac{1}{2}\%$  and now it is  $2\%$ , the lowest in force for the last 35 years. These reductions are evidence of the determination of the authorities to promote easy money conditions. It is now the avowed policy of the British Government to increase the level of wholesale commodity prices so that industry will be fairly remunerative, as was the case in 1929. As prices have dropped  $30\%$  since that year, deflation to the level of 1929 means raising prices  $30\%$  and correspondingly reducing the value of sterling. Sterling can be made cheaper in two ways: by increasing the amount of it that is available, which is done by the Bank of England buying Government securities and thus releasing bank cash; and by reducing the rate at which it can be borrowed. Both these policies are being steadily pursued at present, and therefore the reduction of the Bank rate to  $2\%$  did not come as a surprise to the business world in England. In fact at the time the Finance Bill was discussed in May last, a lowering of the bank rate was not only urged upon the Government but confidently expected. Indeed the Government was advised at the time in responsible quarters to go even lower than  $2\%$  in furtherance of a cheap money policy. This may or may not be possible; but the reduction that has been effected will certainly have a strong influence in raising the sagging prices and in aiding the upturn of industry.

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#### War Loan Conversion.

THE low bank rate has enabled England to embark upon a plan of war loan conversion. She lay under a crushing burden of the  $5\%$  War Loan of £2,000 million and over. It has now become possible for her to give an option to the holders in it to accept a loan at the lower rate of interest of  $3\frac{1}{2}\%$ , and it is expected that most of the holders will exercise the option in favour of the new loan. If this expectation is fulfilled, there will be a yearly saving of £30 million in the interest to be paid. This is the largest single item of debt outstanding, and if the proposed conversion takes effect nearly a tenth of the interest charges which she pays every year will be remitted to her. This is said to be the biggest conversion that has taken place in any country at any time. In the discussions that took place on the Finance Bill in the Commons buying of War Loan was hinted at. It was said that if, in order to lower the value of sterling, you bought gold with your sterling you would send up the price of gold and only aggravate a state of things which you were trying to remedy. If, on the other hand, you bought dollars or francs you would risk heavy losses in the event of the U. S. A. and France going off gold. It was therefore suggested that the best way of expanding the volume of credit would be "to buy War Loan and pay for it in currency and thereby increase the amount of currency credit. By so doing you would be reducing the amount of debt, and the people who would benefit by the reduction in the value of sterling would be the tax-payers, and you would also benefit the Consolidated Fund of the country." What is now proposed is not to buy War Loan but to make its conditions easier. Anyway the Consolidated Fund Services will benefit thereby to the tune of £30 million a year and so much more will be released for the Supply Services. The present conversion will so enhance the prestige of the National Government that one fears that the progressive elements in England will have to roam in the wilderness for a long period indeed.

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#### Reparations Conference.

THE fundamental fact about the reparations is that Germany simply cannot pay them, and all that

the creditor powers can do at Lausanne to devise a save-facing formula under which the liability of Germany will be recognised in form but liquidated in fact. At the time the Conference opened in the middle of last month only two possibilities were envisaged. One was complete extinction of all reparation payments or a long moratorium on them (on the distinct understanding that the payments were not to be resumed so that after the Presidential election is over in the U. S., the U. S. may be simultaneously persuaded to cancel war debt payments. And the other possibility was to require Germany to pay a nominal amount and even that not immediately (as it was physically impossible) but on the return of somewhat easier economic conditions in that country. It was then felt that the first alternative of the "clean slate", though moral, would not be politically practicable; and the second one of a "token payment" in order to secure the admission of a principle, while yielding much the same result, would be easier of accomplishment. The Paris correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* writing to that paper on the eve of the opening of the Conference, thus describes what he thinks would appeal to Germany's creditors as the best solution under the circumstances: "Germany is to agree in principle to make a payment of five milliard mark in final settlement, or, rather, to issue bonds to the amount, though not before her economic and financial position improves sufficiently to make it possible for this loan to be floated at par and at a reasonable rate of interest." This is precisely the offer that the five creditor powers have made to Germany. Only the lump sum to be paid is reduced still further to four (or four and a half) milliard marks. Measured in terms of the Young Plan Settlement this amount is purely nominal since it represents only two and a half annuities that will fall due for payment and such annuities have to be paid under the Settlement up to 1988! At the time of writing Germany agrees to pay only two milliard marks, and insists that the time for the issue of bonds shall be fixed with the consent of Germany. It also asks for the repeal of the war guilt clause in the Versailles Treaty which fixes the sole responsibility for the war upon Germany. The creditor powers are not likely to agree to this, for the only *raison d'être* for their demand upon Germany will then have disappeared.

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#### Japanese Competition.

THE Bombay Millowners' Association have made, with the support of several other commercial bodies, a demand for an extra duty on textile imported from Japan in view of the fall in the value of yen as measured in rupees. The effect produced by the lowering of the value of the currency of any country is to lower correspondingly its cost of production and as a consequence to give it an advantage in the marketing of its exports. Japan is now in a condition to reap such an advantage over the manufactures of our country, and these bodies therefore ask that measures should be taken in this country in order to check dumping due to the depreciation of the Japanese currency as measures have been taken in other countries. For instance, France imposed by decree a surtax of  $15\%$  on goods imported from Great Britain, Australia, Denmark and Sweden in order to protect French manufactures against competition from these countries with depreciated currencies. Neither the Bombay Millowners' Association nor the other bodies specify the amount of protection to which they think they are entitled. But in the telegram now sent by the Association to the Government they seem to be making a somewhat exaggerated demand. For there they say that the decline in the rupee value

the year is 50%. The Japanese Consul in Bombay has shown however how misleading this statement is. As he says, the present decline amounts only to 20%, i. e. 6% more than a month ago when the Association submitted their Memorandum to the Tariff Board. In this Memorandum the Association say that the yen-rupee ratio, being 15% below the normal parity, gives to Japan an advantage over India of about 8%. As against this there is the 6¼% increase in import duty imposed on Japanese goods by the Supplementary Budget of September 1931, though this increased duty was for purposes of revenue. The question therefore is whether a larger increase is not justified by the further decline of the yen, and it is a matter for consideration whether it cannot wait till the Tariff Board after examining all the circumstances makes its recommendations or whether, as demanded by the commercial bodies, immediate action is necessary.

## Articles.

### UNACCEPTABLE.

THE reception given in India to Sir Samuel Hoare's new procedure regarding Indian reforms is unmistakable: the procedure is unacceptable. Apart from a section of the Muslims, Indian opinion has been unanimous in condemning it. The most important and influential among the protests are those of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. M. R. Jayakar. Messrs Sastri and Chintamani have been exceptionally strong in their uncompromising condemnation. The reasons are not far to seek. Notwithstanding Sir Samuel Hoare's professions to the contrary, there is not the slightest doubt that at the Round Table Conference method, according to which Britishers and Indians sought to arrive at agreements which were subsequently to form the basis of parliamentary legislation, has been abandoned and the Simon Commission procedure reverted to the Simon method, as now the Hoare method, stands on the arrogant assumption that Britain was to be the sole judge of Indian constitutional progress, and that India had no place in it, except to tender obedience. If the Simon method was an undiluted insult to Indian nationalism, the Hoare method is a double insult inasmuch as in the latter case Indian cooperation, having once been invited and accepted, was subsequently spurned with contumely.

The justification that Sir Samuel Hoare offered for this vital departure from the Conference method was of expedition and efficiency. If that was the case, Sir Samuel might very well have consulted the members of the Round Table Conference, or, at least, of the Consultative Committee, who could certainly not have objected to any step that would really expedite their work. Sir Samuel claimed that the Princes approved of the change. But they were not the only people entitled to consultation. It appears now that the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes or other leading Princes were not consulted at all! There was absolutely no justification to make the decision over the heads of members of the C.P.C. and dismiss them without even the show of ordinary courtesy.

Is the Hoare method likely to ensure expedition, at least? The cause of delay has been the absence of communal agreement. That had blocked all progress even in matters on which there was no reason to fear disagreement. It was fairly clear as long ago as the second Round Table Conference that communal settlement by agreement between Indians was out of the question, and that, willy nilly, the British Government had to impose an award. Was the delay in giving the award due to the Round Table Conference plan or due to the British Government? The communal question in all its intricate aspects was discussed threadbare at the two Round Table Conferences, and there was no justification for the Government to postpone their award so long.

Would the Conference method have been less efficient than the Hoare method? An examination of the subjects that were left undecided at the two Conferences, such as the army, commercial discrimination, central responsibility and all its implications, shows that Indian opinion was fairly agreed on them and at any rate the differences on these subjects were not such as to lead to deadlocks. On these matters it was more England and India that were sitting across the table and not Indians *inter se*. It was freely talked about during the session of the second Round Table Conference that it was no accident but the deliberate and sinister manoeuvre on the part of the Conservative overlords of the National Government to advance on the agenda those questions on which Indians were disagreed and put off those on which differences might bring up the British against Indians.

The Hoare plan contemplates the Consultative Committee as the first stage, and the Joint Parliamentary Committee as the second, provided the Consultative Committee records agreements on all matters referred to it. Failing it, there is to be interposed a more formal consultation in London. Would it really take more time or be less efficient if, soon after the communal award is given, the Federal Structure Committee met in London, instead of the Consultative Committee meeting in India?

The preference of the Indian nationalist for the Conference method is well-founded. Britishers and Indians come together round the common table on a footing of equality, and share equal responsibility for the shaping of the constitution. Apart from satisfying the sentiment of the people that they had a share in drawing up their future constitution, it will yield better results than the Simon method, where Indians were only witnesses and had no share in drawing up the report. Though the results of the two sessions of the Round Table Conference did not come up to the high expectations raised in the public mind at the start, it cannot be denied that they were far superior to the decisions recorded by the Simon Commission. To take an instance, not all the expensive deliberations of endless committees brought about the establishment of a Military College as did the decisions of the Defence Subcommittee of the Round Table Conference. There is all the difference in the world between Indian

leaders discussing matters directly with British Cabinet Ministers in a conference and their submitting evidence before an all-white commission. The personal equation plays a large part in these conferences. Because of its dignity and importance, the Prime Minister, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, presided over the Conference, and those who are intimately acquainted with the vicissitudes of the Conference realise full well the great and decisive part played by the Prime Minister. No less important and decisive were the parts played by members like Mr. Wedgwood Benn, Mr. Lees-Smith and Mr. Pethick Lawrence. When Sir Samuel Hoare himself wished to shut up the Round Table Conference, it was the vigorous plea of these members that saved the situation and the Conference from shipwreck. It is not to be supposed that the Prime Minister will preside over the Joint Parliamentary Committee. Composed as the British Cabinet and Parliament are today, the only hope of India lies in the Prime Minister and Lord Sankey, and if the Prime Minister is not on the Joint Committee, it is of little use to India. Moreover, because they are no longer in Parliament, friends of India like Mr. Wedgwood Benn and others will find no place in the Joint Committee, which will be filled with Tory die-hards, with disastrous consequences. The anticipation of the Joint Parliamentary Committee is open to the sinister suspicion that it was meant to exclude these British friends of India from further deliberations.

Again, the Joint Parliamentary Committee is bound to reflect the composition of the Parliament, which today is overwhelmingly Tory, and in its decisions will be taken by majority vote. The decisions will thus rest with the Tories. The Conference plan provides for agreements, which postulates accommodation to different views and no decisions by majority vote. Even the presence of the Prime Minister on the Joint Committee will not make up for the abandonment of the Conference plan.

Sir Samuel has offered that in the place of the present Round Table Conference a smaller body of representative men and women might be called to London by the Government if it became necessary. The selection of the members of the Conference by Lord Irwin was not without adverse criticism. Will a selection of Sir Samuel Hoare be less open to objection? Very likely, he will confine his selection to diehards in India.

Another statement of Sir Samuel Hoare is equally disquieting. All progress even according to his plan was to depend on the assumption that the communal award would be acceptable. It is too much to hope that the award would be universally accepted; very likely all sections will be dissatisfied to some extent or other. To say in advance that progress will depend on general acceptance is putting a premium on communal obstinacy and recalcitrancy. It actually instigates communities to hold up progress. The first session of the Round Table Conference was proceeded with in spite of the absence of the Indian Congress, admittedly the

largest and best organised political party. It is, therefore, extraordinary, almost sinister, that Sir Samuel Hoare should have taken the line he has. He may as well drop all talk of reforms and be done with it. The right course is for the Government to give the communal award and proceed with the Conference notwithstanding the threat of non-cooperation by any particular community.

All things considered,—the political party to which Sir Samuel Hoare belongs, his efforts, fortunately unsuccessful, to torpedo the last session of the Conference, his present failure to consult even the members of the Consultative Committee before he decided to dismiss the Conference method, his anticipation of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, on which, neither the Prime Minister nor Mr. Wedgwood Benn and others like him will be present, the real danger that he will select Indians to confer with the Joint Committee who will be even less acceptable than the selections made by Lord Irwin—Sir Samuel Hoare has completely forfeited the confidence of the whole of nationalist India.

In our opinion, the right policy for His Majesty's Government to adopt would be to give the communal award as early as possible and draw up their proposals for the reforms, and place them before the Federal Structure Committee, and finally before the Round Table Conference and then proceed to frame a bill on the basis of the agreements reached at the Conference. This procedure, we believe, will be as expeditious and efficient as the Hoare method, if not more so, and what is more important, will be acceptable to the great bulk of the people of India, which, according to the statement of Sir Samuel Hoare, is the real test of the matter. Referring specially to the renewal of the Ordinance regime, Sir Samuel said that the way to show British good faith was not to break with friends. Certainly it is not proof of good faith that he should break faith with friends like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mr. Jayakar, Mr. Srinivasa Sastri and a host of others who have stood by the Conference method. If these be not friends, we should like to know whb the "friends" are of Sir Samuel Hoare.

#### RE-MONETISATION OF SILVER.

THE question of the advisability of taking silver into partnership with gold as a basis of currency was incidentally raised in the House of Commons in the discussions that took place on the Finance Bill last month. This Bill creates an Exchange Equalisation Fund of £150 million to be used for buying gold, foreign currencies and securities with a view to preventing sudden and violent fluctuations in the exchange value of sterling. While it is true that the immediate object of the Fund is to steady the external value of the pound, there is no doubt that the Fund can be used and is intended to be used for a larger purpose, viz. to bring about an expansion of credit and a consequent rise in the price level. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, after much questioning, admitted that a raising of commodity

prices was a definite objective of the Government's financial policy, and that, since to get up prices in terms of sterling is to cheapen sterling, steps would be deliberately taken to encourage the pound to go down in value. He did not disclose what would be the extent of the increase in commodity prices or a decline in sterling that the Government would aim at. But the general opinion is that there should be an increase of 30 per cent. in the present level of prices, which would require the pound to be pushed down 10 per cent. This policy of controlled inflation would obviously be easier to prosecute if we could widen the precious metal basis of credit and exchange, and this fact gave an opportunity to the bimetallicists in England like Sir Robert Horne and Mr. Amery to propose that power should be given to the Government to invest the Exchange Equalisation Fund in silver as well as in gold or external securities and currencies. On this limited proposal the policy of introducing a silver-gold standard could not of course be fully discussed as such discussion would have been out of order, but it was pointed out that the chief cause of the present economic *malaise* of the world was insufficiency of gold, and that therefore the possibility of using silver as an auxiliary to gold in the world's currencies must be carefully considered. It would appear that the total annual supply of gold would eight years hence fall short of the world's requirements by some £49 million. If this is so, and if we must have a metallic element in our currency, if, that is to say, we cannot do with a managed paper currency, then—it was argued—we cannot neglect to take the aid which silver can give us as a cover for our currency. Sir Hilton Young, the Minister of Health, who replied on behalf of Government, of his part could not go into all the arguments either, but he made it clear that in the inter-imperial and international discussions that would soon be initiated on the monetary problem, the question of silver would loom large, and that the Government had no desire to prejudge it in any way.

At the Imperial Economic Conference in Ottawa this issue will in all likelihood be raised, for the Canadian Minister of Commerce, Mr. H. H. Stevens, is known to be an earnest advocate of bimetallicism. When some time ago a resolution was passed in the House of Commons of Canada asking that measures be taken for the stabilisation of the currencies of all countries in the British Empire Mr. Stevens made a pointed reference to the inadequate supply of gold of properly sustaining the gold standard and said that gold and silver must be brought into active co-operation. This question is being seriously considered in other countries too. In France a Parliamentary Committee has been formed for the purpose of advocating the use of silver along with gold as a metallic basis of currency. In the United States a resolution was unanimously passed in the Senate in January of last year asking for a conference on the question of silver. And things have not remained stationary since then. A report of a Coinage Committee of Congress was issued last month suggesting that an international conference be held for the

purpose of raising the level of commodity prices and it contained the following passage:—

"We recommend that it be conveyed to the proposed conference that as debts of all nations are fixed and measured in money, but in fact are paid in commodities or their proceeds, the problem should be approached from the angle of the price level which can be most effectively controlled through the money systems, because these systems have a disproportionate power of leverage on the large body of commodities through the price level which regulates their movement. All these systems, whatever their local nature, have their bases in the two precious metals, so that a normal relationship between these two is pre-requisite to equilibrium in money and, through money, in the price level of commodities."

As very soon an international conference will become necessary for finding a solution for the monetary problem in all its aspects, it is of the first importance that we in India should have formed our views on that aspect of it that touches us most nearly, namely, the question of the advisability and feasibility of making use of silver to widen the basis of our currency.

#### U. P. LEGISLATURE.

THE Summer Session of the United Provinces Legislative Council held at Nainital from June 13 to 21 evoked widespread interest among all concerned in its proceedings,—a somewhat unusual experience for this otherwise dull body,—on account of the heated discussions which centred on some special subjects of general public importance, such as the sudden change in the Government's excise policy, a private member's bill to suppress immoral traffic, the legislation requiring nomination of a woman as a member to every Municipal and District Board in the Provinces and the future of the Government's Publicity Department.

The debate on the excise policy, which was abruptly changed last March from the fixed fee license sale of liquor to the auction system, was dramatically cut short by a motion for adjournment until the Government were in possession of the results furnished by what they called the 'new method' employed to check illicit distillation. The Government's professions that no alteration in their policy of total abstinence for the people was implied in the withdrawal of the surcharge system will carry conviction to no sensible man. The reintroduction of the auction system has cheapened liquor, increased the number of excise shops, abolished the sealed-bottle sale and provided in general greater facilities for the purchase of spirituous drink. The U. P. Council consists of such lame, tame and maimed persons that the Government can easily have their way in practically everything by advancing the flimsiest excuses and the most preposterous pleas which do duty for arguments for them.

The bill to suppress immoral traffic carried on on an organised commercial basis in U. P. covered no new ground which had not already been covered by the similar acts for Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. It is unfortunate that on a vital issue of such great public welfare, the Govern-

ment decided to remain neutral after having expressed sympathy with the provisions of the bill, and left the matter to the vote of the non-official members only, who threw out the bill at the last stage of its discussion by a narrow majority of 35 to 30. Can the Government justify their attitude of neutrality towards a measure with which the health of the body politic is so intimately concerned?

The third topic of all-India interest which was accepted by the House was an amendment to the District Boards and the Municipalities Acts sponsored by Mrs. Srivastava which enjoined upon the Government hereafter to make three instead of two nominations to District and Municipal Boards, one of whom must be a woman. In the backward 'Hindustan', where the women's lot is unenviable due to strict *purdah* and the ignorance of the three R's, this seemingly simple step in social reform will supply a spur to social revolution, in which women will play a prominent part.

The debate on the question of the abolition of the Government Publicity Department was raised on a motion for the demand for a supplementary grant. Through eventually unavailing, it put the official spokesman in a tight corner. They had a weak case to defend. The contention of the Government was that the Publicity Department was maintained principally to popularise ideas of village uplift by correlating activities of the agricultural and co-operative departments for the benefit of rural folks and to impart political education on sound lines to the masses which was sadly neglected by the urban intelligentsia. This was being attempted, among other things, by publishing the review of the week. The Opposition, on the other hand, held that the Government's weekly paper was utterly worthless, for which no one anywhere cared at all, and packets of which remained unopened. They argued further that it was not the function of an irremovable Executive to carry on political education at the cost of the tax-payer through a Government-paid agency. In regard to the rural uplift aspect of the paper, the argument of the Opposition was that while food, water and clothing, the essential wants, remained inadequately supplied to the villager, what good could the mere talk of rural reconstruction do to them? Hence the money spent on keeping up this department was a public waste, which the people could ill-afford at this period of financial strain when more important and urgent needs remained unsatisfied. None-the-less, the Government secured an unqualified victory by 59 votes to 16.

There remains one other matter of public importance which deserves notice. Twice during the session the President of the Council had to rebuke the Government members for not supplying answers to the questions of non-official members. In regard to questions dealing with excise matters, of which notice had been given many weeks before and which had not been answered, the Excise Minister offered a grotesque explanation that as the debate on the excise policy was being held on that very day, he considered it right that those questions should not be

answered until the debate was over. "Whatever information we will give, we shall give this afternoon", said the Minister. The Executive and Legislature, we thought, were interdependent links in the machinery of the government, but if the Executive did not co-operate with the Legislature, the result would be chaos. The Government maintain costly offices with the staff at the expense of the people, and it is their duty to help adequate formulation of public opinion by furnishing correct information at the earliest opportunity. The other occasion when the Government failed to supply information in answer to questions was when the health of the eminent political leaders now in prison was enquired. The President considered the complaint of non-official members as legitimate, and threatened the Government members with disciplinary action if such episodes were repeated. The Leader of the House offered an apology and promised to behave better in future.

While the victory resulting from the counting of hands went to the official benches generally at Nainital, it seems clear that the laurels of the debate belong to the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, with whom also rests the moral triumph of the entire Session.

S. P. ANDREWS DUBE.

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## Our Geneva Letter

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( From our own correspondent. )

( BY AIR MAIL )

GENEVA, June 25.

LAUSANNE—GENEVA—LONDON—OTTAWA.

"TODAY", said Mr. MacDonald at Lausanne, "the method of reaching agreement between Governments by international conferences was undergoing its supreme test." He might have added that never before in history was such an effort made by representatives of organised communities professing a common civilisation to face a serious situation confronting it. Lausanne—Geneva—London—Ottawa: these conferences are different methods for attaining an end which is nothing less than the conscious recognition of the influences at work in a changing world, the cumulative effect of which will be to transform it far more radically, organically and inevitably than the communist experiment, and fashioning the economic and juridical features of the new order with forethought and with due regard for the avoidance of human waste. For, as the British Premier was careful to point out and as it has now come to be commonly recognized, the present economic crisis cannot be accounted for completely either by war debts or reparation payments or defective currency or fiscal policies or by over-production alone. Its persistence and its elusive character distinguish it from other crises of this kind and render it a highly complex economic phenomenon directly related to the vitals of the present order.

The effects of the disease are only too evident: a civilisation, more pronouncedly commercial than

any other, is faced by a decline of more than half the total volume of the world's commerce since 1929; an economic order, characterised more than any other by industrial production, is prostrated by over-production; a democratic system is endangered by the consequences of considerably over twenty-five million able-bodied workers being condemned to inertia for lack of work. Mr. MacDonald did not exaggerate when he said: "The system is crumbling under our feet."

The remedies, at any rate those that have to be immediately taken, are no less obvious: firstly, the liquidation of war debts and reparations; secondly, the regulation of money; thirdly, the organisation of solvent economic units by facilitating trade and commerce; and fourthly, and most important of all, the reduction of armaments so as to release the resources of nations for constructive purposes and to create the necessary confidence for bringing about an understanding between them for general reconstruction. The Lausanne Conference is calculated to deal with the first of these problems and by securing the suspension of the war debts and reparation payments for the duration of the Conference it has made a promising start. The Geneva Conference for disarmament meant to grapple with the last of these issues, after passing through various vicissitudes, is once more being reinforced by the counsels of the statesmen assembled at Lausanne and united by the common anxiety not to disappoint the expectations of public opinion in this respect. London will relate the work of the European Powers at Lausanne as regards the evil heritage of the war to what the United States can do about it, a necessary link in the chain, as they still fight shy of "European entanglements" and will not directly take part in the Lausanne negotiations. Ottawa, judging from Mr. Thomas's pronouncement on the subject in the House of Commons, is intended to serve as a point of concentration on all these issues so far as the British Commonwealth is concerned.

The prospects of success, if only because of the fear of the consequences of failure, are better than they have been for a long time. The German representatives at Lausanne have proved far more conciliatory in manner than what was anticipated of them and, thanks to the recent change in the French Government, the attitude of the French Premier is favourable. News from Washington too is very hopeful and the British Government, backed by the British people, is making a determined effort to put its own house and the Commonwealth in order, to give a lead to Europe and to act as an intermediary between Europe and America.

Thus, almost visibly, although not boldly as yet, for we are all caught up in the process of transformation, the change which the renowned American publicist, Mr. Nicholas Murray Butler, has described as the transition from a political to an economic age is creeping over the world. The stress of united human effort is being shifted from liberty to wealth; from the assertion of individual opinion to the pre-occupation of collective welfare. Internationalism

is of necessity being resorted to, obliterating fierce historical distinctions and the uses of diplomacy and prestige are being confined to the routine remaining over from a swiftly passing time. The need for us in India to seize the spirit of this new world and to realize that, before statesmen gave themselves the trouble of turning to it, the thought and repeated writings of numerous professors, journalists and politicians had dwelt on it, is urgent. In the field of economic action, there is room for the most thoughtful and hopeful among us: the consideration of issues facing the country, the formulation of various methods of reconstruction and the demand for a better life for our people can be so clearly and forcibly stated by those who wish India well that neither the custodians of an antiquated social order nor the men in power, whether foreign or indigenous, will be able to resist the cry.

## Our London Letter.

(BY AIR MAIL.)

LONDON, June 25.

WAKING UP.

NOTWITHSTANDING the official assumption of an air of contentment and satisfaction that there is no special news to record during the week in India, and that the number of persons in jail at the end of May was about fifteen hundred less than a month earlier, there seems to be, even in usually optimistic quarters, the feeling that it is desperately necessary to get a move on in India quickly. I gather that the view is held in official quarters that nothing is to be done to indicate the desire on the part of the authorities that would give complexion to a charge of negotiating with Gandhiji or the Congress. Having already negotiated once with them, and the negotiations having broken down, no Government could afford, so the argument goes, to risk another onslaught upon the citadel of Government prestige. There can be no equality of status between Government and Congress. Government is so obviously right, and Congress is so obviously wrong that there hardly appears in any case to be ground for argument or discussion. All that is necessary is for Congress to call off civil disobedience and the Ordinance regime would automatically disappear, save as against terrorism in Bengal, upon the restoration of peace and order in the country, for the absence of which Congress is solely responsible. One could almost recite the official apologia in one's sleep. Moreover, to enter into negotiations with Mr. Gandhi would deeply offend the anti-Congress elements in India and the Mohammedans whose friendship cannot be risked. There is no doubt too that there is a very widespread feeling in this country, and it is not confined to circles hostile to Indian aspirations, that no reliance can be placed upon Mr. Gandhi as a negotiator. He is described variously as vague, evasive, elusive and, in Tory quarters, as diabolical. It is quite likely, therefore, that even supposing Sir Samuel Hoare wished to open up discussion with Mr. Gandhi, and that is a large assumption for which I do not believe there is any warrant, he would hesitate a thousand times before doing so lest he should let loose a whole menagerie of angry interests only too ready to howl him down, and even to rend him to pieces. At any rate it would not be at all surprising to learn that fears of this kind obsess him. If this be so, it is

clear that, notwithstanding his invitation to Mr. Gandhi to let him know any time he changes his mind and policy, direct relations between the two on any of the things that really matter are, for the moment, entirely out of the question. It therefore remains to be seen whether means cannot be found for indirect discussions, with a view to secure a break-away from the present debacle.

#### FRIENDLY MEDIATION.

When the three British members of the Society of Friends were in India, they took occasion to secure from Dr. Tagore the text of an appeal to the best minds of both races for the restoration of peace in a spirit of conciliation. Dr. Tagore was most anxious that they should wait upon Gandhiji with his message in order, if possible, to obtain a response from him. The Friends were, however, unable, owing to difficulties placed in their way by the authorities in India to see Mahatmaji, but their letter to him, in a modified form, communicating to him the Poet's appeal, was, after some delay, permitted to reach him, and he was allowed to send a reply that has since been published with a covering letter over the signatures of the Archbishop of York, the Master of Balliol, Sir Gilbert Murray and Sir Francis Younghusband, who had issued a similar letter at the time of the publication here of Dr. Tagore's appeal. It is somewhat disconcerting to find Mr. Gandhi's friendly response, strongly emphasising and reiterating his desire for peace and conciliation, treated, if one may take yesterday's dispatch from the "Times" Simla Correspondent, with derision and contempt in official and unofficial quarters alike as containing nothing new in that he conditions his willingness by regard for the national honour. There are large numbers of people, perhaps an increasing number, who believe that peace and reconciliation are the two most honourable objects of a nation's activities. It comes strangely, however, from the countrymen of the Marquess of Salisbury, who, returning from Berlin with Disraeli some decades ago, claimed to have brought back peace with honour. Is it to be supposed that only Governments and their staunch supporters are to be credited with a sense of what is due to honour and that their opponents are to be considered as being destitute of this attribute? One would have on the contrary supposed in a world of reason freed from passion and prejudice that the authorities who claim always to be filled with the desire for the restoration of peace and order in the country would have sought to elicit from Mr. Gandhi the details into which he would desire to see his generalisation translated. It seems a stupid and wanton frustration of effort to turn down an opportunity for further pourparlers because of an inability to comprehend the spirit and the purpose of what is on the face of it a genuine gesture of goodwill on the Mahatma's part. Of course, if he is to be regarded as the Devil incarnate it is obvious that any approach on his part must be treated with suspicion and alarm, but I feel confident that that is not the view that would be accepted by one so intimately acquainted with him as Lord Irwin who has on more than one occasion borne testimony to the Mahatma's integrity of character and the spirit of goodwill that ordinarily animates him. Unfortunately in circles where present official opinions prevail Lord Irwin's stock has fallen low.

Nor, according to a Bombay telegram in to-day's "Times," has the appeal for reconciliation put forward by the Servants of India Society, four of whose members are reported to have visited Mrs. Sarojini Naidu at Yerawda Jail last week-end, been productive of more hopeful results. "The Times of India" in its criticism of the Society's suggestions has been more than ordinarily unhelpful. Nevertheless, as the

date for the expiry of Ordinances approaches, feelings of anxiety are necessarily aroused, not only in India, but in friendly and sympathetic circles in this country (whose influence it would be most unwise to ignore), lest the Government should be guilty of a fresh failure to seize the psychological opportunity to restore confidence in the country by a resumption of normal methods of administration. So long as a mentality prevails on either side, there is the real danger that the prevalent ill-will will become deeper and more wide-spread to the lasting injury of friendly relations between the two countries. It almost looks as though the errors of Ireland may be perpetrated in India and that in the end, so far from there being any disposition to accept a new constitution from the Westminster Parliament, we shall, on the contrary, be faced with an estranged and embittered India just as we are at the moment with a similar situation in an Ireland divided against herself. It is to be hoped, therefore, that further attempts will be made by men and women of goodwill, either individually or in groups, to bring together for purposes of further consultation with each other the Government on the one side and Congress on the other, in order that the latter may be once more induced to "sit in" (to use an Americanism) at the task of national reconstruction at a moment when civilisation, as we have hitherto understood it, is very obviously threatened with dissolution.

#### ODDS AND ENDS.

There are various ways of keeping India in the public eye. The Friends of India, who suffered the capture of their platform last week by Mr. V. J. Patel, who cannot suffer patiently the thought of the leadership of the National movement remaining in other hands than his, and is expounding the doctrine of complete independence of India outside of the British Empire, are seeking to educate public opinion in rural areas by a caravan tour and propaganda. There is to be a public meeting under the auspices of the organisation in Trafalgar Square to-day.

The Student Christian Movement has published an admirable little pamphlet on the crisis in India by the Rev. R. M. Gray, formerly of Bombay. It is a thoughtful little document and should make many people ponder deeply on the facts and causes of the present situation in India.

I hear that it is quite likely that an effort will be made to picket Parliament in order to bring home to members their obligations and responsibilities in regard to Indian freedom. If the pickets can make themselves by peaceful and non-provocative means as great a nuisance as the pickets did during the suffragist campaign they will not be altogether wasting their time.

Yesterday, the East India Association entertained the Indian cricketers, who, by their success in the cricket field, are doing much to increase an appreciation of Indian progress in the field of international sport.

On Monday next an important debate on certain features of the Indian situation will be initiated in the House of the Commons by the Labour Party, ostensibly on the Whitley Commission Report, but it is expected that the debate will cover a considerably larger area of discussion and the Secretary of State is expected to make a pronouncement on Government policy in regard to the Ordinances.

#### THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION.

Secret diplomacy and the open variety have been at loggerheads this week with a vengeance. Both as regards the Reparations Conference at Lausanne and the Disarmament Conference at Geneva there have been clandestine comings and goings and meetings of heads of States at small and unknown inns and



other places of refreshment, at all hours of the day and night, just as one would expect in any romantic novel, dealing with the diplomatic side of international affairs. Side by side with these hidden moves, either for position or for mutual enquiry, is to be placed the megaphoned message of President Hoover that the only way to peace is by universal and substantial disarmament in such fashion as to strengthen the powers of defence as against the powers of attack, and that only with such a reduction of armaments will it be reasonable to approach America for a remission of debts. There has been a tremendous fluttering in the dovescots accordingly, and as was only to be supposed, the American proposals have been attacked from every angle where the concealed machine guns of vested interests are established. Every sort of sordid objection and cynical criticism has been brought into use for the purpose of defeating this appeal to the good sense of the peoples of the world over the heads of their stupid and hidebound Governments. The one ray of life at the moment lies in the fact that M. Herriot has been seen to pat Herr Von Paten in a friendly spirit on the back, whilst the two statesmen, the one in poor German and the other in superb French have expressed the most cordial sentiments towards each other and an

appreciation of each others' difficulties. Perhaps out of this tangle will emerge instinctively some reconstructive effort that will express the true spirituality of the European peoples.

#### DISCORD IN THE LABOUR PARTY.

The Labour Party is suffering a bad eclipse just now. It has divided both to the right and to the left. The National Labour section is probably considerably larger than its Parliamentary representation would indicate. The same argument would apply to the orthodox section of the Party, at present led by Mr. Lansbury. Their fewness of numbers in the House is not compensated for by the quality of the personnel of the Parliamentary Party. And now comes the most unkindest cut of all, the refusal of the I. L. P. to rejoin the fold, notwithstanding the earnest negotiations to that end that have been conducted for some time past. To-day's papers contain an appeal by Mr. Maxton to the Independent Labour Party to separate finally from the official Labour Party and march into the wilderness. Whether they will all follow his lead is uncertain, but probably most of them will do so and will thereby form a buffer between Labour and Socialism on the one hand and Communism on the other.

## R. T. C. PROCEDURE.

### SAPRU-JAYAKAR STATEMENT.

*The following is the full text of the joint statement by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. M. R. Jayakar on Sir Samuel Hoare's announcement in the House of Commons on the 27th June last, on the Round Table Conference procedure :*

THE statement made by the Secretary of State as to the future procedure of work which hitherto has been engaging the attention of the Round Table Conference or its ancillary committees or His Majesty's Government is of such far-reaching importance that it seems to us necessary that its full significance and implications should be clearly understood by the public at large.

The Round Table Conference has met twice in London. Its second session was over on 1st December, 1931, but the Conference itself in its collective capacity was simply adjourned, and not dissolved. With a view to carry on and complete the work which could not be completed at its session in London, His Majesty's Government decided, with the concurrence of the Conference, to appoint certain committees, namely, the Indian Franchise Committee, the Federal Finance Committee, the Indian States Inquiry Committee and the Consultative Committee. The first two Committees have, after extensive and exhaustive enquiry, submitted their reports which have been published. The third Committee, namely, the Indian States Committee has, however, been carrying on its work in England also. Its report yet awaits publication. As regards the Consultative Committee, whereof we have been members, it held two sessions at Delhi during the last cold weather under the chairmanship of His Excellency the Viceroy and adjourned to meet again on 23rd May at Simla, when it again considered necessary to adjourn its sitting to a future date. It now appears that His Majesty's Government do not propose to call any further session of the Round Table Conference or convene a meeting of the Federal Structure Committee in London. They have now published their proposals.

#### ROUND TABLE PROCEDURE GIVEN UP.

The essential features of the new proposals are : (1) There will be a single Bill which will provide alike for autonomous constitutions of provinces and for a federation of provinces and States. (2) They will proceed to give some time this summer a decision on those aspects of the communal problem which now retard progress. (3) The Consultative Committee will reassemble and will proceed continuously with its programme of work bringing its collective advice to bear on the numerous important questions entrusted to it, many of which were not examined by the Conference or its Committees in London. (4) After the conclusion of the work of the Consultative Committee, but before the introduction of the Bill a Joint Select Committee of Parliament, will be set up to consider the proposals of the Government, and thus the Government proposes to facilitate Indian co-operation and ensure effective influence at the formative stage. (5) If the course of discussion in the Consultative Committee proves that the matter will not be ripe for formulating definite proposals for consideration of a Joint Select Committee without further consultation of a more formal character then arrangements will be made for the summoning of a body for further discussion in London, the size and personnel of which would be determined with reference to number and character of subjects requiring further discussion.

This procedure is, in our opinion, very widely different from that contemplated by the Round Table Conference or the terms whereon it was called. We will in this connection refer first to the historic announcement of Lord Irwin dated 1st November, 1929, whereby it was decided, with the concurrence of Sir John Simon, the Chairman of the Statutory Commission, to convene a Round Table Conference "for the purpose of seeking the greatest possible measure of agreement for the final proposals which it would later be the duty of His Majesty's Government to submit to Parliament." The full scope of this statement was further explained by Lord Irwin in his inaugural address to the

Indian Legislature on the 9th July, 1930, as follows: "I now," said Lord Irwin, "am able to define its function (of the Conference) more precisely. After very careful consideration, His Majesty's Government has reached the conclusion that it would not be right to prescribe for the Conference any terms more limited than in my statement of November last and that the Conference should enjoy full freedom that these words connote. The Conference will be free to approach its task, greatly assisted indeed, but with its liberty unimpaired by the report of the Statutory Commission or by any other document which will be before it. It is the belief of His Majesty's Government that by way of conference it could be possible to reach solutions that both countries and all parties and interests in them can honourably accept. And any such agreement at which the Conference is able to arrive will form the basis of proposals which His Majesty's Government will later submit to Parliament. From such a definition of the scope of the Conference it is clear that His Majesty's Government conceive of it not as a mere meeting for discussion and debate but as a joint assembly of representatives of both countries, on whose agreement the precise proposals to Parliament may be founded." It will thus be seen that the essence of the method was that the proposals before Parliament would be made by the Government on the basis of the largest measure of agreement that might be reached at the Conference. We feel that the new plan, by dispensing with a further meeting of the Federal Structure Committee or the Round Table Conference, dispenses with and supersedes the deliberate policy of His Majesty's Government referred to above as regards the method of approach to the Indian problem.

#### THE PRIME MINISTER'S ASSURANCES.

In support of our view we would refer to the speeches of the Prime Minister and Lord Lothian, Under Secretary of State for India. In his speech at the last sitting of the second session of the Round Table Conference delivered on 1st December, 1931, the Prime Minister discussed the question of the machinery to be set up for close and intimate consideration of specific problems, and in doing so he stated as follows: (a) "I propose therefore with your consent to nominate in due course a small representative committee, a *working committee of this Conference* (Italics are ours) which will remain in being in India, with which through the Viceroy we can keep in effective touch. I cannot here and now specify precisely how this committee can best be employed. This is a matter which must be worked out and must to some extent depend on the report of the Committee we propose to set up, but in the end *we shall have to meet again for a final review of the whole scheme.*" (Italics are ours.) (b) On 2nd December 1931, the Prime Minister moved a resolution before the House of Commons asking for its approval of the Indian policy of His Majesty's Government. In the course of his speech, Major Attlee interjected a question asking whether the Committees to be appointed were going to report back to the Round Table Conference, and the Prime Minister, in dealing with the question, said, among other things, as follows: "I want to tell the House without any reserve that I am perfectly convinced that the work which has been done could never have been done by any method except the method of co-operation and consultation, and I say further that if any Government here will try to change that now, it would destroy all chance of continuing agreement and co-operation with India itself. The method by which the Round Table Conference has been handled is the only method that will enable India and ourselves to come to an agreement, to work that agreement in harmony and use the agreement for the benefit of

India itself and also for the honour and good of the whole community to which we belong." Further the Prime Minister, in reply to another question by Major Attlee, stated as follows: "Obviously the Round Table Conference will remain and in the end we shall have to meet again for a final review." Thereupon Major Attlee said, "It is satisfactory to note that the method of negotiation through the Round Table Conference is to continue, and that this is an interim process during which certain committees are going to report." (c) In moving the same resolution in the House of Lords, Lord Lothian, Under Secretary of State for India, said as follows: "At some later date, when all the necessary material is ready the Round Table Conference will reassemble in some form for a final review of the whole scheme and thereafter a draft constitution will be presented by Government for the consideration and decision of Parliament."

#### FINAL REVIEW OF THE WORK OF R. T. C. COMMITTEES.

It will thus appear that it was clearly the intention of His Majesty's Government to reassemble the Conference for a final review of the work of the committees when it would be possible for the representatives of British India, representatives of Indian States, His Majesty's Government and other British parties to come to certain agreements. We need scarcely point out that safeguards e.g. finance, defence and foreign policy, have not yet been agreed to. Indeed certain proposals were made on both sides and no agreement has finally yet been recorded. Now we desire to point out that in our opinion in the absence of the representatives of the British Government and other British parties and the Indian Princes—whose ministers have no authority to bind them—in the Consultative Committee, it is impossible for the Committee to register any agreements with British opinion, and such agreements, if aimed at, must stand over until select Indians meet the Joint Parliamentary Committee or until a formal but smaller body than the Round Table Conference is summoned in London in the contingencies contemplated by the new announcement. We cannot see why if the Government proposed to bring about discussion between the Joint Select Committee and individuals on definite proposals and why if they contemplate also the possibility in certain contingencies of summoning a formal though small body of representatives, they should not have at once decided to constitute such a formal body which should meet in London to carry on discussions with the Joint Parliamentary Committee and to treat with it on terms of equality. Our insistence is not and has not been that the full Round Table Conference should be summoned for the third time, but we have urged and do still urge that a smaller body, the personnel of which may inspire confidence, should meet for a final review of the work of the committees including the Consultative Committee and for treating with British representatives. We certainly should not be assumed to favour the procedure so far as it contemplates the summoning after the conclusion of the Consultative Committee, of individuals to be selected by the Government. It would have been a different thing if in the selection of the representatives the Conference itself had any voice. We are aware that it has been suggested in certain quarters that the Conference method has not been successful. Whatever the persons not connected with the Conference may say with regard to this matter the Prime Minister himself observed in his statement before the Conference that "these conferences have not been a failure in any sense of the term." We ourselves are respectfully prepared to endorse this view. We were painfully conscious at the last session of the Conference that a certain section of British opinion, which-

in the altered state of Parliamentary parties possessed considerable influence, did not favour the Conference plan and thought that it would lead to no good. But we are also conscious that the mutual exchange of views and the timely intervention of the Prime Minister himself and of British statesmen like Lord Reading, Lord Sankey, Messrs. Wedgwood Benn, Lees-Smith and Pethick Lawrence enabled the last Conference to get over certain critical situations which seemed to threaten its very existence and to bring to an abrupt end the work that it had up to that stage been able to accomplish and to destroy the spirit which it had generated.

#### SINGLE BILL PLAN.

We are aware His Majesty's Government have taken an important decision in so far as they indicate their intention now to proceed with a single bill, but it is clear from the announcement that they propose to introduce provincial constitutions first, the federation following later. Our support of the single bill plan should not be in any manner assumed to carry with it the support of all the implications of the passage dealing with it in the official announcement. If the hiatus between the provincial constitution and the central constitution is going to be a long one—and we have reason to apprehend this danger—then we cannot clearly support such a proposal. Again, when it is said that before an All-India Federation materialises, the units concerned must be prepared actually to federate, we must strongly dissent from this proposal if it means that it will be left to the provinces to decide whether they will not join the federation. For, it is clear that one single province may, by adopting a perverse and obstinate attitude, hold up the federation indefinitely and thus make the provision in the bill absolutely nugatory. Of course, we recognise that so far as association of Indian States is concerned, Parliament can only provide for their entry on a voluntary basis, but to extend this principle of voluntary basis to provinces is in our opinion to endanger the whole scheme of federation. In our discussions in England with British statesmen, we repeatedly pressed this point of view and we continue to be of the same opinion.

#### QUESTION OF DELAY.

Coming to the question of delay no one is more anxious than ourselves for the early establishment of the new constitution. But we cannot see how the summoning of fourteen or fifteen members of the Federal Structure Committee from British India and nine members from the Indian States,—the rest being in England,—would have caused any material delay. In any case it seems clear from the announcement itself that the drafting experts have not been sitting idle, for if definite proposals are to be the basis of future discussion, they can be put forward either as clauses of a bill or as propositions which may ultimately be shaped into clauses, and thus it seems to us that there cannot be much room for apprehending delay by sticking to the old basis. It is not difficult to read in the new announcement a considerable measure of pressure exercised upon the Government by an overwhelming majority of Conservatives in Parliament and our experience of last year justifies us in viewing the new proposals of the Government critically. We have approached these proposals with every desire to understand them and to promote the work that lies ahead. But the announcement, as it has appeared, is not sufficient in our opinion to enable us to form a final judgment. We shall await reports of the Parliamentary debates which may possibly make the position more clear. We shall also await further developments and then issue a further statement defining our attitude.

#### MR. SASTRI'S VIEWS

*Interviewed at Coimbatore on 29th June regarding Sir Samuel Hoare's statement and the Commons debate on India, the Right Honble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri said:*

**T**HE change of procedure goes to the root of the matter. If experts and people with specialised experience are only to give evidence before the Joint Committee of Parliament, dominated as it must be by Conservatives, the new constitution will be an imposed constitution and not one to which progressive parties in India have previously agreed and which they may naturally be expected to accept.

All conditions necessary to perpetuate the present conflict will be maintained. The Secretary of State said in the House of Commons that it was not wise to break with friends. Who—these friends are it is hard to guess, but his statement goes far to break with those who went to London for the Round Table Conference in all faith that they were going to be consenting parties to fateful decisions about India's future. No more striking demonstration could be given to India of her helplessness than the way in which she is now being made sport of party vicissitudes in another country. We should never feel safe again unless the constitution is placed once for all beyond the hazards of English politics. We have dissensions enough among ourselves which paralyse public action. To allow those of England to play with our fortunes adds inextricable confusion and turns us into our own enemies.

With the Congress put out of action in the constitutional field, have the remaining nationalist elements, like the Liberals and the advanced Mahomedan group, any chance of obtaining from the Joint Parliamentary Committee a constitution conformable to their expectations?

The present decision of His Majesty's Government humiliates them in the extreme. They must now consider seriously what their future attitude should be. The position at the moment is so exasperating that no wise decision can be taken until more information has come and things have become clearer.  
—*The Hindu.*

#### MR. SASTRI ON SAPRU-JAYAKAR STATEMENT.

*Interviewed at Coimbatore on 30th June about his views on the statement issued by Messrs. Sapru and Jayakar, the Rt. Hon'ble Sastri said:*

'Without consultation with Liberal colleagues I cannot make up my mind or venture to make suggestions. Sir Samuel Hoare's protestation that the old policy continues in spite of change of procedure is, in my judgment, only a diplomatic tribute which the ministers pay to the principle of continuity. The overpowering strength of the party behind him can be judged by the extent of their influence on the Prime Minister who first gave them the Indian portfolio and now acquiesces in the drastic modification of his own programme.

Messrs. Sapru and Jayakar emphasise the changes apparently secured by their protests. They don't seem to me to amount to much but their advice and guidance are entitled to the greatest consideration at the hands of all progressives in India. Their work in the Round Table Conference is beyond praise. Personally, I am disposed to defer to their judgment. By pleading for the restoration of normal administration and for superseding the Ordinance regime as well as by a gallant stand for the policy of Lord Irwin and the late Labour Government, they have

placed themselves on unassailable ground. The country will support them in the two demands, first, that the provinces after they become autonomous must not be allowed to canvass once again the wisdom or unwisdom of the federation policy and that there should be no long interval between provincial autonomy and central responsibility.

They throw out one positive suggestion, namely, that there should be a Round Table Conference on a smaller scale than before, seeing that Government themselves contemplate such a step, in case the Consultative Committee proves inefficient: One may hope that they will be persuaded to take the step unconditionally. The plan has the great merit of placing Indian delegates on the same footing as their British colleagues and revives, in part, the original principle of the Round Table Conference."—*The Hindu*.

#### U. P. LIBERAL ASSOCIATION.

The U. P. Liberal Association on July 2 resolved to authorise the Joint Secretaries of the Association to communicate the following statement of their opinion to the Secretary of State and the Government of India:—

THE Committee regret the decision of His Majesty's Government to abolish the Round Table Conference before it concluded its important work notwithstanding the assurances of the Prime Minister on December 1, 1931, and his declaration in the House of Commons the next day, and the Committee cannot but feel that in the decision now announced there is a definite breach of agreement by the British Government with the people of India.

The procedure which finds favour with His Majesty's Government cannot commend itself to Indian nationalists who objected to a similar procedure in connection with the Simon Commission and withheld all co-operation from that body. What justified the unmistakable departure from the Conference method and a reversion to the abandoned procedure adumbrated in connection with the Simon Commission so unpopular with a large section of Indians? The Committee think that more would have been accomplished if His Majesty's Government had set forth their own intentions in good time, if they had not allowed needlessly long intervals between the announcement and the Conference and between its first and second sessions and if an obvious attempt had not been made to bring its second session to an abrupt termination. The failure of the Conference to reach a settlement by consent of the communal question had been made much of.

The Indian Liberal party is non-communal and is pledged and endeavours to the best of its power to consider public questions from a national and not a communal point of view. The reasons for the failure of the attempts to reach a settlement were more or less well known and it was clear at the early stage of the Conference that a decision would have to be taken by the Government on their own responsibility. For the delay on their part in taking and announcing the decision the Conference cannot be blamed.

His Majesty's Government have stated that they will place before the proposed Committee of Parliament their own proposals which will be the basis of discussion. Surely they can place identical proposals before the Round Table Conference and proceed to the drawing up of the Bill for introduction in Parliament on the basis of the report of the Conference. It will embody the joint opinions of Indians equally with British members and not exclusively those of the latter.

#### B. P. ASSOCIATION ON ORDINANCES.

A meeting of the Council of the Bombay Presidency Association was held on 1st July and the following resolution was adopted and telegraphed to H. E. the Viceroy:—

The Council of the Bombay Presidency Association view with grave concern the promulgation by the Governor-General of a consolidated Ordinance with modified powers and restricted jurisdiction. Administration by Ordinances is repugnant to all principles of constitutional government. The Council fear this measure will deepen popular discontent, further embitter feelings and impede the early return of normal conditions. The Council, therefore, urge the Governor-General to reconsider his decision and withdraw the Ordinance, thereby putting an end to the present unfortunate situation in the country.

The Council feel that continuance of administration through Ordinances will tend to destroy all respect for the law even among the law-abiding citizens. All breaches of the law can be adequately punished by the existing legal enactments. The Council cannot conceive of an emergency lasting beyond six months, and even if in the opinion of Government the emergency continued, the situation could have been met by submitting the Ordinances as Bills to the vote of the Legislatures.

The Council further earnestly appeal to the Government to restore peace and goodwill by releasing all political prisoners in order to create a proper atmosphere for the reception of the new constitutional changes promised by them. At the same time the Council appeal to all Congressmen to give up the Civil Disobedience movement and thereby facilitate a return to normal conditions.

#### BOOKS RECEIVED.

- COOLIE: THE STORY OF LABOUR AND CAPITAL IN INDIA. Vols. I & II. By D. CHAMAN LALL. (Oriental Printing House, Abkari Road, Lahore.) 1932. 22cm. 124 & 185p.
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