

The Servant of India

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Topics of the Week.

The India Bill.

THE new Reforms Bill was published last week and though its text is not yet available to the Indian public, it has been assured that the Bill does not depart from the J. P. C. recommendations—a painful assurance. That assurance carries with it the intimation that the Indian public would do well not to look for Dominion Status being so much as mentioned anywhere in the Bill. For all this the people of India cannot be said to have been quite unprepared. The omission is sought to be officially justified by some such reasoning as this. The new legislation is intended to take the place of the existing Government of India Act and will result in its repeal. Though with the passage of the new Act the present legislation will be dead, its preamble is immortal so that responsible government with Dominion Status, which is authoritatively declared to be its eventual culmination, will continue to be the pole-star of Indian policy. A statement on these lines will, it is stated, be made on behalf of the Government in the course of the Parliamentary discussions on the Bill.

IT is certain this will not at all meet Indian wishes, for past experience shows that there is a tendency to challenge the validity of such declarations. What India desires is that the statement about the goal should be included in the statute and it is too much to expect that its omission from the Bill would be regarded by her as anything but a danger signal. Of declarations by individual

administrators of India having a right to look upon Dominion Status as the fulfilment of her political ambitions, there has been no lack in the past. Be it said to the credit of the present Viceroy that he takes every opportunity of giving expression to his ambition to see this country an absolute equal of the Dominions, though we now hear less of his ambition to be the first constitutional Governor-General of India. But declarations such as his are no better than the expression of mere pious wishes, and are from the practical point of view of little value.

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THE London *Times* which must be presumed to be in the know of things tries to justify the omission by mentioning the difficulty of a precise definition of Dominion Status. The difficulty is more apparent than real. Whilst aspiring to Dominionhood, India has set her heart on nothing less than complete equality with the Dominions. It passes our comprehension why it should be impossible to make this point clear somewhere in the proposed law. If in spite of the passage of the Statute of Westminster Dominion Status is so incapable of definition as the *Times* tries to make out, the purpose could equally well be served by the incorporation in the Bill of an explicit statement that Indian policy must be so directed as to facilitate the attainment by India at as early a date as possible of a status in no way inferior to that of a Dominion. We are pompously assured that there has been no intention to depart by so much as a hair's-breadth from the pledges given to India by the Sovereign and his Viceroys and Ministers in the last decade. If so, we fail to appreciate the universal official tendency to treat the expression as if it was something which must not be allowed to contaminate one's breath.

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WE must explain once again, however, that the mere mention of Dominion Status in the Act will not satisfy India. It will remove but one of the many grievances. What India wants more than the definition of the final goal is the immediate taking of substantial steps towards it.

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The Viceroy's Speech.

THE Viceroy opened the current session of the Legislative Assembly on Thursday last with his usual survey of Indian affairs. This would not have been complete without some reference to the constitutional problem in the light of the J. P. C. report.

In this respect public expectation was not disappointed. But if some people expected the Viceregal address to furnish them with some hitherto undiscovered argument in support of the official plea in favour of the acceptance of the Report, it was conspicuous by its absence in it. Indeed, nothing that he said on the subject need make anybody modify his views about the Report. His Excellency naturally spoke of the two foundations of the proposed scheme, viz. provincial autonomy and all-India federation with his customary enthusiasm and wanted the people of this country to be equally enthusiastic about them—an appeal which in the absence of radical alterations in the scheme, of which there seems to be very meagre chance, is, we are afraid, likely to fall on deaf ears.

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OFFICIAL apologists of the scheme, obviously speaking under a common inspiration, ask people to believe that the safeguards are not so many deductions from power as is commonly supposed but a measure of the advance intended. His Excellency the Viceroy too did not let go the occasion without repeating the advice. With every desire to understand the official view, the logic underlying this statement is difficult to follow. It is argued that if the power proposed for transfer had been small, all the safeguards with which the J. P. C. scheme is riddled would have been unnecessary. And after all what do they amount to? They are, it is said, nothing more than precautionary measures intended to carry us from one system of government to another. To regard their existence as "an unreasonable or unfriendly act" would be, we are warned, a narrow and prejudiced view. Despite official protestations to the contrary, the Indian public seems determined to be perverse enough to persist in taking the same narrow and prejudiced view of the safeguards against which Lord Willingdon sounded this note of warning.

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National Demonstration against J. P. C. Report.

IN pursuance of the Congress President's appeal, February 7th will witness the national demonstration against the report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee. The following resolution will be proposed for acceptance by public meetings organised for that day:

"This public meeting condemns the proposed constitutional changes as conceived in a spirit of imperialistic domination and economic exploitation and disclosing no intention of transferring real power to the people of India.

This meeting places on record its considered opinion that it prefers to continue to struggle for swaraj under the present constitution, and calls upon the popular representatives in the legislatures to reject the proposed scheme."

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A Snub to Government.

MR. SARAT C. BOSE, brother of Mr. Subash Bose, has been, as is well known, a State prisoner under the obsolete and antiquated Bengal Regulation of 1818 for nearly three years. He is neither allowed an opportunity to prove his innocence in a court of law nor is he restored to liberty. A demand for his release has repeatedly gone forth from many platforms and has received unanimous support from the Indian-owned press. But the Government has systematically continued to defy public opinion by turning a deaf ear to all such appeals. Though in custody, Mr. Bose succeeded in securing his election to the Assembly last November but has been prevented by the Government's refusal to set him at liberty from representing his constituents.

* * *

THE unfairness involved in the Government's action both personally to Mr. Bose and to those that have perforce to go unrepresented was ventilated in the Assembly last week over a motion of adjournment, by passing which we are glad the Assembly administered a well-deserved snub to the Government. It is not our purpose to go into the question whether the continued detention of Mr. Bose involved any breach of privilege of the Assembly. We may be prepared to grant the correctness of the position taken by the Home and Law Members that members of the Legislative Assembly have no more rights than ordinary citizens. Even so, Mr. Bose's detention appears to us perfectly unjustifiable. If the Government have not enough evidence against him so as to be able to prove his guilt, let them at least take the Assembly into their confidence with regard to the charges they have against Mr. Bose. Whatever the Government may say, the public will continue to look upon Mr. Bose as innocent till he is proved guilty, whether to the satisfaction of a judicial tribunal or to a popular one like the Assembly. To adopt neither course is to proclaim to the world that the case, if any, which the Government has against him cannot stand the light of public criticism. The fact that the adjournment motion was carried in spite of the Independents remaining neutral is a measure of the public indignation aroused by the conduct of Government in regard to Mr. Bose and we hope the lesson of the debate will not be lost on them.

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Is S. I. Society: Political or Social?

IN our last issue was published the letter addressed by our London correspondent to the *Daily Telegraph* with a view to removing that journal's misapprehension that the Servants of India Society is a non-political body. The late Lord Sydenham too laboured under a similar misapprehension, to which as a member of the Select Committee on the Montagu Reforms Bill of 1919 he gave expression in the course of his cross-examination of Mr. Sastri, the then President of the Society. The following questions and answers that passed between the two will show how much Mr. Sastri did to impress on his Lordship the utter baselessness of such a belief.

I took great interest in that (Servants of India) Society in its early days, and Mr. Gokhale assured me more than once it would never become a political body. Can it be said it is a non-political body now?—I am not aware that at any time Mr. Gokhale intended it to be a non-political body.

He told me so more than once. Is it a political or a non-political body now?—It is a political body. It was a political body from its very inception.

That is not what was explained to me. Now, you are going to put in a Memorandum of your views as to conscience clauses?—May I say a word about that last point? I was present when your Lordship visited the Servants of India Society. Mr. Gokhale was there, and I had the honour of taking tea with you.

I remember?—I think at that time a conversation took place which pointed to the fact that we were all studying political questions and administrative questions with a view to their being agitated. I remember discussing with your Lordship at that time the report of the Police (Public) Service Commission, which had recently been issued. I remember discussing it with some particularity.

I quite understood the subject was being studied, but I also understood certainly that the Servants of India Society was never to be made a political body?—Your Lordship made a present of several books to the library. I hope you went over the list of the library books. It was a strongly political library that we had.

* * *

THE INVITATION DOES *NOT* STAND.

THE resolution passed by the Chamber of Princes defining the States' attitude towards federation and the speech made by His Highness the Maharaja of Patiala in moving it are of crucial importance in the settlement of this question. The Princes, to judge from the Maharaja's speech, are still full of concern as to what might befall them if they decided to enter the federation. There is hardly any important demand which they put forward which the British Government has not accepted, and yet their misgivings have not been allayed. There will not be a uniform list of federal subjects for all the States; each State is to determine for itself for which of these subjects it will join the federation. Still the States are alarmed that the list from which they are to choose is too long. They fear that it will in practice be difficult for individual States to shorten the list for themselves. Their complaint is that the list contains some subjects, the propriety of the federalisation of which was not previously discussed with them. And if even all these subjects were cut out and the list reduced to much smaller dimensions, even then the fears entertained by the Princes will not be entirely quietened. What guarantee will there be, they ask themselves, that the federation will not encroach in course of time, as has happened in other countries, on the sphere of authority reserved to the governments of the federating units? The jurisdiction of the Federal Court, according to the States, has been unduly widened, but on this point their objection has already been met by the framers of the Constitution Bill, who have assigned a narrower ambit to the Federal Court's authority. But this is only one of the ways in which the powers of the federation have been extended beyond the range which the Princes had bargained for.

There are, moreover, certain things which it would be beyond the legitimate scope of the Constitution Bill to provide for, viz. the maintenance of the rights and privileges guaranteed to the Princes under treaty. The Instrument of Instructions to the Viceroy and the Treaties of Accession alone can provide for this, and the Princes will scan these instruments minutely before they decide to throw in their lot with British India in a federal constitution. What they are anxious to secure, we are told, is security from malicious attacks in British India against their administrations. The Princes' Protection Act gives them the security that they want. But they are not sure that it will be continued in the new regime. It is true that when the Act was passed it was passed in order to discharge an obligation resulting from treaties, but even so it was bitterly opposed by British India, the latter not recking its moral obligations. An Act forced upon the popular representatives of British India by superior authority may be repealed under responsible government, and the Princes require a guarantee against its possible repeal. It would appear that they have already been promised satisfaction on this score, as they will be given satisfaction on every other score. It is said that the Instrument

of Instructions will contain a provision requiring the Governor-General to withhold his consent from any legislation curtailing the protection which is due to the rulers of States under treaty. But whatever concessions be made to them, they appear to be nervous, or at any rate affect to be nervous, about the consequences which the federation will entail upon them. Will their internal autonomy really remain unaffected as the letter of the law provides, or will it collapse under the perpetual pressure of the democracy in British India? These and similar other doubts still keep on assailing their princely hearts.

All these fears are idle. The Princes will themselves be secure under federation and will make British power in India secure. Sir Kailas Narayan Haksar has plainly stated that they need not still be standing on the edge of the bank, but that they may throw themselves into the federation without further thought, for, he says, they have in several respects obtained more safeguards than they had asked for. We have no doubt that if the Princes merely consulted their sectional interests, they will decide in favour of federation. The only question is what their decision will be in view of determined hostility of all sections of British Indians to the federal scheme. Viewed from this angle of vision, their attitude seems at the moment to be entirely satisfactory. For the resolution passed by the Chamber emphasises that "the inauguration and success of federation will depend entirely on good-will and co-operation of all the parties concerned," and in view of the declared opposition of the British Indian people, not to federation in principle, but to the federal scheme now before the country, it may be hoped that the Princes may yet decide not to join the kind of federation that has been proposed. The Maharaja of Patiala put the point very clearly. The extract is long, but his exact words are worth quoting. He said:

The circumstances under which some of us agreed to consider a federal proposal, as providing a suitable scheme for co-operation between British India and the States, are indeed well-known. It was not from any desire on our part to hinder British India in the realisation of its legitimate aspirations but rather to help India in her constitutional progress and political development, without sacrificing our own sovereignty and internal autonomy. But today responsible men in British India, men who I know bear no ill-will towards the States, have not hesitated to say frankly that in the present scheme of things, Indian States have become a positive hindrance rather than help to British India. I would not have taken such an expression of views, from however eminent a quarter, seriously, but for the fact that it seems to be widely held in all sections of political opinion in British India. And if that is the view of men of moderation in the country, it is a matter for your Highnesses seriously to consider whether we should put ourselves in the position in which practically every important body of opinion in British India considers us unwelcome partners, and looks upon our entry into Federation with suspicion. The benefits of a federal scheme to the Indian States are in any case not so overwhelming that, whatever the opinion of British India, it would be in our interests to go in. On the other hand, if, as it would seem, the invitation of British India which we willingly accepted does not stand,

and the benefits to the States are not obvious, the Princes for their part should be prepared to say, that while they are willing, as they have always been, to enter into a federation, they would be equally prepared to stand out of a federal scheme if British India is not anxious to have it. In view of the accusation that is being levelled against the States, I think it is necessary that our views should be clearly and unequivocally stated on this issue.

Do let us say bluntly that if the invitation went from British India, as the Maharaja says, it no longer stands. This is clear from the resolutions passed by the various political parties in the country. The Congress will be organising meetings this day week all over India rejecting in terms the federal proposal which the Princes are considering. The Liberal Party at its annual Conference has plainly stated that it does not want this proposal to be proceeded with and to be put through. If, indeed, as the Princes profess, their entering into the federation is dependent upon British India accepting it, they need not tarry in intimating to His Majesty's Government that it should consider the negotiations that have so far proceeded as having fallen through. British India has already given the answer. Let the Princes take it as final and definitive. We are glad to find that the Princes themselves, from their own point of view, do not consider the advantages of federation to be so great as to justify their drawing upon themselves the hostility of British India, and this hostility will be very serious indeed. Only one point needs to be stressed lest misunderstanding should arise. In discarding the proposed constitution, British India does not discard federation as such; but it discards the particular scheme with which alone we are now concerned. It may be that under other circumstances British India will offer a new scheme of federation to the Princes, and the Princes will then have the liberty either to accept or reject it, as may at the time be deemed best in their interests. But for the present British India itself does not entertain the J. P. C. scheme and certainly does not want the Princes to entertain it either. *United Bengal* expresses on this point the united wishes of the whole of British India. Referring to the speech of His Highness of Patiala, it says: "He has observed that the Princes have no mind to become unwelcome partners of the British Indian people. There is no gainsaying the fact they will be positively unwelcome if they enter the federation on the conditions on which they have insisted and which have been incorporated in the White Paper proposals and the Report of the Joint Select Committee. His Highness will do the British Indians a real service if he minds their opposition and decides to keep out."

RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT IN THE J. P. C. REPORT:

THE establishment of responsible government was enunciated by the preamble of the Government of India Act, 1919, as the goal of Indian constitutional progress. That Act itself provided for substantial steps to be immediately taken towards the attainment of the prescribed goal, leaving to future enactments the task of a completer fruition of

responsible government. The Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee is the basis of the new Constitution Act which is now presented in the form of a bill to the British Parliament. It is, therefore, of special interest to analyse the views of the J. P. C. on responsible government and its application to India.

The J. P. C. assert that by directing the attention of Indians towards the object lessons of British constitutional history and by accustoming the Indian student of government to express his political ideas in the English language, it has favoured the growth of a body of opinion inspired by two familiar British conceptions; that good government is not an acceptable substitute for self-government, and that the only form of self-government worthy of the name is government through Ministers responsible to an elected legislature. There is a considerable amount of truth in this view and one of the most far-reaching advantages that India has reaped from its association with Great Britain is the early appreciation by its educated classes of the merits of self-government. It is hardly fair or correct, however, to imply that the Indians' support of self-government, and especially of its responsible form, is almost entirely the result of British contact and English education. That these influences smoothened the way of political education in India is to be admitted, but it must further be realised that a genuine Indian thought on the subject of Indian government has emerged. *Swaraj*—self-government—is the very soul of the Indian national movement, which has within its borders all sections of nationalists ranging from the educated, progressive and capitalistic classes to unlettered, orthodox and socialistic sections. The Indians' demand for self-government cannot be treated as an exotic and superimposed fact due to external influences alone.

Nor is it quite accurate to say that the responsibility for the growth of a strong feeling in favour of the responsible type of self-government is due principally to the general influence of the teaching of British constitutional history and of the English tongue. This issue was unsettled till the advent of the Montford Reforms. In fact the Congress-League scheme which summarised the demands of politically minded Indians provided for a popular and elective but not 'responsible' executive. But the years following the Treaty of Versailles were notable for Anglo-American insistence on the establishment of Parliamentary governments in the newer democracies, and the Indian reforms were not immune from this influence. The then leaders of the Congress had demurred to the principle of a removable executive and the irritation caused by their attitude in Mr. Montagu's mind has been recorded in his diary. By a deliberate act of policy on the part of the British Parliament responsible government has been prescribed as our constitutional goal. We have already travelled a stage towards it and have familiarised ourselves with its working in this as in other countries. If, therefore, we now prefer to keep on the same track till we progress sufficiently towards nationhood and democracy we cannot be blamed as deriving our

model too exclusively from the experience of one country, namely England.

The J. P. C. take no notice of this fact and speak as though India was demanding a form of government, which the more experienced British statesmen think is unsuitable to India. It is these very British statesmen who have imposed this form on India, and now the J. P. C. are exaggerating the difficulties in the way of its successful working with a view to retard further progress. The Committee assert that responsible government is not an automatic device and that unwritten conventions play a very important part in its working. Indian politicians and students of government might be credited with the knowledge of these facts, which the writers of British History have taken enough care to emphasise. It is strange indeed that having eulogised the importance of 'unwritten' conventions the Committee should proceed to justify their recommendations that these so-called conventions should be reduced to 'statutory provision.' Flexibility is the soul of convention, rigidity that of a provision of the statute.

It is here that even the Canadian analogy that the J. P. C. have pressed into service in support of their safeguards fails to carry conviction. Under the Canadian constitution the powers vested in the Governor-General in Council are to be construed as referring to the Governor-General acting with the advice of the King's privy council for Canada, which means the Canadian ministry. The Constitution does not provide for the Ministers being necessarily members of the legislature. Thus though the responsibility of the Governor-General to the ministry is provided for, that of the latter to the legislature is not assured by the letter of the law. But the whole weight of constitutional government is overwhelmingly in favour of making the ministers in their turn responsible to the legislature. The Canadian experiment which makes the Governor-General the non-responsible mouthpiece of the Federal ministry cannot relevantly be used as an analogy for supporting a constitution which is noteworthy for the plenitude of discretionary powers that it vests in the Governors and the Governor-General. If the Canadian model were to be followed in India in all its essential details—federation, residuary powers with the centre and constitutional use of the powers of the Governors and the Governor-General—nobody would be better pleased than the Indian progressives.

The J. P. C. Report has laid considerable emphasis on the merits of evolutionary growth. The replacement of the principle of direct election, which now holds the field, by a scheme of indirect representation is the most flagrant violation of the principle of evolutionary growth. The refusal to have all residuary powers vested in the central government of the country as at present is another palpable breach in the citadel of evolutionary principles which the English value most. The same is obviously true with regard to the proposal to have second chambers in the major provinces. Only those who have deliberately shut their eyes to facts can claim that the institution of second chambers in Indian

provinces is a natural growth of the inherent political tendencies prevalent in them.

The J. P. C. have attempted a few essays in the field of governmental theories which only prove the unwisdom of not having added trained talent to the Committee. The executive, the Committee tell us, cannot share its responsibility with the legislature. If here the executive means the Ministry, and further by its sharing of responsibility is meant the pushing off of blame or praise the Committee's remark is justified. But if it is contended, as is obviously the implication by context, that the Governor and his ministers are not under the control of the legislature in respect of the policy of their Government then the Committee's statement is utterly untenable. No item of executive policy and action is outside the direct influence of the Commons. In fact this is the characteristic feature that distinguishes the responsible from the presidential form of democratic government. It would be truer to say that in a responsible government no executive (ministry) will share its responsibility with the nominal head (Governor, Governor-General or King). The measure of responsibility contained in the new constitution can be very accurately assessed by the extent to which the Governors and the Governor-General are expected by the letter and the spirit of the law to abnegate themselves in favour of their ministers.

Certain political factors have been indicated by the J. P. C. as essential for the success of responsible government. Familiarity with the principle of rule by majorities, readiness of minorities to concur in and loyally abide by the decisions of the majority, the organisation of well-knit parties based on programmes and the existence of mobile public opinion are the four requirements stressed by the Committee. That none of these exist in India and therefore progress towards responsible government is not to be lightly thought of is their conclusion. Now both the prescription of requirements and its application to India must appear completely fallacious to any dispassionate and informed student. The principle of majority rule is indeed at the very root of all democracy; so also party government is the unavoidable instrument of organised governmental action under a democracy. But none of these two requirements are in any way more in demand under the parliamentary as distinguished from the presidential form of democratic organisation.

In deciding upon a progressive political policy in India we start with the assumption that what with the leaven supplied by the educated classes and what with the experience and traditions of the people themselves there are enough grounds to justify the introduction of a democratic constitution. There can be no greater obstacle in the way of responsible government than in the way of democracy. If the British Parliament feels that India is not fit for democracy let them say so openly. Perhaps it is too late in the day now even for the British parliament to argue such a case and still hold their heads high before the bar of civilised opinion. Nothing is gained by magnifying the alleged difficulties

in the way of responsible government. Traditionally, as well as by the experience secured during the last twenty-five years, India has enough leadership and political capacity to make a success of a democratic and responsible constitution. Such difficulties as exist can only be removed by the practice of responsible government itself. Conventions of a constitution cannot be solidified into statutory provisions imposed by an external power; they must grow

out of the actual functioning of the government. The whole bias of the J. P. C. scheme is towards overloading the constitution with quantitative and qualitative restrictions on the competence of the representatives of the people. Their scheme will not make for democracy, much less will it lead to the establishment of responsible government.

D. G. KARVE.

NEGRO PROBLEM IN AMERICA.

I have just finished reading a book on the American Negro. It is a book called "Brown America" by Edwin R. Embree, a white man. A few tit-bits may not be wholly uninteresting to your readers, in view of the contemplated visit to India of a delegation of Negroes from this country.

In the first place, there are not many, if at all, "pure" Negroes in this country: most, if not all, are of mixed blood: mulattoes, like our Anglo-Indians. Only they have the blood of three races in them: white, Negro and American Indian. "Masters freely, one might say habitually, cohabited with their slave girls. Such relations have been common wherever slavery has existed. In America in addition to the usual cases, there was an economic motive. Children born of slave mothers became slaves. During the early decades of the nineteenth century, with the need for more workers (in the cotton-growing industry, which developed very rapidly since the invention of the cotton-gin) and the increasing difficulty of importation (as the slave trade was forbidden by international action) there was pressure for more and more slave children", so much so that slave-breeding, like cattle-breeding, became a great industry itself!

The first consignment of slaves consisted of twenty. They were landed in 1619, before the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in the *Mayflower*. It appears that Sir John Hawkins, "one of the most desperate man-hunters" set out in a ship named "Jesus" (1) to snatch and win for England a part of the profitable slave trade.

In the first two centuries, till about the beginning of 1800, the treatment of the slave tended to improve, to become more humane as between a kindly master and a willing slave. But when cotton-growing became a great industry and its progress got forced, the personal relations gave way to impersonal and mechanical relations and the slave was merely a dumb-driven machine to be prodded and goaded to maximum work in order to swell the profits of the owners. The Civil War in the sixties of the last century suddenly released the slave; it gave him personal freedom but no property or vocation to live on or by. He was driven to wage-slavery. It was something like cutting the leash which tethers a bullock but muzzling it; it may be free to roam about but it cannot eat. Since his release, the American Negro has been subjected to discrimination and disabilities and driven from pillar to post. Nevertheless, with all the handicaps, he has made progress during the last sixty years which can only be described as amazing. To give an instance, illiteracy, which amounted to 95% in 1865 has been reduced to 20% in 1930. They now run Universities, banks, businesses; they are in the professions, in the realms of art and literature.

It has been said that the American Negro is, from the eugenic point of view, better than the white or the pure Negro. Slave conditions killed out the

weak and the "unfit" In transportation alone from Africa to America in the days of slave traffic, only one survived of every five captured! Then the hardships of slave work weeded out more. Only the strongest survived. The present generation of Negroes was derived from the unions of the most aristocratic, "blue-blooded" white planters and owners and the most intelligent, comely and bright Negro girls: the select from both groups. They now form about a tenth of the whole population of the United States: some 12 millions in about 120 millions. The majority of them are in the Southern States, the more tropical part of the country.

The status of the Negroes in the Northern States differs from that in the Southern States: there is no social, educational or political segregation in the North; there is in the South. In schools and colleges, in hotels and restaurants, in trams and trains, in theatres, in all public places and services, there is no discrimination in the North. But in the South it is complete and uncompromising. There the schools and even colleges are duplicated. (In South Africa it is worse: they are quadrupled: white, Negro, Asiatic and mixed.) Under the duplicate system the Negro gets the worse of it. The discrimination and prejudice against him is so great in the South that it sometimes leads to comic, if they are not really so tragic, situations. For instance, the Negro in the South, whatever his attainments and status, may not be addressed as "Mr." "When Booker Washington (a world-famous Negro leader and the founder of the Tuskegee Institute for Negro education) was introduced on Southern platforms, he was called professor, doctor, president, principal, even on one occasion a major—anything to avoid mister". "In a recent case before a justice of the peace in Delaware, in which the parties were Negroes, one spoke of the other as "Minster". The Justice told him he mustn't do it. When the Negro persisted, the judge fined him for contempt." "Ronald Hayes (a famous Negro singer), when he gave one of his first concerts in a fashionable club in Louisville, Kentucky, had to sing from behind a screen, lest it be thought a Negro was openly received in a gentlemen's club." A white man may not eat with a Negro under any circumstances: there should at least be some *pankti-bhedam*: some distinction in the seating arrangements. A white man may eat the food cooked by the Negro though. In this respect our caste system was in one way more logical; if A will not eat with B, he will not eat the food cooked by B either.

The Southern white has not only a prejudice against the Negro but he still nourishes antipathy towards the Northern white because of the Civil War over the question of the abolition of slavery in the United States. It is surprising to notice the intensity of the bitterness which still lingers: it reminds one of the Hindu-Muslim antipathies in India. The Southern white feels himself grievously wronged by the Northern white over the emancipation of the slaves. The Southern white with the help of cheap

Negro labour successfully competed with the Northern white employer who had to employ dearer white labour. "We must remember that business, rather than brotherly love, chiefly determined the Northern point of view towards slavery." "With the breakdown of the slave system, white workers were released from the very real bondage in which they had been held by slave competition."

The Southern white's antipathy towards both the Negro and the Northern White was greatly aggravated by the fact that for a decade or so after the Civil War, the Negroes ruled the Southern States, while the whites were *disfranchised* as "rebels" and the "Enemy" in the Civil War! They "held the balance of political power in the topsy-turvy South of the post-bellum days," and with the exception of one State, they "controlled, for a time, all the state governments" in the South. The slave of yesterday changing places with the master today!! Some retribution that; some humiliation to the proud Southern white. Soon after the Northern military control was withdrawn, the scale turned; the wheel of fate turned and the Negro was discriminated against with a vengeance. He was *disfranchised*—not directly, for that was against the Constitution, but by all manner of indirect means. "The story is told of a Negro graduate of Harvard who applied for registration (as a voter) in Mississippi. The official asked him to read in turn the Bible, the Constitution, a Latin book, and a Greek text all of which he did with fluency and ease. It happened that the registrar had a laundry slip with some Chinese characters printed on it. Thrusting the bill into the man's face, he demanded; "Now, daggone ye, what does that mean?" The Negro inspected it carefully and answered: "It means that you white folks are not going to let me vote."

The Negroes, when they were imported into this country as slaves, were heathen, non-Christians. The missionaries undertook to convert them to Christianity. With them preaching went with teaching, especially to read the Bible. But then arose a *dharma-sandeham*: a doubt regarding the proprieties. "Embarrassments arose in carrying the gospel of brotherly love and of a common heaven to persons held in chattel slavery?" Could a Christian be a slave? The question presumed that the slave was a man, a human being. But was that so sure a proposition? An ingenious person hit upon the convincing sophistry which was hailed with delight and repeated widely. "Man is made in the image of God", he cried, "and since God, as every one knows, is not a Negro, it follows that the Negro is not a man."

But apparently this happy solution was not conclusive and conscience pricked. Granting that the Negro was a man, could he be held as a slave? "Preachers brought the Scriptures to the defence of their slave-holding congregations. Noah's curse upon the children of Ham resounded from a thousand pulpits...St. Paul's command, "Servant, obey your master," was given added point as the learned divines argued that the Greek word "doulos" used by Paul, and usually translated "servant", properly meant a person held in service for life—a slave."

Now to come back to the original question after this diversion. Could a slave be a Christian? "The Church of England divines, thwarted by the old English doctrine that Christians must be free, were relieved by formal declarations of the Bishop of London and the legislation of the Colonial Assemblies, abrogating the law that a Christian could not be held a slave."

Preaching is one thing and teaching quite another. Education may be dangerous. So it was prohibited. In 1740 South Carolina made it a crime, punishable by a fine of £ 100, "to teach or cause to

be taught any slave or to employ one as a scribe in any manner of writing whatever." Another State prohibited the education not only of the slave but of the free Negro too and fined the teacher and ordered "a public whipping of the free persons of colour or slave instructed." The situation in 1832 was described by Henry Berry in the legislature of Virginia: "We have, as far as possible, closed every avenue by which light may enter their (slaves') minds. If we could extinguish the capacity to see the light, our work would be complete; they would then be on a level with the beasts of the field and we shall be safe. I am not certain that we would not do it, if we could find out the process—and that on the plea of necessity." Shades of Manu; the great law-giver! Manu's more drastic prohibition of religious education to non-Brahmins may be an interpolation and never historically proven. But the American prohibitions of Negro education are apparently historical and not of the remote pre-historic past.

Happily things have changed considerably and for the better. Considering the harsh background and the present disabilities, it is nothing less than marvellous, the progress that the Negroes have made. What will they not achieve, given equal opportunities and special stimulus to make up the lag?

The most significant and gratifying feature of the history of the Negro in this country is the fact that almost from the beginning there were some among the whites who disapproved of the social injustice to the Negroes and at great risk to themselves undertook to uplift them. It was natural for the oppressed to revolt against and repel the injustice and uplift themselves. But for the whites, who suffered not, to voluntarily suffer for the sake of social justice, is something worthy of the highest approbation and appreciation. The Latin, French and Spanish Catholics were from the beginning sympathetically disposed towards the education of the Negro slaves. Among the Anglo-Saxons, the Quakers were pioneers in the matter. As early as 1789 the Quakers of Pennsylvania,—it was not a Southern slave-owning State though,—organised a "Society for the Free Instruction of Orderly Blacks and People of Colour." The missionaries have consistently and continuously striven to give education to the Negroes, though unlike the Catholic Latins of Mexico and South America, they did not go the length of assimilating the Negroes and Whites. Notwithstanding that the emancipation of the slaves had for its chief motive economic causes, there were a number of heroic men and women who, from a sense of social justice and in spite of much social ostracism and personal privation and danger, sought, and still seek, to uplift the Negro. All honour to them. They may have been few and had no decisive influence in public affairs. All the more honour to them.

Was there a corresponding feature in the Hindu system? It is true that in very recent times, during the last few decades, Hindus have undertaken the work of the uplift of the Harijans in India. And today, thanks particularly to Mahatma Gandhi, there is contrition among many members of the higher castes and a desire to give special facilities to the Harijans in order to enable them the quicker to progress and come into line with the upper classes. The tendency in India is to frown upon the repressions, to discourage them, to eliminate them as early as possible and not to approve of them, to confirm them or forge more of them. It is only a question of time for the full consummation to be reached, if only there were a similar tendency in this country and in Africa!

Granting that the present tendency in India is satisfactory, was it so during the past centuries?

Were there political, social and economic disabilities and discriminations in Hindu India? If so, did the oppressed revolt against injustice? And were there members from the other class, however few they may be, who espoused the cause of the oppressed and strove, may be unsuccessfully, to rectify the wrongs and establish social justice? Were most of our ancient reformers religious reformers rather than social reformers?

P. KODANDA RAO.

Our London Letter.

(BY AIR MAIL.)

(From Our Correspondent.)

London, 18th January.

INDIAN LIBERALS AND THE REFORMS.

LAST week there was a disposition in some circles here, and noticeably in reactionary quarters unfriendly to the Government, but not solely there, to regard the speeches delivered and the resolutions passed at the recent Indian Liberal Federation Conference, at Poona, as amounting to an indication that the Indian Liberals were about to make common cause with the Congress Party, and to reject the reforms in the sense of establishing something in the nature of a boycott of them. It had not been noticed, or it had been ignored, in these unfriendly quarters, that the term "rejection" was a very elastic one, ranging in meaning from a very strong dislike of and dissatisfaction with the official constitutional proposals to a complete boycott of them, associated with wrecking tactics.

Whilst in friendly circles here, the Indian nationalist rejection against the Government's proposals as adumbrated in the majority Report of the Joint Select Committee was very well understood, appreciated, and to a large degree sympathised with it has always been held in British progressive circles, first that the reform proposals themselves do contain a perceptible improvement on the present constitutional position and secondly that it would be a cardinal error not to work them for what they are worth, to extract the maximum value from them, and to use them in a constructive manner for the purpose of building up an effective demand for the more complete satisfaction of Indian aspirations, with the minimum of delay. My friend, Mr. Frederick Grubb, in his lucid article in the *Hindu* of the 13th December, though writing solely on his own behalf, brings out this representative British viewpoint clearly and emphatically. It has been underlined by the Labour leaders without ambiguity.

MR. SASTRI EXPLAINS.

Certainly to the relief of many friends here who feared that Indian Liberalism was about to commit itself to a programme of sterile obstruction and sullen hostility, Mr. Sastri, in his important article in the *SERVANT OF INDIA*, has made it clear that the Indian Liberals have not proposed, and do not intend, to do anything of the kind. Indeed, he goes further apparently and expresses doubts, seemingly well-founded, as to whether the Congress Party will do so either. Indeed, with the possibilities of wide and effective political action and the conquest of power under the new constitution in the autonomous Provinces, it would have been strange to any student of human nature to find that very wide-awake and shrewd Party contenting itself with anything less than taking the greatest advantage of whatever opportunities, by Parliamentary action, might be available

to it, for the purpose of pursuing the political education of the country and of acquiring merit for the time when Congress policy had more fully matured, the political life of the country had become more fully co-ordinated, and national unity had become more completely organised, so that the national demand had become armed with a force and power that it does not at present possess.

A FRIENDLY COMMENT.

In an editorial comment this week, the *Spectator*, which is now under the distinguished editorship of that good Liberal, Mr. Wilson Harris, comments as follows on the situation as revealed by Mr. Sastri's illuminating interpretation of the Indian Liberal attitude:—

"The surprise caused by the Indian Liberals' unqualified condemnation of the Joint Select Committee's Report is a little modified by Mr. Sastri's article in the *SERVANT OF INDIA*, in which he makes it clear (as Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has done elsewhere) that the Liberals have no intention of refusing to work the new Constitution. According to Mr. Sastri, if the Liberal meeting at Poona had thought rejection practicable, it would have advised it plainly. All it did say was that it thought the new order little or no improvement on the old. It becomes increasingly clear that the absence of any reference to Dominion Status in the Select Committee's Report is the cause of more discontent in India than anything else, and very intelligibly so, for to drop the term at this time of day, after it has passed into common usage with official endorsement, marks definite retrogression at the very moment when it is being sought to convince Indians that the new Constitution means substantial progress, as, of course, it does. The mistake should still be repaired."

BRITISH LIBERAL INTENTIONS.

In this connection it is important to note a very significant passage in a speech by Sir Archibald Sinclair, one of the leaders of the Samuelite Liberal Opposition, in Parliament, at the National Liberal Club on Wednesday last. He was discussing the attitude of the Liberal Parliamentary Party towards the problems with which Parliament would be faced during the coming session. Remarking that the chief legislative task in the next session would be the India Bill, he said that Liberalism would not join the Socialists and the Diehards in opposition. In this connection, however, it is only right to say that, to the best of my information, the Parliamentary Labour Party has not made up its mind to vote against the third reading of the Bill. Indeed, at the moment of writing the probabilities are strongly against this. It is useful to note the exact language of Sir Archibald Sinclair's further reference to the India question.

"We shall reserve our right to move amendments on such important matters as the clear declaration that India's constitutional evolution is expected to end in full Dominion Status and for a system of direct instead of indirect election, as now proposed, for the Central Legislature; but otherwise we shall give firm support to the Government's policy."

It is clear from this that the Liberal Opposition has definitely rejected Lord Crewe's contemptuous reference to Dominion Status as "a cant phrase of politics." How it ever occurred to an ex-Secretary of State for India that this was a proper phrase to use to describe a political status that had been assured to India upon Royal, Viceregal, Cabinet, and even Parliamentary authority, passes comprehension in the light of an understanding of its psychological consequences in India.

A POLITICAL FORECAST.

Lady Layton, having broadcast last Friday on the position of Indian women under the proposed Constitution, and the views expressed thereon by

the various women's organisations, Mr. Andrews is both to speak at the lunch-hour meeting to be held at Friends' House next Tuesday and also to broadcast on Tuesday night on Indian national feeling on the reforms scheme. By an unintended coincidence, the India Bill, containing upwards of four hundred clauses is expected to be issued the same day, and I believe that copies are already on their way to India by air, the first time in history of the happening of such an event.

Whilst the Diehards are still muttering threats of reprisals against what they regard as the Government's unwarranted intention, which they read into Sir Samuel Hoare's recent broadcast, to suppress free debate on the Bill, it is very doubtful whether they will in fact carry out their threats. Though the Prime Minister, at a much-interrupted meeting in his constituency last night, denied the intention of the Government to force an election this year, nevertheless public opinion is already on guard as to the possibilities of the political situation. Indeed, for the Government it may not be so much a matter of intention as of necessity to do so. Whether, however, there is or is not to be a General Election this year (and if so it could only be about the end of November or early December), neither the Government nor the Tory Diehard forces have any real interest in disrupting the Tory Party in the face of a general election that must come sooner or later. The probability, therefore, is that the Government will give reasonable facilities for a full debate upon the main principles, and that the various elements of the Opposition may be generally satisfied therewith and will not seek to delay the passage of the Bill. Indeed there are many good reasons why they should not do so. The country certainly would not tolerate dilatory tactics not so much because it is eager for the early accomplishment of Indian constitutional reform, as because there are so many domestic problems of urgent and immediate importance that require the early application of Parliamentary machinery for at least their partial solution. Whilst it is true that unemployment has decreased in considerable areas, there are nevertheless many industries and many areas that are to-day derelict. The country is insistently demanding that prompt steps should be taken to deal with these grave economic and social problems.

THE *Guardian* AND INDIA.

As one might have expected from past history, the *Manchester Guardian* which has recently devoted considerable space to a correspondence setting forth the various pledges and promises made relating to Dominion Status and the consequences in India of the omission of any reference thereto in the Report, has now extended its hospitality to a more detailed consideration of the Indian question, both editorially and by means of special articles. This week it has had two leading articles on India, one analysing the position of the Princes in relation to the Federation,

and the other appreciating Mahatma Gandhi's activities on behalf of village-reconstruction, which appear for some perverse reason to have aroused the suspicions of the powers that be in India, who are evidently inclined to regard him as a sort of King Charles's head. In addition, the *Guardian* has induced half a dozen prominent and representative Indians of different schools of political thought to give their viewpoint on the proposed reforms, and the first two of these, appearing in yesterday's and to-day's issues, are by Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha and Mr. N. M. Joshi. Besides these there is to-day a special article by Mrs. Corbett Ashby, in which she gives her experience in India after her visit to the Indian Women's Conference at Karachi.

DR. MAUDE ROYDEN INTERVIEWED.

Upon her return here this week from India, Dr. Maude Royden has got very quickly on to the job of telling the British Press some of the things that she observed and felt during her recent visit. She spoke with enthusiasm of the spirit of welcome and friendliness with which she and Mrs. Corbett Ashby were received. The liveliest issue throughout the proceedings of the Conference was, she emphasised, the political issue. Both at Karachi and later at a conference of women's organisations at Delhi, there was general agreement in condemning the Select Committee's Report. The general opinion in India on the Report seemed to be one of profound dissatisfaction. When questioned if the Constitution would be worked, she said that what troubled her was that it would be worked but by the wrong people. Asked if Mrs. Corbett Ashby and she had advised acceptance, she replied that they had been careful not to advise, for it was India's business and not theirs. She had been much impressed by Dr. Stanley Jones's comments upon the matter and the manner of the Report that "it was so typically British." Questioned as to whether Dominion Status would satisfy, Dr. Royden said that she had the feeling that the situation had already got beyond this: but she added that it must be borne in mind that her impressions had been formed as a result of the fact that while in India she had moved mainly in the more advanced political circles. Other points that she stressed included the hold that Mahatma Gandhi's new village work had got upon the educated Indian women who were also very keen upon its success. She said that it had reduced her to despair to hear this work described in official circles as an "astute move" on the part of the Mahatma. She had asked him about this and he had answered that in no sense was it a political move. Another point upon which she had felt very strongly was the fact that when people were proud to go to jail, or to have gone to jail, we were reaching a very delicate situation. Finally, it was easy to see that Indian opinion had been enraged because all the concessions made in the Report upon the White Paper proposals had been in favour of Great Britain and against India.

GOKHALE'S LIFE AND WORK.

The Right Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri delivered a course of three extension lectures at Bangalore last week under the auspices of the Mysore University, dealing with the life and work of Gopal Krishna Gokhale. The following report of the lectures is extracted from the Hindu. Mr. Sastri said:

I

MR. GOKHALE died 20 years ago. He was in many ways the accredited and true representative of the Indian side on most problems of his day. But things had changed very much since India lost Gokhale. New questions had come up

and old ones had either diminished in importance or passed away from the political field. Emphasis and importance had shifted so much, that to one who lived in the past and still lived in the present, like himself, the change was something remarkable. It was therefore somewhat of a rash undertaking on the part of the speaker to try and make Gokhale live

again, so that young men might understand with sympathy his life and work.

EARLY INFLUENCES.

Born in 1866 in the Ratnagiri District of the Bombay Presidency, of poor parents, Gokhale owed much of his education to his elder brother. After he graduated, he knocked at the doors of the Engineering College. In those days, there was the prize appointment. Gokhale found in the College men like the late Karpur Srinivasa Rao. Not hopeful of getting the prize appointment, Gokhale turned his back upon the College using some remarkable words. "There are some devils here, with whom I cannot compete." Then he entered the Law College, but here also he did not stay long. Gokhale then joined the noble band of educationists who had formed themselves into the Deccan Education Society. Some of the finest products of the Bombay Presidency hailing from the Deccan enrolled themselves as life-members of the Society. To that institution, Gokhale was attracted by two eminent men of the times, Mr. Tilak of great fame and Prof. Agarkar. Until the great Mr. Ranade came into his life, Prof. Agarkar might be said to have been the great mentor of Gokhale. Mr. Ranade, whose name deserved to be remembered on many accounts, was one of the most remarkable men of his times. His social position as a judge of the Bombay High Court was only a very small part of the numerous activities to which he gave himself. In the social, in the industrial and in the political field, Mr. Ranade was an unrivalled figure and he had, what few leaders possessed, the rare gift of attracting young and promising men and give to them that turn to their minds and hearts which rendered them great instruments of public welfare. Mr. Gokhale was attracted in that manner by the great Mr. Ranade. He sat at the feet of his master and learnt what stood him in good stead in his eventful life, which he turned into such marvellous account by his own genius.

ENTRY INTO POLITICS.

After referring to Gokhale's tutorial work in the Fergusson College, Mr. Sastri said that under the influence of Mr. Ranade, Gokhale took to political work. He began very early the editorship of the quarterly journal of the great political body, the Sarvajanika Sabha. Gokhale also contributed to the English columns of a social service paper. In these capacities, he won such distinction that he was very early given charge of the Provincial Conference. He next became the Secretary of even the great National Congress. Disaster overtook the Sarvajanika Sabha in 1886. This Sabha of which Ranade was the life and soul became a sort of general body, to which all the active, energetic and vivacious intellects of the times were drawn. Some of these, however, were not exactly sources of amity and peaceful work. One or two of them gave trouble to both Ranade and Gokhale. Ranade was not the man easily to yield. He struggled very hard, but it became impossible. He founded the Deccan Sabha. Gokhale and Ranade suffered a great deal of insult. So much was done in violation of the ordinary rules of decency to oust Ranade from power.

Young Gokhale took this so much to heart and this afforded him occasion for exhibiting in a somewhat striking manner one of the qualities—a disposition to take things somewhat too seriously, almost tragically, one might say. Gokhale had given of his spare energy to the work of the Sarvajanika Sabha and when he found that he was abused and even ousted, he poured out his grief in a letter to a great friend of his, Mr. G. V. Joshi. Mr. Joshi played a great part in moulding Gokhale's life. How much Gokhale respected and venerated him and loved him, would appear from one or two of his letters to Mr.

Joshi. Gokhale wrote to Mr. Joshi: "I am absolutely sick of the public life of Poona. I am anxious to be relieved of all public responsibilities and lead hereafter an entirely retired life." To speak of retirement at the age of 30 would be to fling at facts. Gokhale never retired. He retired only when he was called away.

WORK WITH THE WELBY COMMISSION.

Mr. Sastri, proceeding, referred to the great part played by Mr. Gokhale in the Welby Commission. In 1896 was appointed the great Royal Commission presided over by Lord Welby. Its main purpose was to enquire into the conditions of Indian Finance. Special emphasis was laid in India upon the way in which charges fell on Indian Revenues. It had long been the contention of India, and the question had not been settled even to the present day to the satisfaction of Indians, that the charges from the War Office and other departments on the Indian finances were not proper, but that they should really fall on the British Exchequer. Some great friends of India were members of the Commission—Sir William Wedderburn and Dadabhai Naoroji. This Commission was hailed in India, like all other Commissions, with the liveliest satisfaction, and they expected great things to happen. Like most commissions, however, it ended with a report. (Laughter). Besides G. Subramania Aiyar, Surendrenath Banerjee and Wacha, the young Gokhale gave evidence before the Commission. Before the Commission, Gokhale cut the most attractive figure and of the evidence that appeared from India, his was the best evidence. Gokhale was the recipient of warm praise from many people. Sir William Wedderburn observed that Gokhale had rendered signal services to the country and opined that his evidence was a most masterly exposition of the views of an educated Indian reformer. Gokhale, however, did not feel elated. He thought that what praise he received was due to his master. Gokhale wrote in one of his letters to Mr. Joshi: "All these high praises belong really to you and to Rao Saheb (Ranade) and not to me. And if it has been bestowed on me, I lay it at your feet and Rao Saheb's as our ancient honoured Guru Dakshina. My work has been mostly that of a conduit pipe or an Edison's gramophone. Pray, accept this expression of deepest gratitude for the splendid assistance which you so cordially and so cheerfully gave me and which has enabled me to discharge satisfactorily a great National duty." This letter showed Gokhale's love and veneration for his masters and the way in which he always and whole-heartedly acknowledged his indebtedness to them. One marked feature of his character was this feeling of veneration for his teacher. Mr. Wacha, in a letter to Mr. Joshi, observed that Mr. Gokhale had most splendidly come out of the ordeal.

POONA PLAGUE INCIDENT.

"Life is not all of one tenor," continued Mr. Sastri. "At the moment of the greatest triumph, it sometimes pleases Providence—doubtless for our own good—to send us also humiliation and sorrow. Mr. Gokhale was not long allowed to enjoy this feeling of satisfaction." While he was in England, Gokhale received news from home about the ravages of plague in Poona and the neighbourhood. Gokhale was informed of the story prevalent at that time in Poona that some soldiers who were appointed by the Government in connection with plague relief work, had violated the modesty of two women and that one of them died a little later. Gokhale's sorrow knew no bounds. He was introduced by Sir William Wedderburn and spoke to a small committee of the official members of the House and after that, he gave an interview to the representative of *The Manchester Guardian*. Later on, he wrote in that paper about

this incident. This produced a tremendous sensation in England and in India. Enquiries were set on foot and the Bombay Government cabled back to say that the whole thing was a malevolent invention. The whole anger of the community was turned on Gokhale, who had made public what was stigmatised as a falsehood. Gokhale went through Hell. He and Sir William Wedderburn and other friends were the recipients of foul abuse. In the House itself, angry protests were raised. "It pains me," Mr. Sastri said, "to think that as it always happens in such situations, the worst abuse did not come from the European side, but from our own side. There was then in the House, in addition to Dadabhai Naoroji, another Indian member, also of the same Parsi community—Sir Muncherji Bhowmagari. Bhowmagari said, "Gokhale has defiled the threshold of this glorious institution."

When Mr. Gokhale returned to India, he set on foot some enquiry. Nothing was forthcoming. Like a gentleman, he owned entire responsibility and he would not hand over the names of his correspondents. He was advised by friends that the only honourable course open to him was to tender an unqualified apology. It was a bitter pill to swallow. But Gokhale rose equal to the occasion and he apologised to the Governor, Lord Sandhurst, the Plague Commission and to the soldiers concerned. That apology illustrated in a striking manner some of the qualities of Gokhale. He felt that the apology must be full, other wise it would not give satisfaction. The apology must also be sincere and he felt that it must be such as was really calculated to wipe off the matter. In his apology, Gokhale said: "In doing what I did, I felt I was discharging a most painful duty. My deepest regret is caused by the thought that I became the instrument of adding anxiety to His Excellency the Governor. I feel most keenly that I have been much less than just to their countrymen, the soldiers, etc. I once more tender my unqualified apology." The Governor did not reciprocate this sentiment. Lord Sandhurst would not even permit his lips to pronounce the name of Gokhale.

THE AMRAOTI CONGRESS.

After some time, Gokhale gathered his current once more. He attended the Indian National Congress at Amraoti. Unfortunately, the delegates who had come there, especially those from Bengal, did not treat him properly. The speaker grieved to say that Gokhale was treated very shabbily. The delegates would not allow Gokhale to figure as a speaker on the platform. This incident caused him the greatest possible anger. At the end of the session, he was compelled to issue a statement to the press. Gokhale had been blamed for it, because he allowed himself to be dragged into the press once more. Many of his friends regretted that he wrote at all. The concluding part of the letter contained sentiments, which were worth recalling and pondering over. "I have no doubt about the ultimate verdict upon my conduct. The day will come when it would be generally recognised by my countrymen that this most unfortunate incident deserves to be thought of, as far as I am concerned, in sorrow and not in anger and, in most trying circumstances, I have taken the only course which was consistent with duty and honour. Trials and troubles accepted in the right spirit only chasten and elevate. All that is necessary for me to do is to go on doing my duty, whether it is sunshine or shade. Public duties, undertaken at the bidding of no man, cannot be laid down at the desire of any one. Whether one works on a higher plane or a lower plane is a matter of comparatively small importance. One is always glad of the approbation by the public of what one has done. It is an object of legitimate satisfaction; it is also more—it

is a source of strength and encouragement and moreover in this country, it constitutes the only reward in public life. But it is not the highest purpose of existence, nor nearly the highest. If it comes—in the words of Herbert Spencer—'well; if not, well also, though not so well.'"

A Bengalee gentleman wrote a nice letter to Mr. Gokhale. Mr. Gokhale wrote back to him saying, "I have long since learnt to make my conscience and not popular applause the spring of my action. The best part in life is not in what we enjoy, but in what we endure."

ADVICE TO DISCIPLES.

Professor Gokhale was somewhat of an agnostic, proceeded Mr. Sastri. He did not keep his belief to himself. Once, it would appear, when there was a condolence public meeting held in memory of Charles Bradlaw, he delivered the principal speech and had the temerity to proclaim himself as an agnostic. It was commented upon at that time. But, under the influence of Ranade, Gokhale seemed to have changed his views. Nobody precisely knew the views of Gokhale upon religion. Once, Gokhale told the speaker that he (Gokhale) did not think it proper of any person to speak about the relations of the individual to God and Nature. So far as the speaker was aware, Gokhale felt during the whole of his life that he lived and functioned under the guidance of some unseen power which he felt all about him.

In conclusion, Mr. Sastri referred to Mr. Gokhale's advice to his disciples not to keep a diary. Part of the activities of Government in those days was to institute enquiries of all sorts into the conduct of young men, especially of those who were members of public bodies. In many prosecutions, diaries came in handy. Strangely enough, the speaker had in his possession a manuscript of Gokhale wherein he had noted down some of his ambitions. Gokhale had written: "By the grace of Sree Guru Datta, I will, humbly but firmly, endeavour to achieve or acquire the following:—first, I will practise Yoga; secondly I will acquire good knowledge of (a) history, ancient and modern, (b) philosophy, (c) astronomy, etc., (3) I will try to become a member of (a) the Bombay Legislative Council, (b) the British Parliament and (c) the Supreme Legislative Council. In all these assemblies, I will try to do good to my country by all means in my power". Lastly, Gokhale wanted to become a preacher of the highest philosophical religion and to teach this religion to the whole world. This letter, the speaker observed, showed the way in which Gokhale wanted to cleanse and purify his soul to the highest destiny.

"It will be best to leave him in this prayerful mood," observed Mr. Sastri at the conclusion of his first lecture.

II.

GOKHALE'S LEGISLATIVE WORK.

In the course of his second lecture Mr. Sastri referred to the part played by Gokhale in the legislatures. Towards the end of 1899, a vacancy occurred amongst the elected members of the Bombay Council. Young Gokhale stood as a candidate and found that he had an easy victory. During the time that he held office in the Council, there were some measures of importance upon which he expressed his views fully. The subject upon which he made the most famous speech of the session was the Land Alienation Bill, which provoked very bitter controversy. That gave occasion to the famous scene in which Sir Phiroze-shah Mehta and three other non-official colleagues after being defeated on a certain amendment to which

they attached the greatest importance, walked out of the Council, anticipating by a long period the tactics of the modern day (Laughter). While Gokhale seemed to have taken exception to this procedure in the first instance, he also followed when he had delivered his speech and found that it found no more favour than the speeches of others.

In 1901 the great Ranade passed away, amidst the lamentations of the whole of India. All the rest of his life, Gokhale used to say that the world after the death of Ranade did not seem to him the same it was during his life-time. Gokhale delivered a few speeches on the life and work of Ranade. For many years, it was expected that he would write his life and publish it for the benefit of the country. A letter which Gokhale wrote to a friend, a few months after the death of Ranade, was well worth quoting. "I have set my heart," he wrote, "on publishing a study of Mr. Ranade, with selections from his writings and speeches. The work will no doubt take time, but you may rest assured that if love, gratitude and reverence can accomplish such a task, it will be accomplished." It was a matter of universal regret that this promise was not destined to be fulfilled. There was no good life of Ranade at the present day. None of Gokhale's pupils, none of those who learnt of public affairs at his feet, continued the lecturer, had yet written his life. He (the speaker) had been blamed in some quarters for not writing the life of Gokhale. He would plead guilty. He (Mr. Sastri) therefore owed special thanks to the University of Mysore for allowing him to test, in a sort of preliminary way, his fitness for the great task. "The lectures that I now deliver here may, God willing", continued Mr. Sastri, "form the foundation, if not for a full-blown biography, at least for another course of extended extension lectures, where I may treat adequately the life and career of Gokhale."

Mr. Sastri then referred to Mr. Gokhale's work in the Imperial Legislative Council. His work here was of superlative value. His annual budget speeches drew so much attention by their high quality, that they were listened to with the greatest respect and young men could still study them with great profit, for they afforded such instruction, as a text-book would, upon the great subject of Indian Finance as well as upon topics of general administration. But budget speeches were not Gokhale's only activity. In every branch of work of the Imperial Legislative Council, he took his share and it was the lion's share.

FOUNDING OF SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY.

In 1905, Gokhale founded the Servants of India Society, continued Mr. Sastri. The primary object of this Society was to train a number of young men for what might be called 'public work' in social and political matters.

The chief basis of this work was the five years' preparation, for Mr. Gokhale fully believed that no one was competent to be a servant of India, unless he had prepared himself by hard discipline and study for the task. He insisted besides that young men who sought admission should be men not merely of character, but of more than average ability, tested in the ordinary way by Indian Universities. Gokhale subjected the members to seven vows of which the speaker would mention only two. One was that they should regard, as their own brother, every Indian, disregarding every consideration of religion, sect or creed. They were to work for the Indian nation as a whole and not merely for any sect or community thereof. The other vow that the speaker proposed to mention was more interesting. That was that they must not engage in any personal quarrel. (Laughter.) "Of course, public quarrels could not be avoided," he con-

tinued. "They will find you, even if you do not find them." (Laughter.) This Servants of India Society had branches in many parts of India and the speaker hoped that people of mature years were aware of the work performed by the members in several fields of national activity.

COMBATING EXTREMISM.

In 1907, immediately after the famous Dadabhai Naoroji Congress in Calcutta, Gokhale undertook a tour in Northern India, for the express purpose of combating the spread of certain doctrines which he abhorred. For some years past, the counsels of the Indian National Congress had been torn and national work had been impeded by the growth of parties at moral variance with each other. Doctrines subversive of order, unfavourable to the British connection, threatening the very basis of constituted society began to spread. Gokhale, aware of the immense danger to national life, if these doctrines were allowed to reach their culmination, determined to arrest these downward processes. This tour was believed to have been eminently successful. Several of the speeches that he delivered were listened to with the greatest interest and exercised a calming influence on the young mind. These speeches, repeated in several places, in the course of two or three months, were then regarded by the lovers of continuity in national life as amongst the very best service that Gokhale had rendered so far to the country. But they brought him also a good deal of bitter attack from the upholders of those doctrines, which he combated. A great paper in Bengal, the *Bande Mataram*, called in question his patriotism, his loyalty to the nation and his title to be regarded as a servant of the nation. The rancour of criticism went so far that there was a leading article entitled "Exit Vibhishana," which startled the whole of India, meaning thereby that Gokhale was a traitor to the cause of the country. It was a tragedy that Gokhale should receive that opprobrious appellation. In those days, political controversy went down and down in standard, until even the career of one, who had proved again and again of the best quality, was not saved from envenomed attacks.

THE MINTO-MORLEY REFORMS.

Mr. Sastri, proceeding, referred to the great and remarkable part played by Gokhale in the inauguration of the Minto-Morley Reforms. It was quite difficult even at the present day to settle between Morley, and Minto, as to which of them made a better contribution to this work or deserved greater credit. Morley being the able and astute literary man that he was, anticipated the verdict of posterity by publishing his recollections long before the Viceroy could ever have thought of it. As he published only the letters that he had written, the impression had been firmly established that his part in the work of the founding of the new constitution was the greater. Sometimes afterwards, it occurred to people interested in the great name of Minto, that something should be done, if possible, to redress the balance. This task was entrusted to John Buchan. He was not a thorough partisan and his book did not possess the same literary value as John Morley's. No doubt he put down certain matters correctly, showing that Lord Minto also from his side really took a significant part in the making of the new constitution. But still the honours lay with the senior member of the fraternity. Quite recently, a further attempt had been made from the side of Lord Minto. The Countess of Minto had just published a book containing extracts from the diaries and writings of Lord Minto, supplemented by passages from her own diary. He could not say that the book was interesting reading. But the book contained certain passages, which

made it clear, in what light Lord Minto regarded Gokhale. He was constrained to say that loose extracts were not quite favourable to the life and reputation of Gokhale. The speaker was by no means disconcerted by this fact. He could prove that the Countess of Minto perhaps suffered from the prejudices which had been implanted in her mind by some of those obscure characters who gather round Simla and Delhi. (Laughter). "It is extraordinary," Mr. Sastri said, "how our public men are completely misjudged by these pundits. They have their own standards and sources of information, and although they meet our public men, it takes a lot of their own personal testimony to counteract the information of these conveyers of truth, who belong to the C. I. D. (Laughter). They trust these people better than they trust themselves." (Laughter).

In the book of the Countess of Minto, continued the speaker, there was a remarkable passage. In 1906 just after the accession of Minto to office, Their Royal Highnesses the Prince of Wales and the Princess were about to visit India. "It seems—this is a fact discovered by the Countess—that there was an attempt to boycott the visit on behalf of the public and somehow or other, the chief agitator who was responsible for this threat was Gokhale." Nobody, in the world, said Mr. Sastri, would believe this canard. But it was solemnly put down in the book of the Countess! It was well-known that in the Congress that was held in 1905, under his own presidency, Gokhale was responsible for passing the resolution welcoming the visit of the Royal couple. For anybody to say that Gokhale suddenly turned into an agitator was, to say the least, a perversion of truth. The Diary recalled the fact that Gokhale was understood to have told the Private Secretary to the Viceroy, undertaking to stop the boycott. (Laughter). Gokhale never pretended to have such power. The speaker mentioned this as an example to show in what way some of the most eminent men were regarded in the private minds of the high potentates. Really, Mr. K. Natarajan, Editor, of the *Indian Social Reformer* was perhaps justified in administering a serious warning to the leaders of the people in India, that they should not take at their face value the praises that they received at the hands of the powers that be, for all the time they might be holding opinions somewhat derogatory of the views they publicly avowed.

Continuing Mr. Sastri said that from the letters that were available, it was clear that John Morley maintained throughout an attitude of friendliness and even high personal regard for Gokhale, which never for a moment wavered. Gokhale's part in the fashioning of the reforms was regarded as very great and meritorious. When Morley first enunciated the reforms in the House of Lords, one noble Lord after another stood up and criticised the reforms as almost revolutionary in character and traced their origin to the malign influence of an astute Hindu, who went over from the Deccan. John Morley defended himself with vigour. He said that it was his duty to consult the chief representatives of those whose fortunes would be affected for all times by these reforms. Mr. Gokhale was mentioned by name and Morley acknowledged the advice and assistance that Gokhale gave him. In this connection, Gokhale himself had said that though Morley had taken some hint from his paper, his suggestions were not all accepted.

PROSECUTION OF TILAK.

Mr. Sastri then passed on to the period of the deportation of Lajpat Rai and the arrest and imprisonment of Tilak. In 1908 the Government of Bombay found it necessary to prosecute Tilak and had him sentenced to six years' imprisonment. The speaker was present during the trial in Bombay. He was

very much struck with the great ability with which Tilak defended himself and the heroic stand he took. When the sentence was pronounced, the speaker felt that an undeserved fate had overtaken Tilak. The speaker and his colleague, Mr. Dravid, were anxious that the full facts should be made known to Gokhale and they wanted Gokhale to interview Morley to see that in jail, Tilak received as lenient a punishment as was possible. I still recall with the greatest possible pain and humiliation, the slanderous statement made in a certain section of the public press and widely believed among the partisans of Tilak. They ascribed to Gokhale a most infamous part in bringing about the prosecution. Week after week articles appeared in the Press asserting that Gokhale was primarily responsible for the advice tendered to the Government against the liberty of Tilak and his followers. I will read to you extracts from a letter—and you will be the first to hear it,—which will show clearly how Gokhale felt over the affair. In a letter to Mr. Patwardhan, he wrote: "As regards Tilak, I have not the least doubt in my mind that after a little time, he will be treated with every consideration and that next year, after the proposed reforms have been inaugurated, if things are quiet in India, he will be brought back and set free. You may rest assured that I will do everything that I possibly can in the matter, though I don't like to say so, for it might be misunderstood by our extremist friends. I will follow up the work, with personal appeals to Sir George Clarke, for everything will naturally depend upon the state of things in the country and in the Bombay Presidency in particular, during the next few months."

Another letter written by Sir George Clarke to Mr. Gokhale was next read to the audience by Mr. Sastri. In this letter, Sir George Clarke stated: "I have no time to write to you about recent events, as to which you might not agree with me. I will only ask you to believe that I detest arresting anyone, but that the action taken was absolutely necessary. Had it been postponed, serious trouble was inevitable and your objects and mine would have been rendered more than ever difficult of attainment."

THE PRESS ACT.

In conclusion, Mr. Sastri referred to the passing of the Indian Press Act and the part played by Gokhale to modify the original Bill. The attitude of Gokhale on this matter had brought a great deal of adverse criticism and the speaker took it as an illustration of the difficulties which confronted a public man who desired to play a prominent part in the country's affairs. The Press Act in its original shape was an exceedingly severe one. Mr. Sinha, the Indian member of the Cabinet, refused to support this measure, as it stood. The other members refused to permit any alteration being made. The Government of India, like Provincial Governments, were somehow or other, most unwilling that they should seem to act in deference to a public demand. It went against their grain to yield to reasonable demands. (Hear, hear.) At the instance of Sinha, Sir Lawrence Jenkins and Gokhale, three changes, very important indeed, were made in the Bill. One of them was that for the first time the interposing of courts of law was provided for in the Bill.

III.

LORD HARDINGE ON S. AFRICAN SITUATION.

In the course of his third lecture, Mr. Sastri narrated the chief events in the last years of Gokhale's life, years crowded with important events. The first topic to which the speaker asked the attention of his hearers was that of South Africa. Indians in South Africa still suffered from disabilities and hardships

similar to those with which Mr. Gokhale had to deal, though they were very severe at the time. Gokhale had to pay a visit to South Africa himself, towards the close of 1912, but as the promise that the Government made to him was not kept at the proper time, trouble broke out again, in a much more drastic shape. So harrowing were the tales that reached India of the suffering of Indians in South Africa that they formed the subject of bitter complaint in this country. Lord Hardinge, the then Viceroy, happened to tour in the Madras Presidency. The Madras Mahajana Sabha presented him an address and the speaker had the honour of reading it. Lord Hardinge, in his reply, made certain observations upon the subject of South Africa, which had since become historic. The observations of Lord Hardinge were in themselves quite just and proper. But, the Viceroy who was so rash as to make them was taken to task. But he was brave, just and chivalrous. He did not mind the rebuke. "Recently our compatriots in South Africa", said Lord Hardinge, "have taken matters into their own hands by organising what is called Passive Resistance to laws which they consider unjust, an opinion which we, who watch their struggles from afar, cannot but share. In this, they have the sympathy of India, deep and burning, and not only of India, but of those, who like myself, though not Indians, have feelings of sympathy for the people of this country. But the most recent developments have taken a most severe turn and we have seen the widest publicity given to the allegations that this movement of Passive Resistance has been dealt with by measures which would not for a moment be tolerated in any country that calls itself civilised. If the South African Government desire to justify themselves in the eyes of India and the world, only one course is open to them and that is of appointing a strict and impartial committee, upon which Indian interests shall be fully represented, to conduct a thorough and searching enquiry into the truth of these allegations. I have not hesitated to press this view upon the Secretary of State."

PASSIVE RESISTANCE CAMPAIGN.

When this promise was cabled to South Africa, continued Mr. Sastri, one could easily imagine how this was received by Indians there. Mahatma Gandhi himself had no words in which to acknowledge the sympathy and helpfulness of the Viceregal utterance. The speaker even now remembered how grateful Gandhiji felt for the help that his followers received by this utterance, in a moment of supreme crisis. After a little while, things had gone still further and the situation became very critical. The South African Government appointed a Commission. Nobody of Indian extraction was appointed to this Commission. But it included two notorious enemies of the Indian community. Gandhi drew the attention of the South African Government to the words of Lord Hardinge. The modest request that at least friends of the Indian community should be appointed was not given heed to. In India itself, a request of that kind would some time ago have met with a refusal. It was only in recent years that Indians had begun both to claim and to obtain representations on important commissions of that kind. In South Africa, the Government was stubborn and returned a negative answer. Gandhi started another kind of Passive Resistance, this time including women and children. Mr. Gandhi went still further—he was no Mahatma then. He administered an oath to his followers. He bound them by a solemn oath not to recognise this Commission. Lord Hardinge grew impatient at this step, which he called strange conduct. Cables passed of the utmost secrecy between Gokhale and Gandhi on the one hand and Gokhale and Lord Hardinge on

the other. During this period, Gokhale suffered from a complication arising out of his fell malady—diabetes. The speaker well remembered how Gokhale struggled very hard during this period. He had to plead with Gandhi who was unyielding and with Lord Hardinge, who was impatient. The scene was one of the utmost pain. Gokhale used to say: "what a trial for me. At one stage, he burst out saying 'what business has Gandhi to make a pledge of this'." But there was no use in arguing with the Mahatma over the cable. Even if he were present, one could not shake him. (Laughter). The Mahatma cabled back saying that he could bind his men only by a pledge and that any help was welcome. But if no help came, there was God above.

SURAT CONGRESS AND AFTER.

Proceeding, Mr. Sastri referred to Gokhale's activities after the Surat Congress split. The convention was made at Allahabad to the effect that at the future sessions of the Congress, only those could attend as delegates who had signed what was then called the creed of the Congress. This was a serious departure from the previous rule. Many people felt that this departure was a radical one and they would rather remain outside the Congress. The Congress became weaker and weaker and all over the country, the feeling grew that something should be done to bring back into the fold of the Congress those who had stayed out of it. Gokhale felt that something should be done. For three years he laboured hard. A compromise was arrived at, but this fell through, owing to certain misunderstandings. Gokhale felt that Tilak and his followers were not fully prepared for a reconciliation and so he withdrew his consent to the compromise and at the Madras session in 1914, his withdrawal was made known to the Subjects Committee. This led to a bitter and acrimonious controversy. Gokhale had not the strength to defend himself in a public meeting. He wrote to the Press. In these matters, the speaker would observe that the good rule, derived by experience of many many centuries, was, "least said, soonest mended." He, who put in his defence, thinking thereby to silence his opponent, merely gave the opponent so many separate charges for each sentence that he wrote, so that the controversy went on widening and perhaps bringing spectators and others into the street. (Laughter).

GOKHALE'S POLITICAL WILL AND TESTAMENT.

Mr. Sastri next referred to the fulfilment of a request made by Lord Willingdon, who was then Governor of Bombay, by Gokhale. When the air was filled with ideas of a most revolutionary character, it was felt that India, which had borne an honourable part in the Great War, should be rewarded by something in the nature of an advance in the constitution. Lord Willingdon, true Liberal that he is, felt that the time had come for the Government of their own accord to do something in that direction. He sent for Gokhale and asked him to put down on paper, what Gokhale considered would be the minimum which would satisfy India, coming from the Government of its own accord. This matter was to be kept very confidential. At this point, Gokhale showed one of his most marked characteristics. He said this was a tremendous responsibility. He felt that in this great task, he should have the backing of the whole of India and he therefore took Lord Willingdon's consent to consult both Sir Pherozeshah Mehta and His Highness the Aga Khan, names which would have occurred to anyone acquainted with Indian affairs, as two of the greatest consequence in Indian politics. Gokhale was then in his death bed. He summoned his courage and made a penoil draft of the demands that he thought

should be fulfilled if India was to be kept contented during the progress of the war and feel that she had been properly treated. This document had been called Gokhale's political will and testament. It could not be really called by that name, if they were to understand by it, a document which contained what in Gokhale's view were the advances in political reform which the people of India were entitled to and which they would accept, if an agitation had to be started in that respect. This draft only represented what Gokhale thought, if granted at once and with grace by England, voluntarily, without any word being said in India, would keep India contented and happy.

NO PROGRESS WITHOUT PEACE AND ORDER.

"Gokhale felt," continued Mr. Sastri, "that the moral authority of Government was of superlative importance. That indeed was the corner-stone of the Indian constitution. Like Burke of whom he was a most devoted student, Gokhale in his later years began to think that peace and order were the essential pre-requisites of any progress here. He did not share the feeling of many other politicians of repute, both in his day and to-day, who believe that peace and order have been the ruin of this country. They cry out in their anguish: 'give us a little turmoil. Let us have blood, if necessary, so that we may know how national troubles and causes grow in intensity and how in the end, the wisdom—desperate it may be—available to the people themselves out of their own knowledge comes to their aid and national troubles are solved by national effort and not by the superimposed authority or political wisdom of another people, who stand so aloof from things Indian.' I do not say there is nothing in this point of view. There may be something. God knows. I have been trained in Gokhale's school. I believe myself that this teaching was not his own merely. He followed the teachings of his master Ranade, Joshi, Mehta and others. They were all wise and great men, who knew affairs, could really guide the nation along safe and helpful lines. To peace and order, Gokhale attached the very greatest importance."

How sincere and going to the very root must have been his conviction, observed Mr. Sastri, about peace and order, will be clear from a confidential communication from him to us, which stated how the members of the Servants of India Society had to conduct themselves, so as to be the proper vehicles for this peace and order. He asked them all to realise that whatever the shortcomings of the bureaucracy and however intolerable at times the insolence of individual Englishmen, they alone stood in the country for order and without continued order, no real progress was possible for our people. This would give them an idea of the way in which the followers of Gokhale had to control their feelings and restrain their modes of expressions: how the movements in which they could join and take part were strictly circumscribed. By their original understanding, and he would say, statutes, the members of the Society were precluded from taking part in movements, which were subversive of law and order.

THE BRITISH CONNECTION.

"Some of you, inclined to be critical," proceeded the speaker, "may say that Gokhale wrote that before the Rowlatt Act, the Amritsar tragedy, the Khilafat movement, etc., and would ask me what Gokhale would say if he were alive now. I have read the passages from the communication in order to indicate how, in his judgment, the British connection with India was necessary and could not be dispensed

with for so long as we may yet look forward to. It is not fashionable now-a-days to say such things. It may offend modern political leaders. Ranade, Mehta and Gokhale always used to say that in the connection between England and India politically, they saw the hand not of a punishing God, but of wise and beneficent Providence. This connection was, therefore, to them, more or less of a sacred character and they would not have it, in times even of greatest provocation, spoken of lightly. Curiously enough, many things have happened since then which make even the enunciation of such a doctrine in a public meeting a matter of some risk to the daring speaker. But I must ask your indulgence, for I am really living in the past for the moment and I ask you also to share the life for just a moment."

"The idea that the future of this country", he continued, "must be evolved and sought outside the British connection was to Gokhale a matter of most extreme un wisdom. It was that new doctrine which he went about in Northern India especially to combat and if possible to weaken. Unfortunately, the British Government, like all Governments, cannot remain for a long time without making some desperate mistake or another. As often as that happens, so often are the foundations of the British Raj shaken. The strength of the belief in this Providential adjustment which Ranade and Gokhale had before them is no longer so strong. But one cannot help it. Time moves on. Fate is not quiescent. New times bring new events. New ways are set up and the vigorous young people are determined, if things are not shaped according to their wishes, to try conclusions of one sort or another. But the question arises, what would Gokhale have done, if he were alive to-day? I am sure of one thing. Nothing would prevent him, not even the threat of lynching, from talking still of the necessity of the British connection. He would fight for Swaraj. To him, Swaraj meant the attainment by India of a status politically equal to that which the self-governing Dominions enjoy. No more. Not, outside, but within the ambit of the British commonwealth. How would he attain this end? By purely constitutional methods."

"A PRECEDENT IN HISTORY."

"This word brings in another element of political dispute," Mr. Sastri continued. "There has been no precise definition which a scientific student of affairs would possess of this expression 'constitutional methods.' Gokhale's own definition, I had occasion recently to quote in a political dispute. It finds acceptance even in Congress quarters. Curiously however, when this method of constitutional agitation is prescribed by people like me, critics turn round and say 'tell us which country has attained freedom by strictly constitutional methods.' This question was asked of Gokhale himself in Madras. I remember very well the meeting he addressed at the maidan, opposite the Panchaiyappa College. Towards the end, a paper was given to him and he was asked to answer the same question. Gokhale was quick with his answer. 'May be' he said, 'no country has yet done so. But, why should not India do so for the first time and start a precedent in history. The history of the world is not at an end. Many chapters have yet to be written and India and England acting together for the consummation and fruition of India's destiny may yet form a bright and lustrous chapter.' Brave words! They come back to me now."

Proceeding, Mr. Sastri observed:—"I read the statement made some time ago by Mahatma Gandhi, asking the very same question. Two thoughts occur

to me, I dare not pit myself against the Mahatma in political controversy. I do not like it at all. Is this the time, when the National Congress has, by universal consent, returned to the constitutional method of political procedure, when Gandhi who has, it seems, actively blessed this return to constitutional methods, to put this question? And then, is it right, I ask, for the progenitor for the first time in the history of the political world of a new method of peaceful political warfare,—the most powerful and unparalleled personality that he is—is it right for him to ask that the verdict of history should be sought for this? It seems strange. But, we must all remember that the crisis that has overtaken India at the present moment is such that it stirs up the deepest depth of our hearts. It asks us questions about those things for which for years we have been given the foundation and these themselves seem to be called in question. I do not therefore wonder that even the Mahatma, clear-headed as he is, should occasionally confound his hearers and followers with questions of this very radical and drastic nature.

HOW GOKHALE WOULD ACT?

Mr. Gandhi himself had often acknowledged that Gokhale was his political guru. True. He seemed to have now gone beyond this strict province of his teaching. He might seek justification for this departure in the events of which Gokhale had no experience and perhaps no forethought. The reputation of Gokhale had advanced, since his death. In his time, while he was alive, the Government had perhaps some suspicion now and then of his exact tendencies, but now they had none. His political critics often attacked him for his very timid doctrines, for absolutely conservative views, for programmes which were feeble and anaemic in the extreme. But what did they say now? It was indeed extraordinary that they all went back to him and the speaker was often asked by people belonging to the Congress, whether Gokhale would act if he were alive, as the speaker was acting now. He did not know. Speculation of that kind were very misleading and in any way unprofitable. They had, however, only to refer to Gokhale's writings and speeches, and his own example, to find out what he would have done. It appeared to the speaker, and he would like to acknowledge in all humility, that the members of the Society were keeping closely to the lines that Gokhale would have approved. Not only was there much interesting speculation as to what Gokhale might have done, but people often made comparisons. Comparisons might seem attractive to the speculative and dreamy mind. In practice they yielded no results.

In conclusion, Mr. Sastri said that he had really performed a task, which had given him the greatest possible satisfaction. He marvelled at the way in which he had been able to stand the strain all these three days. They had a belief that when a dutiful son performed the obsequies of his father or mother, the very sacredness and weight of the task kept him strong and healthy. Might be, the magnitude of the task that he had performed had kept him also in full vigour both in body and in mind. His profound thanks were due to all those present to hear his lectures.

Correspondence.

INDIAN FEDERATION—A QUERY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—The Right Honourable Srinivasa Sastri is reported to have used the following words in his address to the Liberal Federation which met at Poona in X'mas week :

"The Princes approached us of their own accord and said 'federation will be incomplete without us.' It was they who made the offer to enter Federation in order to make things comfortable to themselves. We accepted it as it seemed to be an inexorable condition of central responsibility."

Mr. and Mrs. G. D. H. Dole in their new book "A GUIDE TO MODERN POLITICS" (Gollancz) 1934, page 307, write :

"The idea of an all-India Federation including the Native States was brought forward for immediate adoption from the British side, because the British Government hoped to be able to use the Indian Princes as a loyalist counterpoise at the centre against the Nationalists."

Who was really responsible for this curious monster of Federation? Did British Indian politicians want it? Did the Indian Princes want it spontaneously? Or was it all a got-up thing by the British Government to keep things afloat? Will the persons who are in a position to know explain the real story? Yours, etc.

S. V. AYYAR.

Dacca, January 19.

MUSLIMS AND J. P. C. REPORT.

The Council of the Muslim League at its meeting held last week at Delhi passed the following resolution about the J. P. C. Report :

"The All-India Muslim League Council have given their most careful and earnest consideration to the Joint Parliamentary Committee report, and are of the opinion that the constitutional proposals embodied therein are more reactionary than the White Paper proposals, which were considered by Council on April 1, 1934.

COMMUNAL SETTLEMENT.

"The Council reiterate their opinion that they accept the Communal Award, so far as it goes, until a substitute is agreed upon by the various communities concerned, and on that basis they express their readiness again to co-operate with any community or party a view to securing such future constitution for India as would satisfy the people".