

# The Servant of India

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## Topics of the Week.

### The Reforms Outlook.

RECENT advices from England point to the possibility of the date of the publication of the Joint Select Committee's report receding still further into the future. The report was originally expected to be out in March; but the latest information on the point is that it is unlikely to see the light of day very much before November and in no case before the end of August. It is hinted in some quarters that all this delay is not just accidental; but that the publication of the report is being purposely timed to take place after the forthcoming elections to the Assembly are over so as to deprive the electorates of an opportunity to express their clear verdict on the report. It is difficult to share to the full this uncharitable construction of the delayed publication of the report. Even supposing that the electors are baulked of an opportunity of pronouncing upon the report, can it be contended by anybody with a show of reason that it has met with the approval of Indian progressive opinion? The Government can no longer pretend to be ignorant as to the depth of public dissatisfaction with the White Paper. It is moreover on the cards that the Committee's report, far from being an improvement on the White Paper, will make it far more objectionable to public opinion. It is stated on what seems to be reliable authority that the Committee will recommend the establishment of provincial second chambers, the non-transfer of the C. I. D. and indirect election in the case of the Federal Assembly. Even if only a part of this forecast comes true, it will constitute a definite step backward. In this case, can it be doubted that progressive Indian opinion will offer it stern opposition? In this connection it should be remembered that even Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru than whom it would be difficult to find a stauncher friend of the proposed

federal constitution has long ago seriously contemplated the possibility of non-co-operation in case the report was found to be more reactionary than the White Paper. In these circumstances will it be open for any normally-minded human being to claim that because the Indian electors have been denied the opportunity of expressing their mind with regard to the Committee's report, it was generally regarded as an adequate measure of political appeasement?

The Hindu Maha Sabha Conference which met in Bombay last week has characterised the White Paper itself among other things as "retrogressive." That may well be taken to be the view generally held in progressive circles of the White Paper. The report is expected to make it, if anything, still more reactionary. Is it not utterly futile therefore to hark back to the memorandum of the British Indian Delegation and to hope that its recommendations will be found incorporated in the report? This does not seem to be a matter of practical politics at the present day and no politician with any acquaintance with realities has any warrant for contemplating such a contingency as even a remote possibility. And yet for a wonder we find Sir Cowasji Jehangir speaking as if there was some chance of the British Indian Delegation's recommendations being found acceptable by the Committee. If this (in the present circumstances) very unlikely event came to pass, the new constitution would, he pointed out, secure the support of 85 per cent. of political-minded India. But to entertain such a hope at the present day is hardly more useful than building castles in the air.

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### Independence or Dominion Status?

SIR COWASJI JEHANGIR, in a lecture delivered by him at Sholapur on 29th June, reiterated his objection to the Congress goal of complete independence as against dominion status by which the Liberal party swears. "Independence," he is reported to have said, "might result in tearing India limb by limb into independent kingdoms, hostile to one another." Indeed!

Apropos of this, Mr. C. L. R. Sastri writes in the *Leader* of 2nd July :

Everything is conspiring against the realization of our ambitions—not least the White Paper scheme with its pseudo All-India Federation, and its innumerable safeguards, piled one upon another, like Pelion on Ossa, and obliterating, by their massed strength, what little of self-government may be lurking in the nooks and corners, in the holes and crevices, of that fantastic device. It may be more heroic to demand the impossible, but where is the sense in it when you have no sporting chance of realizing even what is, by any standard of reasoning, possible? The Liberals also, I fear, are making a mistake. They may not be convinced that we can secure complete

independence—'Purna Swaraj'—but why should they quarrel with the objective of those who either are so convinced, or only pretend to be? I shall put them a question. Suppose the English, in a moment of mental aberration—or, say, in a 'lucid interval'—decide to grant us independence—complete, and full-fledged. Will our Indian Liberals forthwith issue a manifesto that they are not going to take advantage of it, what they asked for being only 'Dominion Status'? They ought not, I believe, to make *that* a ground of quarrel with the Congressmen. By all means let the latter demand the bigger thing: the only ground of quarrel should be their *methods*, which are and can be, we know from bitter experience, as variable, as a woman's moods, as changing as a chameleon's colours.

But even more serious objections to making independence a fundamental point of difference are the two that were mentioned recently by a correspondent in these columns: 1. The Liberals themselves have been proclaiming that even the lesser goal of dominion status will become constitutionally impossible of attainment under federation; and 2. Complete sovereign independence is being interpreted in the British dominions as nothing more than dominion status. "The sovereign independence" of the Union of South Africa is now declared in the Status of the Union Bill, a bill which has been promoted by the South African and Nationalist parties together, and the Imperial Government has not taken exception to it, either on political or constitutional grounds.

"The sovereign independence," here contemplated, is in fact not the absolute sovereign independence that we associate with countries like England or France but the qualified independence that we associate with colonies which have reached political maturity. Senator F. S. Malan's following criticism of this Bill is entirely just:

(Confusion arises because) some people lay different stress on different words (in the resolution of the Imperial Conference of 1926, on which the Bill is based). For instance, the Minister of Railways and Harbour, (Mr. Pirrow, who moved the Bill), speaking this afternoon did not stress at all the words: "autonomous communities *within the British Empire*." They are equal as dominions *within the Empire*, but he did not stress the words, "*within the British Empire*." He said: "England is a sovereign independent State; the Union is equal to England; and, therefore, South Africa is an independent sovereign State." But the resolution of the Conference of 1926 did not say, "autonomous, equal to Holland or Germany or any other foreign State"; it said, "equal *within the British Empire*." But these last words are not emphasised at all. Even England, as part of the British Commonwealth, along with South Africa, is a different entity from the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth is a whole and the autonomy which is granted here is not on equality with foreign States; it is equality within the British Empire. That is the plain reading of it, but, of course, people slur that over. Others again read "sovereign independence," and they slur over the words, "as hereinbefore defined." The sovereign independence of the Dominions is qualified by the words, "as hereinbefore defined." There again they slur over the words which limit the sovereignty.

All this is true, but the declaration by South Africa of its being a sovereign independent State affords more than a colourable excuse to the Indian Congress to use the words "complete national independence" to describe its goal; and the point which the Liberals have to consider, as a correspondent put it, is whether it is worth while picking a quarrel with the Congress for using the word "independence" which it fancies so much, particularly when the Congress dictator always juggles

with it by attaching to it no other meaning than that of dominions status.

#### Congress and Communal Award.

IF the Congress decided to adopt an attitude of neutrality to the Communal Award in the hope of placating the Muslims that hope seems destined to be disappointed. Mr. Suhrawardy, president of the Calcutta Khilafat Committee, in his recent interview to the press, made it clear that mere abstention by the Congress from opposing the Award was not enough. It must, he said, express its unequivocal acceptance of the Award which should be incorporated in the Indian constitution itself. Not that this bars the door against attempts at hammering out a suitable substitute by mutual agreement; but it is clear that for the moment nothing short of an unconditional acceptance of the Government's communal decision by the supreme national organisation is likely to rope in the Muslims in the national struggle for freedom. So what is the net result of the dubious attitude of the Congress towards the Award? Has it led to any addition to its strength or has it still further weakened it? It cannot be denied that its action on the Award has failed to bring any fresh Muslim recruits to the Congress movement. And as for the Hindus, it has alienated a large section of them. This at any rate would have been avoided if it had set its face sternly and resolutely against the Award. As it is, it has already been deprived of the active support of such veterans as Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Aney in its campaign of council-entry. Though their resignations of their membership of the Congress Parliamentary Board have been technically withdrawn, their differences with their colleagues on this point are very far from being resolved

#### Congratulations to Mahatma Gandhi.

UPON his providential escape from the bomb outrage in Poona prior to the presentation of the civic address our sincerest congratulations are due to Mahatma Gandhi. The presentation of the address had no doubt locally become a matter of keen controversy for some days previously; but nobody could have thought that it would be so outrageously disfigured. It is generally supposed that the bomb-thrower must have either been a sanatanist himself or inspired to this nefarious deed by one. In the absence of definite information as to the identity of the culprit it would be unfair to arrive at this conclusion. But whether the offender turns out to be a sanatanist or otherwise, the fact that the Mahatma's life was spared is undoubtedly a matter of universal rejoicing and thanksgiving. His life is an exceedingly precious national asset which must be preserved for as long as it is humanly possible to do so. Mr. Bhopatkar, who was himself a recipient of some injuries as a result of the outrage and who too deserves to be congratulated upon being spared more disastrous consequences, says that the bomb was really not intended for the Mahatma. Then, at whom was it aimed? To this question however no satisfactory reply is so far forthcoming. But further light on the whole affair may be expected as a result of the police inquiries now in progress. In the meanwhile all we can do is to congratulate, along with the Mahatma, all those that have escaped the outrage with or without injuries.

#### Grievances of Zanzibar Indians.

THE disquieting news is received from East Africa that the Government there contemplate the

speedy enactment of a law which seriously threatens the existence of the Indian community in Zanzibar numbering about 15,000. In fact the second reading of the bills in question is already passed. The proposed legislation is stated to be racial in character and calculated to prevent Indians from acquiring land. Our countrymen in Zanzibar have a very large stake in the clove industry, in which nearly a crore of Indian money is invested. The new bills are reported to deal a heavy blow at Indian interests in the industry by seeking to deprive the Indian community of its rights in regard to it. Fairness and equity require that such an expropriatory piece of legislation should not be passed into law in what cannot but be termed indecent haste. But the local Government appears to be bent upon rushing it through the legislature. We are unable to see the need for all this expedition. The East African Government would be writing itself down as uncivilised if in spite of public protests they persist in passing these obnoxious bills into law. In the predicament in which the Indian community thus finds itself, it deserves all the protection the Indian Government can give to it. And it is a matter of satisfaction to us that they have already placed themselves in communication with the Government of the Colony on the subject. Public opinion would be curious as to the effect of their representations upon the East African Government. In any case it would welcome authoritative information about the pending legislation and its consequences on the future well-being of our countrymen there.

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#### Mysore Budget.

IN his address opening the budget session of the Representative Assembly, the Dewan of Mysore conveyed the gladdening information that after a series of deficit budgets the State budget for the current year was not only balanced but showed a small surplus. This gratifying result seems to have been achieved, at any rate partially, owing to the imposition of the excise duties on matches and sugar in British India. The British Indian lead has since been accepted by Mysore passing emergency legislation for a similar imposition. The proceeds of the duty on matches are expected to come to about Rs. 1½ lakh; but Mysore's share of the revenue from this source on the consumption basis will be about Rs. 5 lakhs, yielding to the State Rs. 3½ lakhs more than what would be collected within its borders by this means. A revenue of Rs. 2 lakhs is similarly estimated from the proposed excise duty on sugar. Mysore did well in deciding to levy on sugar produced in the State a duty equal in amount to that in operation in British India. For if it had failed to do so, the sugar exported from the State would have been subject to an import duty on its entry into British India. It is seen from the Dewan's speech that while the Government soap factory at Bangalore under the able guidance and businesslike management of Mr. S. G. Sastry has shown a profit of Rs. 1 lakh, the working of the Bhadravati Iron Works disclosed a loss of a little in excess of that amount. The Dewan once more reiterated his plea for the abolition of the subsidy payable by Mysore to the Paramount Power which, he said, constitutes a "heavy drain" on the State's resources. In doing so he seemed to be banging at an open door; for the principle of the abolition of such imposts has now been recognised by the British Government, its translation into action being now only a matter of the financial position improving.

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## Articles.

### PROBLEM OF INDIAN COLONIZATION.

IT is noteworthy that the Government of India do not make any comment of their own on the report of the Colonization Enquiry Committee which recently concluded its labours in South Africa. It is not difficult to understand the reticence of our Government. Arranging for the colonisation of other lands by the people of India is a problem not only wholly new to Government and people in this country, but attended with dangers and difficulties of every kind. To mention only one or two, the financing of any considerable scheme is beyond our resources; but even the formulation and entertainment of a scheme are unthinkable. The humiliations heaped upon the Indian nation in consequence of such emigration as there has been in the past have created an insurmountable prejudice in the public mind and even leaders of eminence have made uncompromising pronouncements against the Government of India making themselves responsible directly or indirectly for any Indians going abroad. The protection of our overseas population from ill-treatment and persecution raises inter-imperial and international problems of the first magnitude, to which only a fully independent and responsible Government is equal.

One can see at once how inopportune the publication of this report is if it is meant to invite the Government of India to the larger Commission of Enquiry which was stipulated in the agreement concluded at the Round Table Conference of 1932. No South African politician, not even Mr. Heaton M. Nicholls of Natal, will be so unreasonable as to expect that the Government of India can join in a momentous enquiry of the kind required just at a time when their own internal troubles are at their height, when their finances have touched bottom, when their own constitution is in the melting pot and when public opinion is sore to a degree. Nor would it be practicable to examine the possibilities of Indian emigration to the lands mentioned in the report without reopening such questions as the unpeopled and thinly peopled areas of Australia, Canada and South and East Africa and the denial to India only of the mandated territory or an outlet for her surplus population within the empire which she helped to preserve from ruin.

We may well be asked why, in dealing with the report issued by the Government of the Union of South Africa, we are raising the question of emigration of Indians from India. The answer is that the sending out of the South African Indians in order to placate hostile public opinion in South Africa was contemplated not by itself but as part and parcel of a large scheme of emigration of Indians from the homeland. Much harm has already been done by a misunderstanding of this feature both in this country and in South Africa. In expositions of the Cape Town Agreement of 1932 care

has not always been taken to keep in the forefront the idea that our brethren in South Africa were only to be affected in the event of India herself entering upon a large project of emigration or colonisation of her own nationals. The South African Indian Congress and the newly formed Colonial-born and Settler Association will therefore be abundantly justified in claiming that till the Government of India comes into the picture and takes the matter up in earnest, in conjunction with the Government of the Union, the conclusions and recommendations of this report do not so much as touch them.

The next point is, what will the Union Government do if they find that the Government of India cannot and will not move in the desired direction. We do not pretend to be able to look into the future. The Government of the Union thrown back on their own policy may do several things and

our unhappy brethren may be faced with a worse situation than in the years immediately preceding 1932. We would remind them that the much-vaunted fusion of the political parties in the Union is fraught with grave danger to them and to the native races. The only silver lining in the cloud of their misfortune is the brave and liberal attitude of Mr. Jan Hofmeyr, the present Minister of the Interior. But there are stern limitations in the political atmosphere of South Africa on the power for good even of strong and well-developed personalities. If we may venture on a word of advice to them, it is to the effect that they must reunite and so assume the maximum strength possible and, further, that they must take no step which will estrange them irreconcilably from the Government of India and their local representative.

### “BAD BUT NOT THAT BAD.”

WE reproduce on a later page a thoughtful, and at the present moment a very useful, article that appeared last week in the *Tribune*, in which a plea is made for all the progressive parties in the country combining together with a view to meeting successfully the situation that has been created by the White Paper. The Congress alone among these parties has enunciated its policy in this respect with a fair amount of precision. Other parties have not yet had occasion to define their policies except that they are all agreed in denouncing the Hoare scheme. What, however, is of immediate importance is not whether they condemn the scheme by bell, book and candle, but what they will do to give a most effective and helpful expression to their feelings. It would be nothing less than a tragedy if, at a time of grave crisis like the present, when Congressmen and other progressives hold almost identical opinions of the merits of the White Paper, they should be unable to agree as to the practical action to be taken to meet the menace. And at first sight they do appear to disagree on this all-important point. We are firmly convinced, however, that, with a little accommodation on both sides, a common policy can easily be formulated.

The Congress is pledged to rejection, and non-Congressmen, however violently opposed they may be to the White Paper proposals, appear to have scruples, speaking of all these groups in general, in accepting this policy. But it is possible to make too much of these apparent differences. For, in the first place, rejection as understood by the Congress does not involve non-co-operation and boycott as a necessary consequence; it does not involve obstruction from within either, though it is some prominent Liberals themselves who appear to dally with the idea. It will be allowed by all non-Congressmen that when rejection is dissociated from boycott and obstruction, it is rid of its most objectionable features. Even so, rejection may be and is obnoxious to some progressives. But surely the policy can be expressed in a

form which will be acceptable to Congressmen and non-Congressmen alike, without any of them having to make mental reservations. However, this will be possible only if there is a genuine desire on the part of both to join forces together in a common cause. The *Tribune*, assuming such a desire to exist on both sides, urges them to make the necessary adjustment in their outlook to this end.

This much we can say with absolute certainty, that most progressives are willing to voice, in the most categorical terms possible, their disapproval of the reforms scheme and their utter inability to accept it even if this should lead either to the withdrawal by Government or rejection by Parliament of the Bill into which the scheme may find embodiment. How many Liberals have in fact expressed a wish, not as a flight of rhetoric but as sober truth, to be left with the existing constitution rather than be saddled with the new one! Dr. Paranjpye, than whom there is probably none who is more free from the demagogic element, has expressed his considered opinion that such reform as the White Paper may contain is of a character that makes further reform impossible. The Hoare scheme is therefore only a delusion and a snare, and even more a snare than a delusion. Mr. Chintamani has declared that he would much rather go without any constitutional advance than be fobbed off with such a make-believe of an advance. Mr. Sastri never misses an opportunity of saying that he would if possible erase the whole scheme off the slate. Mr. Kunzru stoutly refuses to be coerced into accepting the scheme by a threat of non-acceptance being answered by withdrawal. Sir Chimanlal Setalvad contemplates bringing about deadlocks in the event of the White Paper constitution being forced upon India. The Liberal Federation warns Government that discontent will only be accentuated if their proposals become law, meaning thereby that it would be better to leave the constitution as it is than worsen it in the way they propose to do.

If it is the purpose of the Congress to have brought forward in the Assembly a resolution recording the opinion that the Hoare scheme is unacceptable to the country, it is impossible to conceive that any Liberal who has any respect for the opinions of Liberal leaders will not support such a resolution. None amongst them will be deterred by the fear that the passing of such a resolution will possibly destroy the White Paper scheme. Their leaders do not fear such an eventuality but hope for it. Why then should the abandonment of the scheme have any terror for rank and file Liberals? What is true of Liberals is equally true of other left-wing non-Congressmen. The situation then as it presents itself to us is this: the Congress for the present has no further intention, in pursuit of its rejection policy, than to make an attempt to carry a resolution in the Assembly, like the one which the Philippines Legislature adopted last year, to the effect that the country declines to accept Government proposals; and the bulk of the progressives will feel compelled, by reason of their own convictions and not at all as a concession to Congressmen, to give their whole-hearted support to such a resolution. When there is so much agreement as to the action that is proposed to be taken by the Congress, is it too much to hope that a formula which will meet with the acceptance of all other parties will be devised for expressing their programme? That being done, the next step would be to bring about a working arrangement among them whereby contest as between progressive candidates will be limited to as small an area as possible at the ensuing Assembly election. Such an appeal will be suspect if it comes from an organ of a small party,

and we dare not make it. But this we may permit ourselves to say: a resolution hostile to the White Paper carried by the joint action of Congressmen and non-Congressmen will be more weighty and fruitful than one carried by an Assembly of a predominantly Congress complexion.

One thing we must hasten to say. There are some among those who are reckoned as progressives who will refuse to cast their vote, if they are in the Assembly, in favour of a resolution, which, if carried, may, by even a remote possibility, result in the withdrawal of the White Paper scheme. They too have no good opinion of the scheme. They join with others in denouncing it, but stop short at a point where they feel that the denunciation is likely to eventuate in their having to forego the new constitution altogether. The Hoare scheme is bad, they say, but not that bad. With such people it is not possible for the Congress and the prominent Liberals, whose opinions are known, to compromise. These politicians take up towards the White Paper an attitude which the Liberal leaders take up towards the communal award. The communal award is admitted by the latter to be most unsatisfactory, but in the present circumstances there is no help, they say, but to accept it. Similarly, the former say that if nothing better than the White Paper scheme is available, the country should accept it. But the Liberal leaders cannot be induced to accept the Hoare constitution on any account. Between these and Congressmen no hostility need exist; on the contrary it is both reasonable and necessary in the national interest that friendly co-operation and good comradeship should subsist between them.

## WAGE CUTS AND REAL WAGES.

### I.

ONE of the important findings of the Bombay Labour Office Enquiry Report on Wages and Unemployment in the textile industry of this Presidency, round which a keen controversy threatens to be staged, is the cost of living and real wage index figures and their bearing on the present wage level in the industry. A view has been expressed that, as the cost of living index figure is greater than the percentage of reductions in earnings and as the real wage index figure is still higher than what it was in 1926, the wage cuts that have taken place are justified. The Labour Office Report contains enough material to show that this is a superficial view and has no foundation in point of fact.

Briefly put, the important findings of the Labour Office enquiry on the question of wages are as follows:—

(1) Except in Sholapur, there has been no uniformity in wage cuts;

(2) Since July 1926, earnings in Bombay and Sholapur have been reduced by 21% and 17% respectively and those in Ahmedabad have been increased by 5 to 6%;

(3) Since 1926-27, the cost of living in Bombay, Sholapur and Ahmedabad has been reduced by 29%, 28% and 31% respectively; and

(4) As compared with 1926-27, the real wages in Bombay, Sholapur and Ahmedabad have increased by 11%, 15% and 54% respectively.

These findings have been put in a generalised form and must be studied subject to the warning given in the report that "it is difficult to find any one matter in connection with this industry upon which it is possible to generalise." Stating each one of these findings in such a general manner, the report has drawn pointed attention of the reader to important limitations to which they are subject and which are no less important than the findings themselves in considering the present wage level in the industry. In drawing inferences and conclusions from those findings, it is equally necessary to consider some other matters which are closely connected with the earnings of the operatives, but which the Labour Office Enquiry was precluded by its restricted terms of reference from dealing with.

The Labour Office has so far conducted four enquiries into wages in the industry: the first in 1921, the second in 1923, the third in 1926 and the fourth is the present one; but the basis for them has never been uniform. In the absence of common basis, strictly comparable data are not available and consequently the comparison between the results of the two enquiries must suffer to some extent. The 1926 and the present enquiries were no doubt conducted on a sample method; but the system selected for the purposes of sampling was not the same. In the

former enquiry, only 19 mills which were considered to be representative of the 78 mills were selected for enquiry, while in the present enquiry 49 mills were selected and the sampling was confined to the workers in different occupations. In the absence of a convincing proof to determine the representative character of the 19 mills, a doubt had been then expressed on the side of labour about the results of the 1926 enquiry. In comparing, therefore, the wage figures of 1926 and 1933-34, the initial disadvantage of the absence of strictly comparable data, based on the same system, cannot possibly be ignored. Indeed, one's attention is pointedly drawn to it when one studies the tables of comparative wage figures of 1926 and 1933 given on pages 30 and 31 of the report. The first table, which covers only 13 mills which were common to the two enquiries and in which only such figures as were "strictly comparable" are given, shows that the average earnings of weavers and winders are reduced in 1933 by 19% and 16% respectively while the second table which compares the 1926 wages of 19 sampled mills which are "regarded as representative of the whole industry", with the 1933 wages of sampled workers in 49 mills, shows that the percentage reductions for the same class of workers are 15.34 and 7.84 respectively—a difference of 3.66% and 8.16% respectively!

A reference may also be made to another fact, that although the number of mills working in December 1933 was 76 with over 1,05,000 workers employed, the enquiry was confined only to 49 mills containing 90,700 operatives. It is true that in March 1934 when the enquiry commenced work, 11 mills had been closed down. Even then six mills were left out of the enquiry. Moreover, the enquiry was confined only to ten occupations, leaving out of account 37 per cent. of the workers. These defects, which are, it may be recognised, inevitable in a hurried enquiry, cannot but fail to vitiate, at least to a certain extent, the results in regard to earnings and wage cuts.

On page 29 of the report, four methods, taken either alternatively or in combination, have been suggested to ascertain the changes in the earnings of the workers that have taken place between 1926 and 1933-34. According to the first method, which is confined only to 13 common and comparable mills, the reductions in the earnings of the weavers and winders, to take only two occupations, are, as has already been stated, 19 per cent. and 16 per cent. respectively. The second method which compares the 1926 enquiry with the present enquiry on the all-industry basis, shows that, for ten occupations, the reduction in earnings is 16.94 per cent. To this figure is added, under the fourth method, a 4 per cent. reduction that took place since December 1933 in the dear food allowance only, and it is calculated that the total reduction in earnings in March 1934 is not less than 21 per cent. The third method compares the total wages bill of July 1926 with that of December 1933; and the comparison shows that the wages bill of 35 mills has gone down by 19.57 per cent. The point that needs emphasis here, is that while the percentage reduction in December 1933 under the second method is connected with the subsequent reduction of 4 per cent. with a view to arrive at a total reduction of 21 per cent. in March 1934 no such attempt has been made in the report to connect the results of the first method with the subsequent reduction between December 1933 and March 1934. If this had been done, higher figures of reductions might have been arrived at. All that is attempted to be conveyed by this criticism is that the 21 per cent. reduction in earnings is a mere approximation based on data which was not strictly identical and the figures of which were not strictly comparable.

## II.

The Labour Office report has admitted that the construction of the cost of living index number is much more difficult than the collection of wage data not only because of the difficulty of collecting accurate and reliable data but also because of the inherent limitations in comparing the index figures of two different dates. For the purpose of this enquiry, the Labour Office reconstructed the new cost of living index figures by scrapping the old one, which was wrong and misleading. Even this new index number is not free from one or two defects. For example, the months selected for comparison are July 1926 and December 1933. The prices of vegetables, whose weighted proportion is 15 per cent. to the total expenditure on food items, heavily fluctuate in these two months and the comparison naturally suffers. Secondly, items such as medicines, travelling and refreshments do not seem to have been properly weighted if one compares the expenditure on them with that given in the standard family budget of a working class family in Ahmedabad given in the report on page 219. Thirdly, items for ceremonial expenses, remittances to dependants and interest charges on debts, are not included in the index. The report says that an average working class family "is indebted to the extent of Rs. 180, the most usual rate of interest being 75 per cent." Such items take away a disproportionately large slice from the workers' earnings and must be taken into account, even though they may not be, for technical reasons, included in the cost of living index.

One of the most important limitations from which the comparison between the cost of living index figures suffers is the assumption that "between two points of time, the standard of living has remained the same." As Dobb, the famous economist, points out, "the standard of life which one is seeking to compare is hardly a quantity and cannot be measured." With the progress of civilisation, the standard of life changes and expenditure on new items becomes inevitable. It should also be recognised that methods of averaging and weighting and the question of representativeness give rise to many difficulties in compiling the cost of living index. "Another source of error," the report points out, "is the impossibility of introducing changes in the items or quantities consumed." All that the cost of living index does is that it measures the relative changes in the cost of a large number of articles in daily use. Any attempt to put a wider interpretation on it is not warranted by the limitations which have been pointed out. Indeed the 1926 Tariff Board Report says on page 114 that "we need hardly point out the objections to taking the cost of living index number as the factor determining the level of wages, as this would result in a stereotyped standard of comfort of the wage-earner for all time."

## III.

Real wages are defined as "wages measured in units of purchasing power or the actual goods or services which money wages buy." The purchasing power is determined by the cost of living, the limitations in the compilation of which and the difficulties in collecting the comparable data for money wages vitiate to some extent the real wage index figure. The report therefore points out that the index number of real wages "must not be regarded as an exact measure of the change, because the material for both wages and cost of living is not always complete or accurate." Secondly, the utility of the real wages index is also limited by the fact that

money wages are slow in adapting themselves to changes in the cost of living. "In a period of rising prices," the report points out, money wages "lag behind the rise of prices"; and it is hardly ever that this "lag" is made good. The Report of the Committee on Prices in 1912 shows, as has been pointed out by the 1926 Tariff Board Report, that "there is reason to believe that wages in the cotton mill industry in Bombay, in the period immediately preceding the war, had not adjusted themselves to the general rise in prices throughout the country." The Tariff Board, therefore, says on page 114 that "the increase in wages, which has occurred since then, must be discounted to that extent." By 1919, the Bombay workers got an addition of 35% by way of a special allowance to their basic wage. The inadequacy of this rise was admitted by Mr. S. D. Saklatwalla before the Fawcett Committee, which says on page 119 of its report that, according to him, "in 1918 and 1919 the weavers were not getting a wage fully commensurate with the then high cost of living." A further rise of 40% for weavers and 40% for other workers was sanctioned towards the end of 1920; and yet it was found that, as compared with May 1914, the real wage index figure in 1926 was only 121 while the cost of living index in the same year was 155. This disparity becomes all the more serious when it is remembered that the cost of living index number of those days was considerably weighted against the workers. This "lag" in wages has never been made good and in any comparison of real wages of to-day with those of any past year, the consideration of the "lag" becomes very important.

Another equally important consideration in properly assessing the value of the rise in real wages is that their index number, though it serves as a measure of comparison of wage, changes between two dates, does not indicate the adequacy or otherwise of wages. The chronic indebtedness of the working classes to the extent of Rs. 130 for an average working class family with a usual rate of interest at 75 per cent. proves how inadequate the present wages are. Similarly, it is necessary to remember that the Labour Office report, while comparing the wages of to-day with those of July 1926, takes no responsibility for suggesting that the 1926 wage was an adequate wage. On the other hand, it says that "we are not concerned with the question whether the standard of life enjoyed by the cotton mill operatives of Bombay is adequate or inadequate, absolutely or relatively, absolutely in the sense that it satisfies the human needs of labour according to the accepted notions of civilised life, and relatively, meaning thereby, relative to the standard of life prevailing in other centres in the cotton mill industry in India or in other industries in the same centre." Lastly, it must be remembered, as has been pointed out by the Fawcett Committee on page 120 of its report, whatever advantages in real wages the worker may be having during a time of falling prices, his standard of life cannot be safely affirmed to be the same as it was 15 years ago, so as to enable us to say that, even assuming for the sake of argument that prices recede to the level of 1914, a reduction of wages to the same level would be justifiable". An application of this one single test, leaving aside the other arguments, is enough to show that a rise of 11 per cent. in real wages in eight years is hardly adequate to compensate any improvement that may have taken place in the standard of living during that period.

#### IV.

In addition to the considerations dealt with so far with regard to money wages, cost of living and

real wages, there are other factors of equal importance connected with the question of wages. The most important of these is whether the workers have entitled themselves to an increase in wage by their improved efficiency. A perusal of the figures of production of yarn and woven goods in Bombay gives an affirmative answer. According to the Tariff Board Report of 1932, between the years 1926 and 1931-32, the number of spindles working has fallen by 15 p. c.; the number of looms working by 5.4 p. c.; and the number of persons employed by 13.5 p. c. But during the same period, the production of yarn and woven goods has increased by 23.4 p. c. and 32 p. c. respectively. This clearly shows that the Bombay worker has considerably improved his efficiency since 1926. A comparison of production figures of Bombay and Ahmedabad given on page 11 of the Labour Office report also shows that the efficiency of the Bombay worker is in no way inferior to that of the Ahmedabad worker. It can also be shown that the efficiency of the Bombay worker has increased not only from the point of view of increase in the quantity of production but also in its quality. The Tariff Board Report of 1932 shows on page 11 that in Bombay between 1926-27 and 1931-32, the production of yarn of counts below 20s is reduced from 65.58 p. c. to 53.98 p. c., that of counts between 21s and 30s is increased from 30.17 per cent. to 32.58 per cent. and that of counts above 31s is increased from 3.91 per cent. to 13.2 per cent. The report also shows that the comparative progress in Bombay in this direction is more rapid than that in Ahmedabad. A more recent proof of the progress made by Bombay in the direction of going in for finer counts is given in the Labour Office report. On page 19, it shows that in 1933 the production of yarn of counts above 30s was 22.5 p. c. of the total production of 42 mills as against only 5.6 p. c. of the total production of 36 mills in 1926. Both quantitatively and qualitatively, therefore, the efficiency of the Bombay worker has increased so considerably that he is entitled to an increase, instead of a decrease in wages.

The second factor which bears very closely on the question of wages is the extent to which the workers are entitled to a share in the enormous protection the textile industry is at present enjoying. Since the era of protection began, the economic condition of the textile workers in Bombay has steadily deteriorated. The protection is not meant only for the millowners. The taxpayer who pays to enable the industry to keep its head above water expects that minimum conditions of service and employment are maintained in that industry. If with the present high level of protection, the Bombay industry fails to insure those minimum conditions when the industry at other centres is not only developing but enjoying a fair degree of prosperity, the only conclusion one can draw is that there is something radically wrong with it. But that is no ground for not enabling the workers to receive a fair measure of the protection by way of maintaining at least the pre-protection wage level.

The last, but not the least, factor relating to the question of wages is the protection of unemployed workers. In Bombay City, there are today 28,000 unemployed persons as against 95,000 employed ones. Agriculture affords no relief to them. The joint family system and the ties of the village community alone have so far saved the unemployed people from starvation by putting their burden on those who are fortunate enough to maintain their employment. As Mr. Harold Butler, the Director of the International Labour Office, has rightly pointed in his latest report, in periods of depression, the real test of the well-being of the workers is not to be found in the

level of wage rates or even in their purchasing value, but it is to be found in the aggregate income of the working population. The Labour Office has pointed out that the wages bill in 35 mills in Bombay has gone down by 19.57 p. c., which gives a fair index of the depressed economic condition of the people in spite of a rise in real wages by 11 p. c.

It will be seen from these and other considerations which have so far been discussed and from the inherent and other limitations that have been pointed out with regard to the collection of wage data, the compilation of the cost of living index and utility of the real wage index number, that the only logical and fair conclusion to which one can come is that there should have been a much greater rise in real wages than 11 p. c., if the workers's standard of life, miserable though it is, is to be maintained at least at the level of 1926. In other words, there is not only no justification for a wage cut, but there is every justification for an increase in wages.

R. R. BAKHALE.

### FEDERATION—A DISCREDITED CREED.

SIR MIRZA ISMAIL, the Dewan of Mysore, wound up the recent session of the Mysore Representative Assembly by holding up democracy and those who give themselves to its establishment in Mysore to ridicule. The sentiments which he voiced are by no means uncommon for the rulers and ministers of States to utter; but they receive a special significance in view of the fact that they have proceeded from one who, of all men who occupy positions of authority in Indian States, is known to be most friendly to popular rights. If such an one feels compelled to speak in tones of withering scorn of the distinguished publicists in the States, who desire Mysore, advanced as it is, to come into line, in respect of constitutional progress, with British India without delay and of the system of popular government itself, one can well imagine how anxious the authorities in other States must be to suppress any little signs of popular agitation that may possibly show themselves there.

Sir Mirza first challenged the statement that there is any genuine demand at all in Mysore for the democratisation of the administration. Now this is a question of fact, on which we have no doubt that the leaders of the people in the State will be quite willing to take up the challenge, whatever criterion the Dewan may choose for deciding the question. Would he take a referendum? This test the people will gladly accept, but it cannot be acceptable to Sir Mirza, cherishing as he does intense disbelief in all such methods of the expression of popular will. Public meetings? Again, we are afraid he will reject this method of measuring public opinion. What is the alternative that he would suggest? How does he make out, for instance, that the people as a whole are hostile to any further introduction of a democratic element into the Mysore constitution and that they are eager to have Mysore's tribute remitted? If he will prove the latter, popular leaders will prove the former—by employing the same means as he does. Ignorant ryots in the villages certainly do not join in the demand for self-government; but they do not join in the demand for the abolition of the subsidy either. Educated people want the one as well as the other.

Sir Mirza says further that the people in Mysore are not fit to receive another instalment of reform immediately, and that if even a genuine demand existed, he would not entertain it for a moment. On what he bases this reply it is difficult to say, but

does he realise what his answer implies? If the people of the most advanced State in India are not qualified for the reforms introduced in British India even now, twelve years after their introduction there, does it not mean that the States as a body, are not fit to be taken into partnership with British India in a federal government? Why should British India then admit these mediaeval States into association with it, on a footing of equality?

Sir Mirza is puzzled to know why an insistent demand for democratic self-government should be made just when democracy has come into disrepute all the world over. He means that parliamentary government has been overthrown in many countries and is being practically suspended in many others. This is not the time when any people, and particularly those in Mysore, who are enjoying all the benefits of autocracy, should foolishly give them up and hanker after democracy which has already proved its inutility. If democracy is so thoroughly discredited, one may ask why the States show such eagerness to enter into a federation, which is to develop on the lines of a democracy. It is true that the States themselves will temper this democracy to a very large extent, but why do they, retaining their own autocracy as they do, throw in their lot with another part which will be mainly democratic? Why do they not agree to bureaucratic control of all federal subjects? Would they not be acting as wise and far-sighted people if they did so, just as they want their subjects to be wise and far-sighted, in preferring autocracy to democracy?

Another point. Federation is as much discredited in the world today as democracy. If Italy, Germany, Poland and several other countries have dictators installed in the place of responsible ministers, Germany has thrown federation overboard; South Africa has abolished provincial autonomy and secession is taking place in Australia. May we not ask, why then should Mysore and other States be so anxious to form a federation? And further, why should Sir Mirza Ismail say to the British Government, as he did in effect in a recent letter to the *Times*, "Whether British Indians want federation or not, force it down their throat; they will swallow it alright; only you must not expect them to invite you to feed them with the stuff. Never mind what is happening to federations all the world over. We must have federation in this country and we must have it in spite of all the show of opposition which British Indians are making." Why all this insistence upon federation, when there is a distinct tendency to be seen in other countries at the present time for existing federations to be dissolved?

A. V. PATVARDHAN.

## Our London Letter.

( BY AIR MAIL. )

( From Our Correspondent. )

LONDON, June 22.

WINSTON UNABASHED.

A common phenomenon among the insane is that every one but themselves is a lunatic. Mr. Churchill seems to share the illusion that every one is wrong and that he alone is right. Having been turned down unanimously by the House of Commons last week, which adopted, without a vote, the Report of the Committee of Privileges, he now has the temerity to reaffirm the validity of his charges against Sir Samuel Hoare and Lord Derby, and uses the episode in order to warn the country that the Government is



engaged upon a sort of criminal conspiracy to get various sections of opinion that would otherwise be hostile to "come along quietly." "Lancashire he declares, "has been persuaded to come along quietly. Efforts are being made to persuade the Princes to come along quietly. Every endeavour is used to persuade the Conservative Party and the National Union to come along quietly. But, he warns us, "the moment is approaching when those who are pursuing these tactics with so much skill and perseverance will turn round upon us and, having said all these months, almost years, that no one is committed to anything except an impartial and semi-judicial enquiry, suddenly exclaim: 'Too late. You have gone too far to go back.'" No one can complain that Mr. Churchill is coming along quietly. I do not even know whether he is coming along. But whatever he is doing is being noisily done, and he seems to be quite hot and bothered about it.

He is going up to Manchester next week to explain at great length to the cotton magnates there what a lot of mollycoddles they have been to be taken in by this Government stunt. He is going to tell the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, who really do want to go forward and not back, that they are quite wrong in their statement that they were persuaded to change their evidence because of the representations made to them by the Indian Cotton Mission, and that they did not know what they were talking about when they affirmed the contrary to his allegations. This Manchester meeting, which has been boosted as only the *Daily Mail* Press knows how to boost its favourites, is not going to be quite such a resounding success as Mr. Churchill intended to make it. All the Lancashire members of Parliament are going to be absent from his platform. Mr. Chorlton, M. P., who was to have presided, has now withdrawn. He says that he is interested in cotton but not in controversies between the higher politicians. The *Morning Post* alleges, and the *Daily Telegraph*, Mr. Chorlton and his fellow M. P.'s deny, that the Lancashire members have been warned off by the Government against disloyalty to the Party leaders. One of the principal reasons why the Lancashire members refuse to be on the same platform as Mr. Churchill is that they strongly resent the repetition of his charges against the Earl of Derby, who is universally popular in Lancashire. He has repeatedly said that the best and only way that he knows of restoring prosperity to the Lancashire cotton industry is by political, commercial, and economic agreement between Britain and India. No one in Lancashire who attaches any value at all to Lord Derby's views would disagree with that statement of the case, and it is difficult to see what useful purpose Mr. Churchill hopes to serve by trying to make the flesh of the Lancashire cotton folk creep by telling them stories of the wicked bogeymen, either in Whitehall or in Simla. It rather looks as though, therefore, the India Defence League meeting that is to be addressed by Mr. Churchill next week will be attended not so much by people who are likely to be impressed by the sage of Epping, as by those who are interested in hearing him even if all he can do is to cry "wolf! wolf" in majestic, measured and eloquent language. Those who believe in the doctrine of reincarnation may have some justification for the theory that in Mr. Churchill the gloomy prophetess Cassandra has been reborn.

#### THE WHITE PAPER PROGRAMME.

I was talking to-day with a public man in very close touch with the Government and Parliament, who seemed to share the view held at the India office that, even though the Report of the Joint Select Committee might not be available until the autumn, it would not necessarily imply that the Government's

programme to get the constitutional Reform Bill through by the middle of next year would not be carried through. He felt that the Government so strongly realised the necessity of the minimum of delay in putting the new legislation upon the Statute Book that it would use every effort to clear other legislation out of the way in order to enable it to do so and that such other legislation, which would, had the Report been published this summer, have been taken later rather than earlier will now occupy the time that would otherwise be taken this year by the India Bill. If that is so it is all to the good.

The *Spectator* to-day, dealing with the question of delay, warns its readers that it "will merely exasperate Indian opinion at the moment more friendly disposed than at any time since the Irwin-Gandhi peace... Procrastination can be as disastrous as precipitancy. Each month of further delay in the publication of the Select Committee's Report is likely to render more unfavourable the atmosphere with which India will receive its recommendations. It is to be hoped that Lord Willingdon, who arrives in this country at an opportune moment, will press that line strongly upon Ministers."

Colonel Wedgwood in the *Times* seems to be suggesting that the new Constitution should make provision to enable Provinces like the Punjab, Sind, or the North-West Frontier Province to contract out of the new Constitution.

#### "BEYOND THE WHITE PAPER."

Under the above title, Messrs. George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., have just published a small book at the low price of 3/6d. by Mr. Philip Cox, the author of "The Rani of Jhansi." In this book the author discusses the evidence presented before the Joint Select Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform, and his purpose is to place before the British public, and in particular such audiences as he has frequently addressed in the British Adult Education Movement, Evening Colleges and Literary Institutes, the main structure of the White Paper proposals, with their historical background, as well as an analysis of the purposes they set out to achieve and the principal criticisms that have been directed against them from various quarters. Mr. Cox is a thoughtful and well-informed writer, and he has presented a sane and detached exposition of the point of view generally underlying the main features of the proposed Indian Constitution. He writes as a cautious and intelligent supporter of the scheme now under consideration, and his little book will doubtless be much quoted in wide circles when the Committee's Report is before the country in the autumn. He has written mainly with an eye to the British public, but his book ought also to be widely noticed in India, where, too, it should help to throw light upon a somewhat complex situation. As to Mr. Cox himself, he has the advantage of being familiar with one aspect of the problem of Indians overseas as he was born and brought up in British Guiana; but he also has considerable knowledge at first hand of conditions in the Motherland.

After hearing Sir Alexander Rodger, late Inspector-General of Forests in India, and a member of the Forestry Commission, who thought that the Government of India should keep some control of forests as a whole, and that the Provinces should recognise the forests to be a very important Imperial asset, the Conservative India Committee decided to hold no further regular meetings until the autumn. It is understood that at the Conservative Party meeting to be held shortly the question of Indian constitutional reform will not be discussed, in view of the decision taken a few weeks ago at the Friends House meeting.

The return to England of Miss Agatha Harrison and Miss Muriel Lester, both members of the Indian Conciliation Group, is expected next week-end. This, however, was anticipated and is according to plan. What is however surprising is the news, quite unexpected, that Miss Madeline Slade (Mira Ben) is so quickly following them, for the purpose, as she is understood to have said, by her visit, of securing harmony between Britain and India. I am inclined to think that Miss Slade will not find her task an easy one. The English people have never really understood her devotion to both Mahatma Gandhi and his cause, and she will have to proceed very delicately and persuasively in order to secure a hearing in circles not already converted to the general view that she represents.

Lord Willingdon has now arrived and has expressed a strong desire to enjoy a quiet holiday. While that is partly the exact truth, it is probably only part of it, and no doubt what Lord Willingdon would desire to imply is that he wishes to be left alone by the Press, and to be permitted quietly to undertake such educational work on the subject of Indian constitutional reform as he may find awaiting him now that he is here.

#### WOMEN AND INDIA.

The Indian question figured prominently in the programme of the tenth Annual Conference of the British Commonwealth League held in London on the 13th, 14th and 15th June, and attended by delegates of 45 societies from all parts of the Empire.

Mrs. Maneklal Premchand moved a resolution supporting the franchise demands of organised Indian women, as placed before the Joint Select Committee in London last year.

A resolution supporting the demands of Indian women for re-orientation of the entire system of education in India and requesting the Government to introduce vocational training in schools and colleges was supported by Professor A. C. Chakravarty and Mrs. Rama Rau. Professor Chakravarty commented on the modern tendency to restrict and narrow the field of education and spoke of the work of Rabindranath Tagore at Santiniketan, where men and women lived a life in harmony with nature and boys and girls were given equal chances of development and then encouraged to choose the particular line they desired to follow. He said that Mahatma Gandhi had undertaken the great task of bringing India into right relationship with the rest of the world. He had roused the whole nation to a sense of self-respect, and had made his appeal to women as well as to men to take their part in the re-adjustment. There had been a tremendous response from the women, and the greatest among them were helping in both the social and political fields to make the downtrodden feel that they were God's children and were spreading a message of peace and fellowship throughout the country.

Mrs. Rama Rau thought that the tendency had been to look on education as having merely a material goal, that of obtaining a degree in order to enter Government service. When the All-India Women's Conference was formed in 1927, one of its objects was to work for changes in the educational system in order to adapt it to the needs of the country. In India it was generally recognised that men and women should have equal opportunities, and with the recent exception of the Allahabad University, there had never been any opposition to women students in the universities. Indigenous centres like those of Dr. Tagore and Professor Karve had never been fully recognised by Government, and there were constant

clashes between the distinctively Indian and the academic institutions.

Mrs. R. C. Gupta proposed a resolution urging the Government to enforce the Child Marriage Restraint Act, and so to amend it as to make child marriage impossible. All these resolutions were passed unanimously.

Other subjects dealt with were the legal position of the wife in regard to her husband's income and earnings; equal pay for equal work, in connection with which Mrs. Krishnabai Wagh dealt with the position of the Indian woman in industry and the professions; the bar of colour as one of the bars to careers, on which the speaker was Miss Winifred Holtby, the novelist, who was followed by Mr. Kenyatha from Kenya, and Miss Marson, a Jamaican delegate, who spoke on the difficulty experienced by coloured girls in obtaining nursing training in this country.

### Miscellaneous.

#### HOW TO FIGHT THE WHITE PAPER.

HOW is India to fight the White Paper, or rather the Joint Parliamentary Committee's report on the White Paper, which, it is now expected, will be published by the middle of August? That the report will be as reactionary a document as the White Paper itself goes without saying. The general belief, indeed is, as stated in a recent speech by Sir C. Setalvad, who is perhaps the last person in the world to take an unduly pessimistic view in a matter of this kind, that in some respects the report will be even worse than the White Paper. That it will not be acceptable to any section of progressive political opinion in India is perfectly certain. But how is this opinion to make itself heard or felt? It will not be enough for it to sulk in its tent. Nor will it do for it simply to ignore the report and go on talking in abstract terms about India's right of self-determination.

The best opinion in the Congress itself has now come round to the view that the only right and practicable course for the country is to offer the stoutest battle to the White Paper and to do everything in its power, first, to prevent the White Paper from becoming law, and, then, if that attempt fails, to try and make it unworkable by using all its constitutional powers. Nothing could be better from this point of view than if we had in the country a small executive body consisting of two or three representatives of each of the progressive organisations, which would speak and act in the name of the whole country. The existence of such a body, however, presupposes the existence of a bigger deliberative body, representing political India as a whole, a sort of all-parties conference, such as has again and again been proposed. In the absence of such a body, one of two courses is open to the parties. Either they must join hands whenever and wherever they can, so that any step that is lasting may be taken in the name of all of them, or each party must evolve its own plan of campaign and take its own steps in the hope that they will lead to the same end, and that the combined effect of those steps will be to bring the citadel of the White Paper to the ground. We can only indicate in general terms what these steps should be.

As soon as the report is published, we expect both the Congress and the other political parties and organisations in the country to meet

and formulate their views in some detail with regard to it and broadcast those views, in the form of a comprehensive resolution or of a manifesto. The publication of those views should be followed by public meetings all over the country, held wherever possible under the joint auspices of all progressive public bodies, at which resolutions more or less on the lines of the resolutions of the central bodies should be passed. All these resolutions are, of course, to be published in the newspapers, which will simultaneously express their own views on the subject. But steps should also be taken to cable a summary of those resolutions to the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition in England, to such influential English newspapers as will care to publish them as well as to the continental and the American press. The publication of the Joint Committee's report will be followed by a debate in Parliament. It is in the highest degree necessary that in that debate the friends of India in Parliament, the present Opposition Leader, for instance, should be able to inform Parliament of the true feeling of political India with regard to the White Paper and the Report. If in spite of this information and in disregard of it Parliament will express its formal approval of the Report and will thus authorise the Government to introduce a bill embodying the conclusions of the Report, that will be its own affair, and it will be solely responsible for the consequences of its action.

Simultaneously with this activity an attempt must be made to educate the Indian electorate. The elections for the Assembly are not likely to be held before November, but the prospective candidates chosen by the various parties should take the field as soon after the publication of the Report as they possibly can. This will give each one of them at least two months' time to work among his constituents, and if they make the best use of this time it is not unreasonable to anticipate that a large majority of those returned by general electorates and a very considerable proportion even of those returned by separate electorates or special constituencies will be opposed to the Report. It is because we are keen on the return of such men to the Assembly in an absolute majority that we would advise the various parties, as far as possible, to work in a spirit of co-operation and comradeship, and not on the lines common in all countries at ordinary election times. The best candidates of all parties, when they are pledged to the rejection of the official scheme, that is to say, to support a rejection motion in the Assembly should, as a rule, be assured a safe return. A Congressman, who will not be able to contribute anything but his vote should not be pitted against a front rank Liberal or Independent politician if the latter is as much a sworn enemy of the J.P.C. Report as the former, and if he also definitely declares that he will support a rejection motion. Where both the Congress and the non-Congress candidates for a particular seat are front rank men, and are both pledged to the rejection of the Report, an attempt should be made to give each of them a safe seat. Where a fight is inevitable, let it be conducted in the best and most sportsmanlike spirit without the importation of any element of venom or rancour. We know that in dealing with these candidates we are not dealing with angels, but with human beings with their full share of human failings. But we also know that the situation of a man is the preceptor of his duty and that the policy of a man or a group of men changes with circumstances. The present is certainly a very special case in which each party should place the country before and above itself. Having by this means secured the return of anti-Report members in an absolute majority, the leaders of the various parties and organisations should make it their first business to have a

rejection motion carried in the Assembly, and having done so should again go to their constituencies and secure from them a ratification of that motion.

If British statesmen have not taken leave of their constitutional sense and their political judgment, it can reasonably be expected that in the face of so clear a verdict on the part of the Assembly and the country they will not proceed to give legislative effect to the Report. But it is just possible that they will do so and will try to support their action on the specious ground that the present electorate is extremely small and that if the electorate had been larger the result would have been different. If they take up this position and proceed with the necessary parliamentary legislation, the duty of the progressive parties will be perfectly plain. They must continue their educative work in the country and their propaganda work abroad, if possible with redoubled vigour, and if and when the White Paper Bill is passed they must try to capture an even larger majority of seats in the new Federal Assembly than they are likely to get in the next Assembly. In that Assembly, too, a motion disapproving of the new constitution must be carried, and the carrying of that motion must be followed by a concerted plan of activities designed to bring the working of the Constitution to a speedy end. Two things must be kept in view if these results are to be achieved. The Congress must keep some of its high ideas on one side and, while not departing even by a hair's-breadth from its fundamental principles, should in its actual proposals follow lines such as are likely to have the support of other progressive elements in the House. Similarly, the other parties must revise their present policy and go as long a distance as they possibly can with the Congress. In other words both in the Assembly and in the country these parties should conduct themselves as if they were branches and sections of a larger party, the party of the Motherland, pledged to win for her the position, the rights, the privileges, the functions of a completely self-governing State. Let all prospective members of this bigger party remember the wise and famous words of one of the greatest political thinkers the world has known, that it is no very good or rational account of a man that he has always acted right but has taken special care to act in such way as to make his action productive of no consequence. For too long Indian patriots of all schools of thought, both Congressmen and non-Congressmen, have disregarded this sovereign truth with results that are writ large on every page of India's contemporary history. It is only by turning over a new leaf that they can now hope to make their action effective. And need we say that never in all their history was there an occasion which more clearly or more imperatively called for this change of policy?—*The Tribune*, 25th June.

#### STATEMENT OF VIEWS OF THE STATE PEOPLES.

*A deputation of workers in the cause of the Indian States, headed by Mr. N. C. Kelkar, President of the All-India States' People's Conference, waited upon Mahatma Gandhi in Poona on 20th June. On this occasion the deputation presented the following statement of its views on the Indian States' problem to the Mahatma:—*

**T**HE Congress organisation comprehends within its scope both British India and the Indian States, and as it asks for freedom in the former

so it does in the latter. Resolution xxv of the Congress session held in Madras in 1927 adopted a resolution in the following terms:—

"This Congress is emphatically of opinion that in the interests of both the rulers and the people of Indian States, they should establish representative institutions and responsible government in their States at an early date."

Time has now arrived when Congressmen should be given definite instructions to work actively for constitutional reform in the Indian States so that the Indian States will enjoy the same measure of Swaraj as British India.

The Congress policy in respect to the White Paper proposals in so far as they bear on the States' people must also be defined with greater precision than has been done so far. The Working Committee of the Congress that met recently in Bombay has declared the White Paper scheme as a whole to be unacceptable to the Congress on the ground that it does not express the will of the Indian people. It should be expressly stated that it does not express the will of the people in the Indian States and that it is unacceptable to the Congress on that account also.

It has become necessary, in order to dispel doubts that have arisen in the minds of the States' people, that the Congress insists upon provision being made in the new constitution that in the Federal Legislature all the States' representatives shall be returned by popular election and that the elementary rights of citizenship of the States' people shall be guaranteed in the federal constitution, it being left to the Federal Court to remedy any violation of such rights. The "National Demand" put forward by Mahatma Gandhi at the Round Table Conference did not include such a demand. The Congress representative at this Conference was on the other hand willing to leave it to the rulers of the Indian States to make whatever kind of arrangements it pleased them to make in this behalf. The Swaraj Party's Conference that took place at Ranchi in May last decided, as all Congress organisations would feel bound to do unless a resolution in the contrary sense is adopted, to model the constitution on the lines contained in Mahatma Gandhi's speech. For this reason it is of the utmost importance for the Congress to declare that no constitution will be acceptable to it which does not secure for the States' people election of the States' representatives in the federal legislature and the insertion of a declaration of rights in the federal constitution. The Congress Parliamentary Board should be asked to make the Congress policy in these two respects indubitably clear in the election manifesto that it will issue.

The Constituent Assembly which is to draft the Swaraj Constitution for India after the White Paper is out of the way will be elected, according to the resolution of the Working Committee, "on the basis of adult suffrage or as near it as possible." It should

be specifically stated that the people in the Indian States will find a place in the Constituent Assembly on the same terms as the people in British India.

It is the earnest desire of the people in the Indian States that Mahatma Gandhi will favour them with a communication expressing his personal agreement with the points urged here, so that they may be reassured that the Congress will follow the policy which they wish it to follow in respect to the States.

*The following telegram was sent by Mr. N. C. Kelkar as President of the All-India States' People's Conference to Dr. Ansari on 2nd May for being placed before the Swarajist Conference at Ranchi:—*

"The Swaraj Party's future line of policy concerning the reforms scheme is announced to be generally identical with that which Mahatma Gandhi followed at the second Round Table Conference. This policy was seriously defective in regard to Indian States inasmuch as he did not press for election of the States' representatives in the federal legislature, nor for the guaranteeing of fundamental rights in the federal constitution as essential conditions of federation. In fact he made no demands on the Princes, but was prepared to wait upon their pleasure in every respect.

"This policy is suicidal both to the people in British India and in the States. As President of the All-India States' People's Conference, I beg to urge upon the Swaraj Party to modify it in the sense given below:—

"The Swaraj Party should withhold support from the federal scheme—

- (i) if at least in the lower federal house all the States' representatives are not elected by, if necessary, an indirect but a genuine system of election;
- (ii) if the elementary rights of citizenship of the States' people are not secured in the federal constitution; and
- (iii) if a procedure of amending the constitution in future is not adopted which does not do away with the right of veto allowed to individual States in the White Paper. Amendment procedure may be made as stiff as in the United States, but if an amendment is adopted by the federal legislature by a majority of a certain specified size, then it should be made binding upon all the units of federation, without regard to their individual wishes."

"The Swaraj Party is said to be determined to reject the White Paper on many grounds indicated in Mahatma Gandhi's speech at the Round Table Conference. It should then not find it difficult to add to them the three grounds mentioned above, which by themselves are serious enough to drive a party of progressives to the rejection of the present federal scheme."