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Topics of the Week.

Without Obligation.

THE *Pioneer*, like several other papers of its ilk, makes it appear as if those who participated in constitutional discussions in London cannot now favour the rejection policy without stultifying themselves. One can understand the policy of rejection being discarded on the ground that it would injure national interests. Several level-headed politicians have been denouncing this policy on this ground and making an appeal to the country to make the best of the bad bargain that the Hoare constitution is. But to say, as the *Pioneer* does, that "the British Indian delegation to the Round Table Conference are committed to the White Paper in so far as they have submitted a memorandum enumerating the modifications which would make its proposals acceptable to them" is to lay oneself open to a very palpable fallacy. Their association with the White Paper consisted in denunciation of its proposals and in suggestion of improvements therein. If these improvements are accepted, the British Indian delegation will of course have no reason to repudiate the White Paper; but if the improvements are rejected, are they still bound to accept it merely because they had a hand in its discussion? If this reasoning is correct, we may as well argue that the Government of India is wedded to the immediate grant of full self-govern-

ment to India because it has had to take part in debates relating to this subject. But does the Government of India feel that it has undertaken an obligation to concede unqualified self-government immediately on that account? Its participation in the discussion consisted every time in its returning an emphatic no to the demand for this kind of Swaraj. If it is committed to anything at all by reason of the attitude it took in the discussion, it may consider itself bound to oppose self-government. Similarly, the British Indian delegation discussed the White Paper only to condemn it wholesale. If they have incurred any moral obligation thereby, it is to oppose the proposals contained in it tooth and nail. The *Pioneer's* reasoning is wholly fallacious. The British Indian delegates are entirely free either to accept the White Paper or to reject it, equally with those who have taken no part in constitutional discussions. If rejection policy is to be turned down, it is on grounds of political expediency, and not on grounds of a direct or indirect, express or implied moral undertaking based on participation in previous discussions.

Dominionhood Constitutionally Impossible.

WEEK before last we showed, in Topics of the Week, how the establishment of federation by means of treaties, requiring consent individually of all the acceding States for any subsequent change in the terms of the treaties, acts as a perpetual bar to the growth of the constitution into one of full Dominion Status. There is another bar, again of a permanent character, which is implicit in federation; that arises from the fact that the States will for all time be under the paramountcy of the British Crown—a paramountcy which it is held it will be constitutionally impossible for the British Crown to transfer to the federal government. The States will thus remain for ever under the overlordship of the Crown and they being an integral part of the new government, the latter will never be able to sever the British connexion if it so desired. But the right of secession is the unerring mark of Dominionhood. It follows, therefore, that India will never become a full-fledged Dominion. This point was stressed by Mr. R. G. Pradhan in his very instructive address in Poona on Tuesday last. Referring to the White Paper, he said :

"Its basic principle of an All-India Federation, with paramountcy as regards Indian States vested in the Crown with its perpetuation of existing relations between them and the British Government—which relations will ever debar them from attaining Dominion Status—and with its denial of any recognised place in the constitution to the people in the States, will be found to be a permanent and serious barrier to our own full growth into a Dominion, much less into an independent nation. The scheme as regards the Centre is so cleverly and ingeniously devised as to delay indefinitely, if not altogether

to prevent, our becoming a Dominion as defined in the Statute of Westminster, and to prevent absolutely our claiming independence as a right constitutionally arising from Dominion Status.

"In the first place, the achievement of Dominion Status is extremely problematical. But suppose at some remote period, it is achieved somehow and Federal India then claims the constitutional right to secede. That claim will be countered by the cogent argument that it cannot be conceded without disintegration of the Federation itself; in other words, that Federal India as such cannot claim independence constitutionally, inasmuch as it contains two elements, one of which does not and cannot have Dominion Status owing to the paramountcy of the British Crown. It is this constitutional implication that has made the British Government so much enamoured of the scheme of an All-India Federation.

"I shall put it differently. The British Government is confident that it will be able to put down any attempt on the part of India to sever the British connexion by force. But the question assumes a different aspect when a Dominion wishes to exercise the constitutional right to secede. Such exercise of a constitutional right cannot be put down by force. So the rise of such a situation itself must be provided against and what should be done is to devise a scheme which will prevent such a claim being made and even though made, being constitutionally recognised. And this is what has been done in the White Paper Scheme."

Latest Terrorist Outrage.

THE latest recipient of the unwelcome attention of the terrorists was the Governor of Bengal who, though fired at at close range on the racecourse near Darjeeling, had a miraculous escape. This is a matter for sincere gratification. If newspaper writings are any index to the state of public feeling, this outrage seems to have roused great revulsion against the terrorists in the public mind in Bengal, where Sir John Anderson seems to be very popular with all sections of the community. By his uncompromising opposition to all proposals to discriminate to Bengal's disadvantage in the matter of constitutional reform and his successful endeavour to secure for the province half the proceeds of the jute export duty he has won for himself a definite place in the affections of the Bengalis. But even were he the most unpopular Governor Bengal ever had, any attempt to assassinate him would have been equally unjustifiable and condemnable. When will the terrorists realise the utter futility of their actions from the standpoint of the satisfaction of the country's political ambitions? Far from bringing swaraj nearer, their violent acts only furnish an excuse to the bureaucracy for piling on the country legislation greatly restrictive of personal liberty. Conservative diehards in Great Britain seize upon all such outrages for the purpose of supporting their demand for the grant of a smaller political advance to this country and this latest outrage is not going to pass unnoticed by them. If they succeed in carrying the day, the result, as so forcefully pointed out by Sir John Thompson in his recent Camberley speech, would not be a weakening of terrorism, but quite the reverse. We wish the diehard Tories realised this plain truth. But perhaps it is as useless to expect this measure of commonsense from them as it is to look up to the terrorists to put a stop to their mad career of physical violence. The only method of bringing terrorism under control is by granting liberal and solid reforms to the people, for which however the prospect is at the moment none too bright. It may be that the evil will not even by this means be completely extirpated; but there is no other method half so efficacious in weakening it.

Evil of Girl-Selling.

A BILL which seeks to check the evil of what virtually amounts to a sale of young girls has recently been introduced in the Assembly. This evil leads to the contraction of marriages between parties of very unequal ages and consequently to an increase in the number of widows. The extent of the prevalence of this evil may be incredible to many; but it is so rampant among certain sections of Indian society that to them, according to that well-known ethnologist Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Roy, marriage is nothing short of 'buying a wife.' And as can be easily imagined, the price demanded for a girl varies in proportion to the incongruity in the ages of the parties. The bill referred to makes such sales of girls below 14 penal and prescribes a maximum of two months' imprisonment or a fine of Rs. 200 or both in such cases. That the evil cries for urgent and energetic action admits of no doubt; but it is open to doubt whether the bill as it is will effectively serve that purpose. In fact, Mr. Roy pleads for one "on improved lines." He suggests the raising of the age of majority to 18 and more stringent provisions to deal with the reprehensible practice of treating human beings as saleable commodities. The reactions of women themselves to the proposed measure are really to the point and therefore worth knowing. The women of Madras who recently held a public meeting specially in order to pronounce on the bill took more or less the line adopted by Mr. Roy. Designed as the measure is for the protection of minor girls, they want it to go further by prohibiting the training of girls for the profession of prostitution as well. The age for marriage in the case of girls, they suggest, should be raised to 18 and they too propose more drastic penalties for seduction of girls, below that age. There is no doubt that if the provisions of the bill are thus modified, as we hope they will be by the legislature, it will go some way in checking the evil of bride-selling and giving the much needed protection to young girls.

Indian Emigration to Malaya.

THE revival of the rubber industry in Malaya is reflected in the demand for increased labour which has arisen there during the last two years. Owing to the severe depression which overtook it and the consequent unemployment, the export of Indian labour to Malaya was stopped four years ago. But on the strong representations of the Malayan authorities it has now been decided to allow Indian coolies to emigrate to that colony. The new system of emigration will however differ from the old one in important particulars. While under the latter most of the labour that migrated to Malaya was Kangan-recruited, the new arrangement does away with the recruiter altogether, the element of Government assistance for purposes of emigration remaining constant. A glut in the Indian labour market in Malaya is however provided against by the decision to restrict such labour emigration in the first year to 20,000. This figure does not seem to err on the side of extravagance or even liberalism when it is remembered that in some of the pre-depression years as many as over 1¼ lakhs labourers went over to Malaya in search of employment.

An emigrant can ask to be repatriated on any reasonable ground at any time within two years of his arrival in Malaya, repatriation even at a later date not being altogether tabooed. Ill-health, unsuitability of work, ill-treatment and inability to find work at the standard rate of wages are specifically mentioned as being among the grounds on which an Indian emigrant

can under the new scheme insist upon being sent back to his country at public expense. With a view to swelling the number of recruits the recruiter was under the temptation of misleading intending emigrants by painting an unduly rosy picture of labour conditions in Malaya. With the disappearance of the recruiter, this evil too will disappear. But the Indian labourer wishing to go to Malaya will have the latest information about conditions of employment there available to him through Government sources. In the nature of circumstances this information is bound to be more trustworthy and will enable the intending emigrant to know exactly what he is to expect in Malaya. In order to ensure a proper standard of morality among Indian labourers, it is necessary that as near an approach to the equality of numbers of emigrants of both sexes be attempted as possible and preferably that the emigration of whole families of labourers rather than that of single labourers be encouraged. The press note does not say whether any definite sex ratio will be maintained among the emigrants. Anyway we would urge that this aspect of the matter should not be lost sight of. It is well that before agreeing to reopen emigration the Government assured themselves of the existence of a desire on the part of the labour population of Madras from which Malaya draws a large of its labour supply to emigrate there.

Articles.

IS REJECTION PRACTICABLE?

REJECTION of the Hoare constitution is the avowed aim of the Swaraj party. But the party attach a special signification to the word "rejection." As they use it, it does not necessarily involve non-co-operation in the event of the constitution coming into force. The members of the party will do their best to prevent the reforms scheme from acquiring the force of law, but if they fail in this attempt and the scheme is imposed upon the country, they reserve to themselves the freedom of deciding, as may seem best at the time, whether they should or should not participate in its working and whether, if they opt for working the constitution, they should so work it as to bring it to a deadlock or utilise it for constructive purposes. On these points the Swaraj party have not announced their policy. But their immediate objective is to force the British Government to drop its proposals, and they think they will succeed in doing so if in the next Assembly election they win enough seats to be able to pass a resolution condemnatory of the reforms proposals, at whatever stage these may be at the time. It would appear that this reasoning of the party is well-founded, for Anglo-Indian papers like the *Times of India* and the *Statesman* agree that the effect of such a resolution being carried in the Assembly will be that the British Government will be compelled to withdraw the Reform Bill. The question then is whether the party will, in co-operation with other parties or by itself, be able to command sufficient votes in the Assembly for a resolution hostile to the reforms proposals being adopted by a majority.

Calculations are already being made as to the number of constituencies in which the Swarajists will poll the highest number of votes and as to the possibility of other progressive groups in the Assembly co-operating with them in rejecting the Hoare scheme of reforms. The Assembly consists at present of 145 members, of whom 104 are elected and 41 nominated. Of the latter 26 are officials and 15 unofficials. Now it is agreed on all hands that, on a question like this on which public opinion is to be gauged, official members of the Assembly ought to refrain from voting; and it is generally felt that they will in fact so refrain. To defeat a condemnatory resolution by the use of official influence and by actual official participation would be no less unseemly than to force a constitution upon a people in spite of their unanimous opposition. The general impression is that the Government of India will not be guilty of such a flagrant indecency. We may therefore assume that the Assembly will consist, for the purpose we have in view, of 119 members. Is it likely that the Swarajists will be able to command 60 votes in favour of such a resolution as they want to promote? It is believed that all the nominated unofficial members numbering 15 (with the exception of a representative of Berar and possibly one or two others) and the whole of the European group numbering 9 will vote solidly for the reforms scheme. The representatives of the Muslims' and landlords' constituencies, on the other hand, though inclining heavily in favour of the reforms scheme, will, it is thought, give some small amount of support to the anti-reform groups. The number of elected Mahomedan members in the Assembly is 30 and that of landlords 7. Of these 8 Mahomedans and 3 landlords are expected to join the progressive groups. The representatives of Indian commerce, 4 in number, will all be progressive. Non-Mahomedan or general constituencies return 49 members. These, with 2 Sikhs and 3 non-Europeans from Burma, or 54, may by good luck be all expected to range themselves on the side of constitutional freedom. The maximum number of votes therefore that progressives can hope to obtain in the Assembly will thus be 54 + 15 + 2 or 71; and if they obtain so many votes they will be in a clear majority.

It is assumed here that all the progressives will vote with the Swarajists. This assumption however has no foundation. Though all the 71 progressives will be bitterly disappointed with the Hoare reforms, they may not all vote in favour of a condemnatory resolution, which will have the effect of destroying the reforms, such as they are. For the question which the progressives in the Assembly will have to consider in all seriousness is whether they should give utterance to their dissatisfaction with the constitutional scheme in such a way as to lead ultimately to its abandonment or whether, with a view to saving it, they should steel their hearts to voting in favour of a resolution accepting the scheme. This is a very serious question to which politicians will have to address themselves and to which they will have to return a clear-cut answer.

They must be either for Acceptance or Rejection, acceptance with all the consequences that go with it and rejection with all the consequences that go with it. Either course is fraught with serious repercussions on the future of the country, and the decision must be made after fully weighing them. At present the public at large appear to be somewhat undecided. When pressed for an answer, they say: "We are certainly against this scheme, but...". These but's will not avail them in the electorate or in the Assembly. They must make up their mind whether, on a balance of considerations, their vote will be for acceptance of the Hoare scheme with all its defects, however grave, or for its rejection even if it leads to the country being left with the existing Montagu constitution for an indefinite period of time. The Swarajists will force upon the country this question in its stark nakedness, and everybody who would offer himself for election must think out for himself what answer to give to it, and it must be a clear and unambiguous answer. It is no use saying, "I want the Joint Memorandum reforms" or "I want the Sapru Memorandum reforms." These memoranda, it is clear, have now ceased to have any but academic interest for practical statesmen. The reforms scheme that will finally emerge from Parliament will be of a definitely lower calibre than that outlined in the White Paper, and at any rate we must now discuss the question on the footing that the White Paper scheme will undergo no improvement, and must be ready with an answer as to what we shall do to such a scheme—accept it or reject it. It would have saved us the necessity of thinking if the Swarajists had not brought the question to an issue and compelled us to answer it, but they are going to raise the question at election and we must be ready with our answer.

The answer will differ with differing groups. Some publicists have been saying that they do not mind the Hoare scheme being withdrawn; some even go so far as to say that they would welcome its withdrawal. They will no doubt vote with the Swarajists. But all politicians, though progressive in their general outlook, are not equally indifferent to the fate of the Hoare scheme. In spite of all its drawbacks and imperfections, they see in it germs of momentous reforms and would not like it scrapped. They would try to save it and bring it to early fruition. The progressives will thus divide themselves into two groups, and it is an interesting speculation in what proportion they will divide themselves among the non-Swarajists who will be returned to the Assembly. The number of progressive Muslims and landlords has been put at 8 and 3 respectively. The latter will all be for saving the reforms, and among the former all those who are not Nationalist Muslims will similarly be for saving the reforms. The Nationalist Muslims that will be elected to the Assembly will hardly be more than 4 or 5. And at least a dozen members returned by non-Mahomedan general constituencies will be men who will refuse to vote against the scheme if their vote will make the scheme vanish into thin air. If the above calculations are not too far out, the Swarajists will be able to count upon some 50 to 52 members who will be for rejection, when about 60 votes will be required to make rejection effective. Thus it seems likely that they will be in a minority and will not be able to destroy the Hoare reforms as they desire. But they will not be in a small minority either and will certainly have the power to discredit the reforms if not to damage them.

THE GENERAL STRIKE—OUT IN MILLHANDS' WAGES

AT long last the Bombay Millowners' Association broke their vow of silence and endeavoured to put up through their Chairman, Mr. H. P. Mody, a spirited defence in favour of wage cuts and against the strike of the Bombay textile workers and the public attempts at conciliation and speedy termination of the dispute. I refer to Mr. Mody's speech on the 10th of May at the Bombay Municipal Corporation on Mr. S. C. Joshi's and Dr. Choksy's motions for the appointment of a board of conciliation. Mr. Mody's speech, coming as it does from the Millowners' Association and being as it is the first official pronouncement from that body, has an importance of its own. It has, therefore, become necessary in public interest to examine at the risk of some repetition the case for or against wage cuts with particular reference to Mr. Mody's arguments. In doing so, if it may become necessary to touch the field which is now under investigation by the Bombay Labour Office, the responsibility is that of Mr. Mody's, and not of the writer of this article.

In taking the historical review of the position of the mill industry in Bombay, Mr. Mody made a most astounding statement, and repeated it twice, that the

wages in Bombay were, in relation to output, the highest in the world till March, 1933. This claim, apart from its absurdity, has an element of joke, when it is remembered that a similar claim was put forth a few months ago by the Ahmedabad Millowners' Association in their statement dated December 6, 1933, to the Arbitrators on the subject of the proposed wage cut of 25 per cent. in the wages of the operatives.

Pending, however, the publication of the report of an enquiry into the respective claims of Bombay and Ahmedabad, Mr. Mody's attention may be drawn to an important finding of the 1932 Tariff Board. In paragraph 45 of its report, the Board says that as a result of an increase in the wages of spinners and weavers in 1930 by 8 and 5 per cent. respectively, the wage level of Ahmedabad has gone above that of Bombay. The Tariff Board further points out in paragraph 89 that the labour costs in Bombay mills are only 49.40 per cent. of the total costs for manufacturing cloths of medium counts as against 53.80 per cent. in Ahmedabad. On the authority of Mr. Arno S. Pearse, General Secretary of the International Federation of Master Cotton Spinners and Manufacturers' Associa-

tions, who published in 1929 and 1930 "China and Japan—Cotton Industry Report" and the "Cotton Industry of India," it can be further pointed out that the average cost per pound of weaving products is 31.80 pies in America and 27.32 pies in Bombay. Mr. Pearse has given detailed calculations with regard to the comparative labour costs of spinning in Bombay and Lancashire from which it is seen that the labour cost per pound of yarn is 12.34 pies in Lancashire and 6.28 pies in Bombay—a difference of 6.36 pies per pound in favour of the latter. On page 5 of his Cotton Industry Report on Japan and China Mr. Pearse gives comparative wage figures for Japan and England on a ten-hour basis and if these are compared with Bombay wages on the same basis, it will be seen that, while the wage rate in England is nearly double that of Japan, the wage rate in Bombay is substantially lower than that of Japan.

These facts irresistibly lead to the following conclusions which are given in the words of the Tariff Board Reports:—(1) The labour cost of weaving per pound in the Bombay mills is 15 per cent. lower than in the American mills; (2) the labour cost per pound of yarn in the Bombay mill is nearly half the cost in the Oldham (Lancashire) mill; and (3) while the level of wages is perceptibly higher in Japan than in India, "in respect of the labour cost per unit of output, the position of the Indian industry is inferior to that of Japan;" but "it is not inferior to that of other important textile manufacturing countries."

Closely allied with the question of wage cost per unit of output is the question of relative efficiency of the operatives, the machine and the management, which Mr. Mody did not feel called upon to deal with. The Bombay operative is generally run down as a worker of low efficiency; but it is not equally generally realised that with the progress of science, the machine has become, particularly in factory industries, more important than the man. Apart from this consideration, the efficiency of the Bombay operative will be seen to have gone up considerably when it is realised that in Bombay between 1926 and 1932, although the number of working spindles, looms and persons employed has been reduced by 15.5, 4 and 13.5 per cent. respectively, the production of yarn and cloth has increased by 23.4 and 32 per cent. respectively. Can this be said of the machine efficiency in Bombay? "That it is hard", says Mr. Pearse, "for some antiquated mills (in Bombay) to compete with the more recently established ones will be realised if we consider that in Ahmedabad there are two spinning mills which turn out almost 9 oz. of 20's warp per spindle in ten hours, against some in Bombay with 5½ or 6 oz. In the weaving there exists a difference of 20 per cent. in the efficiency of the looms."

The lower cost of production in upcountry centres Mr. Pearse definitely attributes to improved machinery introduced by them. He does not consider that the technical equipment of Bombay has advanced and he exclaims that "many Bombay mills are museums of machines from all textile machinists."

With regard to the efficiency of management several indictments of the managing agency system at the hands of independent and competent experts and the weak financial position of the Bombay mills with the crash of the Currimbhoys is an effective answer. Mr. Pearse further draws the attention of his readers to the fact that, while the actual cost of labour in the production of a pound of yarn is lower in India, than in Lancashire, "the overhead charges in India due to the increased initial cost, are heavier."

Mr. Mody sought to justify the wage cuts on two main grounds: the reduced cost of living and the financial position of the mills. The public have not yet forgotten that the 80 per cent. and the 70 per cent. dear food allowance was secured by the workers long after the prices had soared up and after a bitter struggle. And it is still a doubtful proposition whether the maximum allowance given was in proportion to the high level of prices in those days. Moreover, even Mr. Mody cannot say with any degree of accuracy what the extent of the fall in prices is and how much reduction he considers justifiable on that account. Is Mr. Mody willing to accept the principle of linking the wage level with the cost of living in a well defined proportion? If so, the workers would not be reluctant to consider this aspect of the question. But he cannot take shelter behind that principle only when it suits him. He cannot also deny that adjustments in wages in relation to cost of living should be uniform in the same centre, which is not the case in Bombay.

Possibly he will try to explain away the absence of uniformity in wage cuts by pointing to the financial position of the mills. Mr. Mody stated in his Corporation speech that he deliberately advised the mills to cut down wages independently of his Association, so that financially better mills should maintain their high wages. Will Mr. Mody lay his hand on his heart and say that prosperous mills have made no cuts? Is he not aware that at least two mills which have made no loss during the decade ending 1933 and which paid dividends ranging from 7½ to 12½ per cent. have cut wages? Does he deny that at least two mills made no losses between 1923-32, and paid dividends from 5½ to 15 per cent. in one case and 4 to 24 per cent. in another case and yet cut wages? Will he challenge that two other mills, which incurred losses only once during ten years and paid dividends, except in the year of the loss, ranging from 5 to 15 per cent. in one case and 10 to 45 per cent. in another case, have reduced wages? Does he know that yet another mill, which made losses only in 1926 and 1927 in the decade ending 1933, has cut wages? Is he aware that another mill, which made large profits for seven years but paid dividends from 6 to 38 per cent. throughout the decade ending 1932, has made a wage cut?

All these cuts even in prosperous mills clearly prove that the liberty given to individual mills under the cloak of enabling prosperous mills to maintain their wages was given with a view to hiding the real

intention of the millowners and to avert a general strike. Mr. Mody and his Association are shrewd enough to realise that a uniform and simultaneous wage cut means a general strike which they wanted to avoid; and therefore, they advised the mills to resort to individual cuts. The prosperous mills cannot help cutting down wages when others have done it, if they have to compete in the market.

Mr. Mody alleged that the wage cuts were made with the consent of the workers and that the latter submitted to the inevitable. Here again what are the facts? In his pre-occupations with evolving the Mody-Lees Pact, justifying the Ottawa Agreement in the Assembly and wringing out the maximum amount of protection from the Government of India, he seems to have forgotten what took place in Bombay between March 1933 and April 1934. The files of the *Bombay Labour Gazette* would have supplied him the facts if he had cared to look into them. But he seems to have relied too much on his brilliance and powers of advocacy in favour of weak mills which have proved to be the bane of the mill industry in Bombay. Some mills put up notices that they would be closed down owing to trade depression or some other causes. Simultaneously efforts were made by the mill managers to negotiate with the jobbers, who are the best exploiters of the workers, and the latter were told that the managers would induce the managing agents not to close the mills or to open them, if they had already been closed, provided the workers would accept a wage cut. Is this not an unfair device of coercing the workers to accept wage cuts? Is this an honest method of obtaining the workers' consent?

The *Labour Gazette* will further tell Mr. Mody that in some other cases strikes took place as soon as cuts were made; but they failed. It may be that in some cases the workers might have taken no action. But it does not require Mr. Mody's brilliance to understand that when they found that sectional strikes had failed, they might have yielded temporarily and waited for an opportunity for mass action.

In dealing with the wage cuts, Mr. Mody failed to refer to two important considerations. It has been pointed out on the authority of the Tariff Board that the workers' efficiency has increased in recent years and Mr. Mody cannot deny that the industry is getting to-day much more protection than in 1927 after the report of the first Tariff Board. Are not the workers entitled to get a share out of these two advantages? Or is it only the employers who have got the sole right of taking the benefits accruing from the workers' increased efficiency and protection? Mr. Mody may have cleverly forgotten to take these factors into consideration, but the public cannot fail to insist upon their being considered by those who may ultimately settle the dispute.

R. R. BAKHALE.

Our London Letter.

(BY AIR MAIL.)

(From Our Correspondent.)

LONDON, May 4.

THE CHURCHILL ENQUIRY.

THE investigation of Mr. Churchill's charges against Sir Samuel Hoare and Lord Derby by the Committee of Privileges has proved to be a much bigger and more involved affair than had originally been anticipated. Early last week it had been supposed that the witnesses would be few, their evidence would not take very long to examine, and an early report would be submitted by the Committee to Parliament. The Committee, however, as is very natural and proper, has taken a very serious view of its duties, and has undertaken its task with a commendable thoroughness. A very considerable number of witnesses, including a large group from the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, have been heard, and it is believed and understood that the taking of evidence is almost concluded, though Lord Linthgow's appearance in the witness seat by permission of the House of Lords will take place early next week, when the Committee, it is stated semi-authoritatively, begin the preparation of its report, which it expects to submit to Parliament before the Whitsun recess. There is, of course, no inkling of the line that the Committee proposes to take, but even if it could be suggested that the Minister and Lord Derby have committed a technical breach of the rules of the House—of which I should imagine the evidence will exonerate them—it is very unlikely, in my opinion, that the Committee will take a serious view of the matter, and the probabilities are that Mr. Churchill's intended victims will emerge from their ordeal more or less unscathed. In the meanwhile we can only await events. Whichever way, however, the result of the enquiry goes, it is bound to add to the bitterness and divisions within the Tory Party, and to create yet a little denser atmosphere of prejudice against the Joint Select Committee, which it is the avowed aim of the diehards to produce, in the hope of being able to detach more of the middle-minded and uncommitted members of the Party from their allegiance to Mr. Baldwin.

THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE.

As to the Joint Select Committee itself, its proceedings are still "wrapt in mystery". It evidently has not ceased to take evidence at least of a technical character, for it has recently requested the House of Lords to permit and authorise the Clerk of Parliament to appear before it. Some of the members must be conducting their duties in an atmosphere of some embarrassment. It is yet not known how far the Labour group is homogeneous; and Major Attlee, who besides discharging the duties of Acting Leader of the Opposition and impressing upon the Committee the official Labour point of view, expressed from time to time at Party Conferences, must be finding his earlier membership of the Simon Commission and signature of its report somewhat awkward, though it is hoped that, like Sir John Simon himself he may be able to do better than at one time expected. One thing is certain that the Labour members may be expected constantly to hear in mind, and to keep before their colleagues, the fact that in India, at any rate, whatever may be the position in this country, the controversy does not lie between support for the White Paper and detractions from it or total rejection along the lines recommended by the various diehard

groups, but between the supporters of the criticisms of the White Paper proposals contained in the Memoranda submitted to the Committee, last year, and printed in No. 10 of the proceedings, and those who would reject even these recommendations as being quite inadequate to satisfy the constitutional needs of India. It is interesting to note from a Bombay telegram that, according to Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, the Indian Liberals have now ranged themselves among the former.

Another member of the Committee, whose position is particularly difficult, is the Archbishop of Canterbury, who, notwithstanding his membership of the Committee, has made it perfectly clear that he at least believes that some very considerable constitutional advance is necessary in India, in view of the fact that the present Constitution has already exhausted its possibilities and no longer conforms to its needs. Nevertheless he stands to be shot at by any honest fanatic, whose muddle-headedness forbids him to see anything but danger to Christianity in India and religious persecution if any change is made in the present constitutional position. That substantially was the burden of a Memorandum addressed to the Archbishop this week by Sir Henry Page-Croft. It was obvious that the Archbishop could not be expected publicly to answer the charges brought by this bigotted reactionary. The Rev. Edgar Thompson, General Secretary of the Methodist Missionary Society, was, however, in a position of greater freedom and less responsibility when he repudiated deliberately and emphatically Sir Henry Page-Croft's statements expressing "the very grave anxieties which are felt by large numbers of Churchmen with reference to the proposed reforms in India." Speaking on Monday at the Annual Meeting of the Society at the Albert Hall, Mr. Thomson said, amid cheers, :

"No body of Indian Christians, and no representative Christian or missionary leader, so far as I am aware, has ever given Sir Henry Page-Croft any support in this view. Indian Christians and English missionaries do not so speak, or their Hindu and Mohammedan neighbours. They confidently anticipate that the new scheme will provide for the equal protection of all law-abiding religions, and that both Hindus and Moslems, alike from political interest and from conviction, will honour and observe a principle which is indispensable to public peace and order. We do not deplore the reform scheme as an abdication by England of her responsibility for India's welfare and progress; rather we welcome it as the vindication and fulfilment of England's mission to India. We are sure that the witness and influence of the Cross cannot be preserved in India by maintaining there a system of administration largely foreign, which has already served its beneficent purpose. We repudiate as fantastic and mischievous the suggestion that Britain contemplates a surrender of any class of her subjects to unmerited suffering, loss, or martyrdom."

PROPAGANDA HERE.

Naturally the Rothermere-Beaverbrook Press is making the maximum use of the Tory diehard meeting held in Sir Samuel Hoare's constituency of Chelsea last week. Much irritation has been caused, incidentally, in orthodox Tory circles at this incursion of certain Peers into a sitting member's constituency. It is the unwritten law that no Member of Parliament may organise or address a meeting in the constituency of another Member of Parliament belonging to the Tory Party without the latter's consent, and it is held with some degree of logic that the same limitation should be deemed to apply in the case of a Peer. It is pointed out that Sir Samuel himself has purposely refrained from addressing his own constituents on the India question during the pendency of the Joint Select Committee. Apparently the

diehards claim the most complete freedom for their own propaganda, however misrepresentative and unscrupulous, and a like liberty to squeal noisily when, in sheer self-defence, their opponents within the Party take any steps to put the facts in anything like a fair perspective.

As will be seen from an examination of Lord Lloyd's speech, it was largely devoted to an appeal to the most narrow and selfish prejudices of his large and enthusiastic audience, composed mainly of retired Anglo-Indians non-resident in Chelsea, afraid for their pensions, and a very important element of retired but still fire-eating militarists and their families. A typical reference by Lord Lloyd, which was loudly applauded, was to the closing of all avenues of employment in India to the public school youths of this country, and he added: "They are being thrown back on the labour market. Can you wonder if the Conservative youth of this country should prefer a black-shirt to a White Paper." In another passage, in reply to a question as to whether it was not a fact that the Viceroy, the Commander-in-Chief, the members of the Viceroy's Council, the Governors of Provinces, and the members of the Provincial Executive Councils are in favour of the White Paper proposals, Lord Lloyd was understood to give, as Mr. R. A. Wilson, I.C.S. (ret'd.), very properly characterises, in a letter to the *Times*, the amazing (especially for one who has himself been a Governor of an Indian Province) reply: "Yes, they would not hold their posts if they were not in favour of the White Paper proposals." Such an insinuation on the part of Lord Lloyd is nothing less than a public scandal of the gravest magnitude and it is a pity that there appear to be no means by which Lord Lloyd can be brought to book.

It need only be added that the reactionaries, as usual, including Sir Arnold Wilson and Sir Alfred Knox, affect to be greatly annoyed and shocked because Sir George Schuster, in his Budget speech, appeared to take for granted Federation as an element in the new Constitution, and to look upon his statement as a breach of the pledge given by the Lord President of the Council, that the future Constitution of India was to be regarded as *sub judice* until after the Report of the Joint Select Committee. The *Daily Mail* hopes to perfect the education of the British voter on Indian affairs by publishing a penny Blue Book on India. The accuracy and fair-mindedness of the paper are notorious and its facts will be examined with some amusement.

SUPPORT TO THE WHITE PAPER.

Sir James Crerar on Monday addressed a meeting of the Conservative India Committee at the House of Commons. He generally supported the White Paper proposals and regarded them as being substantially the inevitable consequence of all that had gone before. In his view the essential conditions of a durable settlement were: (1) continuity with what has already been done; (2) an equitable adjustment of the interests of Britain, British India, and the Indian States; (3) the continued efficiency and confidence of the Public Services; (4) the system of government in India capable of working and developing in harmony with the government based on Parliamentary democracy in India. He expressed himself as being in favour of consideration of a system of indirect election. The present he thought was a more propitious time for taking a constitutional step than was likely to recur. It would be a tragedy for England, as well as for India, if the opportunity were lost.

MR. POLAK ON THE SITUATION.

The *Contemporary Review* for May contains an interesting article by Mr. Hy. S. L. Polak, entitled

"Wasted Opportunities in India." Mr. Polak's criticisms of racial relations between British and Indians are largely based upon a personal experience of twenty-five years and some of the illustrations upon which he draws will find a familiar response in many circles in India, where the facts and others analogous to them are only too well known. It may be added that Mr. Polak was selected to broadcast last Friday on behalf of the Theosophical Society in England on the subject of Theosophy in a series entitled "What I Believe."

Reviews

PRINCIPLES OF TAXATION.

THE NATURE, CLASSIFICATIONS AND PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE. By J. K. MEHTA. (The Indian Press, Allahabad.) 1933. 20cm. 58p.

IN this booklet the author has tried to examine the established principles of taxation and the current classifications of revenues and expenditures of the state. Mr. Mehta contends that the generally accepted principles of taxation, such as those of Adam Smith and the newly introduced notion of least aggregate sacrifice, are only derivative and distributive maxims. The fundamental principle of public finance, according to the author, is that of maximum social welfare. All students of public finance, including most of the writers referred to by Mr. Mehta, will agree that maximum social welfare ought to be the object of all state action, including its financial aspects. The relevant question for a student of finance, as distinguished from that of politics, is what should be the guiding principles of a government while engaged in translating the general maxim into financial practice. Judged in this light we do not think that a charge of ignoring fundamentals can justifiably lie against those whom Mr. Mehta has criticised.

Mr. Mehta finds fault with Prof. Seligman's grounds of classification of public revenues among taxes, fees and prices. Classification is essentially a relative process and there are as many rival classifications as authors. Mr. Mehta is thus to be welcomed when he puts forward a classification of his own, that among taxes, fees and duties. His statement that charges levied by the state with a view to discourage consumption should be called duties is not, however, any more reliable as a guide for exclusive classification, than the existing principles of division such as that adopted by Prof. Seligman. For instance, in many of the Indian provinces the state policy in relation to liquor excise is to raise the maximum of revenue for the minimum of consumption. The social and the fiscal objects are so indissolubly welded in a scheme like this that the excise in Mr. Mehta's scheme will have to hover indefinitely between a tax and a duty. So also Mr. Mehta's statement of the principle of classification between fees, which according to him include almost all prices, and taxes is contradicted by experience. "The difference between a fee and a tax, therefore," says Mr. Mehta, "is that while a fee is charged for and so may be said to partially finance, that service whose free supply might lead to excessive consumption, a tax finances general service of a nature that does not admit of such excesses." Let us see what happens to school and college fees under this definition. To say that the imposition of fees deters a certain number of persons from taking advantage of government institutions is to state a truism. But to assert, or to imply, that the state in levying these and

similar fees is impelled by a desire to restrict the use of state services by the citizens is palpably untrue.

The established principle of classification between taxes on the one hand and fees and prices on the other appears to be more acceptable both on theoretical and practical grounds. This principle is based on the form and extent of the public purpose underlying a state activity. Revenues raised for financing the general services of the state are taxes; those raised to finance an activity which is partially of a public and partially of an individual nature are fees; and those raised for financing activities which are primarily undertaken in individual interest are prices. It is quite true to observe, as Mr. Mehta does, that such a classification is not altogether exclusive. No classification which is of any practical utility has as yet been discovered which is free from this blemish.

The theoretical treatment of topics of public finance is often an inconclusive effort. This is due to the nature of the subject itself. Mr. Mehta deserves to be congratulated on his effort in the theoretical analysis of a subject which is attracting widespread attention at the present moment. Mr. Mehta has suggested an addition to the principles of classification of public expenditure, that between fixed and variable. This classification is indeed not free from the criticisms that Mr. Mehta has offered against the established classifications. But like the rest it also is useful in its own way. It is to be hoped that Mr. Mehta will follow up this small effort and produce a complete and systematic treatise on the science of public finance in a manner which will be familiar to Indian readers.

D. G. KARVE.

PROBLEMS OF THE WORKERS.

THE WORKER'S POINT OF VIEW. By C. T. CRAMP. (Hogarth Press.) 1933. 20cm. 160p. 4/6.

THIS is a book containing articles contributed by six workers who discuss the conditions and problems of their work. Mr. C. T. Cramp, who was the General Secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen of Great Britain and Ireland until his demise last year, in his Preface states that there is a marked difference in the mental attitude of a common worker and one who is an academic socialist of the University type, when examining an economic problem. It is essential that one should know fully what a worker of average type feels and it is to fulfil to some extent this object that six writers who are actual workers in different trades have been asked to write on certain salient aspects of the respective industry.

Mr. Watson, who is a working mechanic, describes the part which proper organisation of equipment of tools and plant plays in a workshop. The absence of some minor materials and tools is liable to cause unnecessary vexation besides trouble and affect adversely the efficiency of a worker. He also pleads for careful selection of the foremen who understand the human factor in industry.

Mr. J. H. Mitchell, who has worked for a long time in the coal mine, explains the miner's view regarding the industry. He criticises the coal-owners' traditional policy of reducing labour costs and the workers' traditional opposition through trade unions against any innovation. He attributes to these two causes the decline of the British mining industry, which in 1926 recorded a fall in production by 119 million tons as against the total fall of only 2 million tons in world production. He charges the Miners' Union of bad leadership and of having been guilty of unremitting opposition to every pro-

posal of the Mining Association. In his anxiety to appear impartial, Mr. Mitchell makes certain statements which are open to criticism. He questions the wisdom of the appeal contained in the "Miner's Next Step" advocating restriction of output to make the coal-mining uneconomical. He forgets that the Mining Association has to thank itself for all the opposition it has created. He has some useful observations to make regarding the wages in the mining industry. He is against piece-work system existing side by side with time-work system. He points out certain anomalies.

Mr. Mitchell remarks that the present system of recruitment and training of apprentices calls for great improvement. Finally he describes the effect of welfare work on the miner and instances the initial opposition of miners to the introduction of pit-head baths as an example of conservatism. The effect of installing baths near the pit-heads resulted in greater absenteeism and this shows that some Indian workers are not the only class of people who invite adverse criticism for initial voluntary absenteeism due to better amenities.

Mr. Gibson places the plasterer's view regarding the bad organisation of his trade and suggests some measures for reducing building costs and says in this way some displaced workers may be absorbed by giving an impetus to the building industry. This view will find support in the orthodox economic circles, but in practice the experience is quite the reverse.

Louis Katin, who worked as a compositor in a printing press describes snobbery and the "class" distinctions prevailing among the workers, especially between those who got their jobs after regular apprenticeship and others.

Messrs. Hargrave and Roger Dattler emphasise the necessity of "personal touch" in industry and seem to favour the old type of a paternal employer to the modern business organisation run by a joint stock corporation with functions of management, ownership and supervision being completely separated.

On the whole, the book is interesting and many of the views mentioned should be suitable for discussion in Workers' Committees of the Whitley type.

V. V. GIRI.

HISTORY OF NEW YORK UNIVERSITY.

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY, 1832-1932. Ed. By THEODORE FRANCIS JONES. (New York University Press.) 1933. 24cm. 459p.

THIS is a centenary publication of the University of New York which completed its 100th year in 1932 and is intended to give a history of the growth of the University. Full of interest as the volume must be to the *alumni* of the University, a reader in India cannot find much enlightenment in its pages, partly because the organisation of American Universities is on a plan widely differing from that adopted in shaping the Universities in India, both in respect of academic and administrative matters, and partly because the volume was probably never intended for non-American readers. Even in these dry details, however, one's eye is caught by a few anecdotes here and there. It seems in about five years from its foundation in 1832 the Council of the University found itself in serious financial difficulties.

"They were stupefied to discover the divergences between the rosy optimism of the Chancellor's reports and the black reality. Their first surprise was the discovery that none of the treasurers had kept any syste-

matic account! Their next surprise came from an investigation of the subscription list. For subscriptions pledged before June 1833 no list had been kept. The amount of subscriptions received was far less than they had imagined. About four-fifths only of the sum considered indispensable to the establishment of the University had been received. But the greatest surprise was the discovery that the Chancellor's repeated reports of the material prosperity of the College were myths!!"

It seems it was decided to start the University after \$100,000 were collected, and when Dr. Mathews, who was the head of the subscription committee and who became the first Chancellor of the University, realising the difficulty of raising subscriptions, "padded the list with spurious subscriptions and made inevitable the scandalous quarrels" caused by financial difficulties in 1838. However, the Council supported their Chancellor and when he resigned in 1839 they resolved that "in him they recognise the principal founder of the liberal system of education on which the University is based" and that "they have been witnesses of his zeal, devotion and sacrifice", and that "they have always had entire confidence in his integrity." "It is difficult to conceal his mistakes" says the editor, "but they were doubtless due to excessive zeal".

Appendix E has a similar interesting account of the "Laboratory Clock." The Professor of Physics (1885), it seems, "wanted a good time-piece—not only a clock to tell the time but a good regulator; one that could give signals for such experimenting as required accurate intervals of time. The price of a good laboratory clock was quite beyond the means of the Department, so the Professor hied him to the offices of Seth Thomas Company to see whether he could not get a good clock-movement unmounted. In conference with the foreman he selected an eight day movement with pendulum and dead-beat escapement but without a dial or a case. From a few boards which he obtained at a neighbouring carpenter's shop he constructed a decent-looking case and within this case the clock was securely mounted. Among the demonstration apparatus was a mercury compensated pendulum—a good enough model but too short for the professor's use. He extended the rod and also the mercury cell to the proper length for a seconds pendulum and put this in the clock in place of the light wooden one. Then he contrived metal contacts and connections for electric circuits and led wires to laboratory tables." All this cost the Physics Department about 12 dollars.

In six years, however the clock acquired a flavour of antiquity and the students who knew nothing of its history wrote sympathetic verses on their "Old Fashioned Clock." In the natural course of events "the new Professor became the old Professor; he withdrew from service and his faithful servant—the clock—missed him sorely." Ignominiously it was thrust into a dark corner and there it gathered dust for nearly ten years in solitude and neglect. Then a distinguished horologist donated to the University a splendid collection of timepieces, and the Professor, now retired *emeritus*, received the proud distinction of appointment as its curator and glad he was to rescue his certain friend and give it a place among these valued pieces."

In the West, in Europe and America, colleges and Universities take a new lease of life every hundred years. In this Presidency, like the Deccan College, they are wiped out of memory, their grounds and buildings being sold to the highest bidder.

M. R. PARANJPE.

PEACE ORGANISATION.

THE BULWARKS OF PEACE AND INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE. BY HEBER L. HART. (Methuen.) 1933. 20cm. 240p. Rs. 7/6.

THE author quotes in his preface the words of a President of the Court of International Justice to himself, "all that you preached in '17 became realised in '19." This new and revised edition of the book is published at a very critical time in the history of the League of Nations. Japan and Germany have left the League and Mussolini is seriously talking of a complete overhauling of its machinery. Even in League circles the necessity of a revision of its covenant is admitted. A study, therefore, of the principles underlying the organization and the work of the League by such a competent authority is welcome.

In the twenty-one chapters of the book the author takes up, one by one, fundamental concepts like Sovereignty, the World-State, Law and Order, Right and Might, etc., and closely analyses their implications and considers the adjustments that are necessary when these principles are to be translated into the practical sphere.

One great point that he wishes to make out is the special position of the Great Powers. Their very size and strength involve a greater responsibility on their part for the maintenance of world peace and a corresponding position of privilege that they should be given in any practical scheme.

All this may look like special pleading in favour of the powers that in the opinion of some are even now exercising a too dominating influence in the affairs of the League. France even now, in its own interests, is putting up its back against this tendency towards de-democratization, and there would be many who would uphold France, though for different reasons altogether.

However that may be, one likes the author trying to reach the bed-rocks of the organization of Peace. One would be pleased if after all this close and very scientific study of the problem, one found the author's positive suggestions for reconstruction of the League put into effect so that it would be possible to repeat the congratulatory remark at the beginning in the year 1940 or 80.

The style is rather heavy and one feels that the author has deliberately avoided being interesting; and yet nowhere is there any slipshod word or phrase nor any obscure expression.

R. H. KELKAR.

INDIAN AGRICULTURAL INDEBTEDNESS.

THE PROBLEM OF AGRICULTURAL INDEBTEDNESS. By NALINI RANJAN SARKAR. (The Book Co., Calcutta.) 1933. 22cm. 47p. As. 12.

THE problem of indebtedness is perhaps the most pressing problem in the modern world, says Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarkar, and he discusses in the course of the booklet, which is a reprint of his address to the Calcutta University Institute, the vital and complex problem of the agricultural indebtedness of the Indian peasants. The total of agricultural indebtedness in India, apart from the so-called National Debt, amounts to Rs. 900 crores, a really colossal figure, considering the average per capita income of the Indian agriculturist which is estimated by the Banking Enquiry Committee to be about Rs. 83.

Mr. Sarkar then relates the causes that led to this burden of indebtedness and discusses the credit facilities available to the agriculturist. He is against repudiation of agricultural indebtedness, which in his opinion is an extreme step, but is

in favour of the adoption of the following methods, each of which can be followed in respect of particular classes of debtors.

Firstly, with regard to those who are in a position to repay the loans, he suggests (i) the settlement of the amount of debt by a compromise between the parties, (ii) the transference of the debt to Land Mortgage Banks, and (iii) a compulsory award by courts. Secondly, with regard to those who at one time may have been able to repay their debts but who may be unable to do so now, he suggests that the principle of settlement by compromise should be tried, failing which the courts should compulsorily enforce settlements. Thirdly, with regard to those who cannot repay their debts, he suggests the passing of a Rural Insolvency Act which, while giving the debtors every facility to be relieved of their debt, should look to the interests of the creditors also. Lastly, Mr. Sirkar discusses the necessity for the establishment of Land Mortgage Banks which would solve the problem to a very large extent and gives various important and useful suggestions for the constitution and methods of working of the Banks. Mr. Sirkar is quite correct in saying that the Government have a duty in solving the problem of agricultural indebtedness and that they should initiate the reforms required. Public opinion in the country will endorse his opinion.

C. V. HANUMANTHA RAO.

SHORT NOTICES.

PROBLEMS OF RURAL RECONSTRUCTION IN INDIA By F. H. DEMELLO. (Oxford University Press.) 1934. 20cm. 68p. Re 1.

THIS is an analytical study of the problem, published first as a series of articles when the movement of Rural Reconstruction received great impetus at the hands of Sir Frederick Sykes, ex-Governor of Bombay. All the difficulties in the way of improving rural life and all the methods so far tried are graphically detailed. The author rightly points out that the tariff policy pursued by the state so far has not been conducive to rural welfare and wants that it should be changed. He expects the universities to give to their products the necessary rural bent so as to make them rural leaders and workers. The last chapter on birth control deserves the attention of the student of rural sociology and the rural worker.

N. S. S.

KETTLE DRUMS. By N. RAMABHADHAN. (Basel Mission Press, Mangalore.) 20cm. 1933. 161p. Re. 1/-

HERE is a collection of stories, provocative of ill-humour and literary disgust. The cawing of a crow is perhaps music in its own way but never is sweetness of song even remotely associated with it. As with all good art, so in literature, to possess a mere "literary bent of mind" that is unaware of the faulty English it employs is not to become a storyteller worth the name. It is claimed for these stories that they give a real insight into "Indian conditions, Indian outlook, and Indian customs," but it is difficult to command patience enough to wade through grammatical and other constructional errors to get at the Quixotic India of the author's imagination.

K. VENUGOPAL RAO.

"THE NEW MOVE."

MR. SASTRI ON RANCHI DECISIONS.

The Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri delivered a speech on "The New Move" on 7th May at Coimbatore under the auspices of the Students' Literary Association. The following report of it is taken from the HINDU of 9th May.

IN the course of his address, Mr. Sastri said that an event of great significance had taken place in the north of India. No one in India, neither the Government nor any political party could afford to neglect it. And it was of the first importance that its main features and its consequences to public life in India should be thoroughly understood. During the talks of Ranchi, of which full details had been published in the papers, one idea was made prominent. Speakers were careful to point out the difference between the circumstances which attended the birth of the Swaraj Party some time ago and the circumstances in which the present Swarajya Party had been brought into existence. The first important difference was the fact that behind this new move they had a united Congress. On the former occasion the Congress was divided and the great influence of Mahatma Gandhi was not on the side of the Swaraj Party. Upon this occasion Gandhiji's attitude was one of active advice and help and they could all understand what a great difference that made. That was what they mean by the unity of the party. Then the other great difference of a positive character was that the present Swarajya Party was coming into the Assembly and later on perhaps into the newly constituted legislative councils, not as on previous occasions with a determination to destroy the Government or administration from within but with the express and avowed object of using the legislatures for national purposes, in other words, for getting out of the legislatures, the most that could be got for the country and the people. That again was of tremendous significance which indicated the change in the mentality of Congressmen. He was fully prepared to concede that in saying that although they (Congressmen) had changed their policy, it did not mean a complete abandonment of their right to resume the old practices when circumstances might compel them to do so. That, it seemed to him, was the proper and just interpretation of their doings.

Among these 19 items in their programme as announced, there was one which filled him with a special pleasure and that was the resumption of means of carrying out propaganda in foreign countries favourable to Indian nationalism. He could not say, however, that he wholly approved of one other item, namely the idea that the Congress as a political agency should endeavour to take part in elections in municipalities and local boards and village panchayats and perhaps school-managing institutions as well, bringing in national politics and capturing all those electoral institutions so that their influence in the country might range all over this sphere and be not limited purely to the field of what they called parliamentary or national politics. It appeared to him that this was a wrong direction to take. He held that neither the Congressmen nor Liberals nor any political party in the country should endeavour to use these local boards as theatres of building up their own influence and that if they did so, local affairs would be damaged in great part and the people in vital relations suffer irreparable injury.

THE CREATION OF PROVINCES.

There was one other item to which he should like to draw their attention. He did not think it

was impossible of rectification even now. One of the blemishes of the White Paper was the creation of new provinces in India, which were not going to be self-supported but for the maintenance of which the general population of India throughout were going to be taxed as if there was not taxation enough and more in this country already. He took very strong exception to that provision in the White Paper. The Congress had for its own purposes divided India into provinces other than the provincial distribution of the government at present. If it meant that when they reconstituted India according to their ideas, they were going to give everyone of those provinces separate political existence with a separate administration, with a separate governor, and so on, it might mean that some of them would be a burden, which the whole country would have to carry. It was an arrangement to which he thought there were many objections.

The speaker then referred in detail to the speech of Mr. Bhulabhai Desai at Ranchi and dwelt critically on the implications contained in the speech especially in reference to the R. T. C.

With reference to the Communal Award and the way in which it had been handled by the Ranchi Conference, he stated it was an adroit disposal that they had made of it. The Communal Award was a part of the White Paper, which was one of the features of the new constitution. It must be remembered that this was given by the British Government only after they had afforded them not one, two, three, four or five but several opportunities of settling the matter among themselves. Most reluctantly and after every avenue of settlement had been explored and found to fail, the Government took it up. It was wrong to describe it as an award. The Prime Minister had no hand in it. It was an arrangement made by the India Office. It cut up the Indian people more than ever. It gave the British element in the country an outrageously excessive representation in Bengal and a tremendously excessive representation in other spheres. If the Communal Award deserved to be torn up for any reason, it might well be for this reason. It was an unjust unnational award, if it might be called an award. It was a Government's decision. But they had no right to quarrel with it. It was a bitter pill but they fully deserved it. And he did not see how they could refuse to swallow it.

The Poona Pact, he was afraid, had not improved matters. It was a good thing on the whole that the Ranchi decision embodied the acceptance of the Communal Award, although they wished to reopen it at the time when everything was reopened when the constituent assembly was to be organised.

THE WHITE PAPER.

Amongst other things, concerning the major policy of the new move, they had in prominence the idea of the rejection of the White Paper. He was no friend of the White Paper. He regarded it as essentially unsound, and opposed to the best interests of the country. And he could wish nothing better than that it were removed from the slate. But what was the use of a wish? There was no chance of such a thing happening. The White Paper met the wishes or met 90 per cent. of the wishes of the minority communities in the country and by an extraordinary computation, the accuracy of which statisticians might question, the minorities were made to aggregate more than 50 per cent. When these parties welcomed

an arrangement and the present Conservative Government in the land also wished that arrangement to go through, it seemed to him somewhat sanguine to expect that any political party in the country, however powerful, would be able really to get the White Paper rejected. What did rejection mean? Supposing the Swarajya Party got a majority at the next election—it might become an actuality—supposing they got a majority and when the White Paper constitution was being considered, that majority gave a negative vote. What followed? As he understood it, it was not part of the intention of the new Swarajya Party to come out of the Assembly, the moment the White Paper was rejected. They wanted to remain in the Assembly and to use their majorities for other good purposes defeating all intentions of Government and getting out of them as much as they could for the country. The question was, what next?

Their friends who had taken a prominent part in the Ranchi decisions, said further that, when the constitution was, by a majority of the new Swarajya Party, rejected in the Assembly, they had further plans, amongst which 'walking out' was not one. Their further plan was to organise a Constituent Assembly for the purpose of formulating a national or popular demand. This constituent assembly was the most conspicuous part of the entire policy of the new Party. And it behoved them to consider whether it was a wise idea. This idea was a little too big for them. If they were not able to adjust the number of seats in the legislature and to settle whether they shall be through separate or joint electorates or through joint electorates with reservation of seats for the minority communities, if they were not going to settle this one matter, were they going to get a Constituent Assembly consisting of all kinds of people in the country to settle not only this matter but two hundred other matters of constitutional importance? They would not learn to compromise. That was why he foresaw a complete and ignominious failure of this Constituent Assembly. And it would leave effects afterwards which not one generation but several generations would have to rue every moment of their lives. If people were sent to the Assembly on communal votes, it would not allow them to be representatives or plenipotentiaries or negotiators. They must be mere messengers of their party, gramophones and nothing else.

CABINET RESPONSIBILITY.

There was the Labour Party. They had their own policy. A Cabinet was formed, the National Cabinet with several other elements, the Labour Party being only represented by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald. Suppose they gave him directions from the party. What was this one man to do there? If they did not give him a general power at the same time of working in harmony with other people who had got equally developed views and points of progress, if they did not give him the direction to serve their interests conformably to the necessities of the situation, then they made a united Cabinet impossible. And that would be the case here.

They all desired that, in this country when a Cabinet, for instance, was formed to-morrow in Madras, they should have a Hindu, a Mahomedan, an Indian Christian and if possible a Britisher. The Hindu representative was being pulled by very hard chains by his own people. The Mahomedan representative was answerable not to the whole country, but only to his Mahomedan constituency and so the Indian Christian and the British representative. And

these mandates were all of different kinds, some of them sharply opposed to one another and yet they wanted united Cabinet responsibility, a Cabinet speaking as one person, voting as one person, standing or falling as one person! How on earth was that possible? What will be the effect of this Constituent Assembly idea?

As regards the coming reforms, if they allowed an interval between the establishment of the provinces and of the Federation at the Centre, nobody could say afterwards what the interval would be. When they had autonomous provinces and representatives from those autonomous provinces, gathered to consider the formation of a federation, could it not be possible, if he was the Secretary of State, to get one or two provinces to say, 'now we don't want federation'? And who could force federation on an unwilling people? Then their self-determination would be put against them. Perhaps he was merely imagining, but if federation was not denied in the end, it would at least be postponed indefinitely. The idea of the Constituent Assembly would be used for the very purpose of delaying and defeating this object. If he, the speaker, had anything to do with the Swarajya Party, he would tell them 'go ahead with all your plans, but do not say you reject the White Paper; say you curse it from end to end and await events; don't broach this idea of a Constituent Assembly'. It is playing exactly the game the Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill does."

He, the speaker, was one of those who, from the beginning, had admired, if not accepted, the organisation and internal discipline of the Congress Party. He had not been slow to recognise the good they had done. He gladly welcomed the new change. It was good what they had done and he could congratulate them and the country on this new happiness. He offered his criticism and suggestions in good part. He did not wish to enter the Congress to become a Swarajist. After these many years, it was impossible for him to change. Nobody would wish him to change his political apparel at this age and he was not going to do so. He still believed in the wholesomeness of Liberal principles. He believed in individual freedom, in the good old truth of justice to all and toleration to all parties and not pushing forward Hitler-like or Mussolini-like all their views and all their policy to the extinction and destruction of other views. He believed in the comprehension in wholesome and healthy synthesis of different views, and reconciliation of divergent ways of life. He still believed in this doctrine and he must be allowed to die in that belief.

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