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Topics of the Week.

Sikh-Muslim Deadlock at Lahore.

THE Sikh-Muslim deadlock over the Shahidganj mosque affair in Lahore shows no sign of an early settlement. It would appear that the mosque was situated within the precincts of a Sikh Gurdwara and its Sikh ownership for the last 170 years has been repeatedly upheld by judicial courts. It is not clear if on the present occasion trouble started by the Muslims questioning the Sikh title to its ownership. If so, it must be regretfully said they took up an obviously impossible position. Not less impossible was their demand that the mosque should be restored to them. Realising fully well the weakness of their position and expecting the demand to be turned down, they alternatively pressed for the retention of the building intact and its not being used for purposes which would offend Muslim susceptibilities.

ON this point the Sikhs might perhaps have met their wishes, if, as they stipulated, Muslim agitation in relation to the mosque had ceased. And from such news as is allowed to appear in the Punjab press about this affair by the official censor, there seems ground to believe that the more moderate elements among the Sikhs were inclined to discourage any precipitate action in regard to the mosque without knowing how the mind of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee due to meet at Lahore on the 8th inst. worked. In the meantime Muslim agitation in respect to the mosque, far from showing any abatement, was gaining in strength; and as if to add fuel to the fire of communal bitterness, the corpse of a Sikh suspected to have fallen a victim

to Muslim violence was discovered in Lahore on the day previous to that fixed for the Committee's meeting. It has since been ascertained that his death was purely accidental and was not due to Moslem fury. But in the state of high communal tension in which the discovery was made, it seems to have acted as the proverbial last straw and thrown the more extreme section among the Sikhs off their balance. The result was that before the S. G. P. Committee could meet and consider the situation, the mosque had been razed to the ground as if in the hope of avoiding all future trouble from the Moslems. The happenings in Lahore since the demolition of the mosque must have completely disillusioned those who might have entertained such expectations and convinced them that their action was very inexpedient and ill-advised.

THE precipitate and unauthorised demolition of the mosque served to aggravate still further the communal situation at Lahore, already pregnant with dangerous possibilities; and for the last three weeks the peace of Lahore has been rudely disturbed. In their anxiety to pacify the Muslims, the Government have, by way of compensation for the loss of the Shahidganj mosque as it were, promised to restore to the Muslim community an old mosque which was bought by them in 1860 and is now utilised as a sessions court. While thankfully accepting this gift, the Muslims continue to be greatly perturbed over the demolition of the Shahidganj mosque. How and when a settlement satisfactory to all parties will be found is more than can be said at present. In the meantime Lahore is passing through a semi-martial law regime, with public meetings and processions completely banned, with arrests and internments in full swing, with official censorship of writings in the press strictly enforced and with the curfew order rigorously in operation. While the past is beyond recall, is it too much to hope that by the exercise of a spirit of mutual accommodation and good sense on the part of both communities an early termination of the regrettable impasse is beyond the bounds of possibility?

Sheer Obduracy.

THE Bombay Legislative Council cannot be congratulated upon the manner in which it dealt

with Rao Bahadur S. K. Bole's latest—the fifth one in the series—attempt to lower the franchise for the Bombay City Municipal elections. The present franchise qualification is the payment of a monthly house rent of Rs. 10. This Rao Bahadur Bole wants to be lowered to Rs. 5 and has been hard at the task all these years without success. His perseverance and doggedness are as praiseworthy as the obduracy of the Bombay legislature and the local Government is blameworthy. With every desire to understand his opponent's reasoning, we have no alternative but to come to the conclusion that they have no case. In some places in this presidency the municipal franchise qualification is as low as the payment of Rs. 3 by way of house rent every month; while in the case of Karachi it has been only recently lowered to Re. 1. If the Bombay legislature can tolerate a one rupee franchise in Karachi, it is difficult to see why it should boggle at the very unambitious proposal to reduce it only to Rs. 5. The ways of the Bombay legislature are indeed inscrutable.

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THE Bill was opposed by Government on what were described as practical grounds. So far as the principle underlying it went, Rao Bahadur Bole and the Government seemed to be at one. This is not to be wondered at. In view of the fact that even under the new constitution a five rupee franchise has been prescribed for elections to the Provincial Councils, Government could not out of considerations of common decency adopt a hostile attitude on the ground of principle. As a matter of fact the Minister went so far as to give the assurance that the Government themselves would move in the desired direction before 1938. All this is very welcome and reassuring. But what the public will fail to appreciate is why if the Government was so sympathetic to Rao Bahadur Bole's proposal they threw their whole weight against it.

* * *

IT was put forward as an argument against the Bill that in case it was passed, even bye-elections in Bombay City would have to be held under the lowered franchise. And this would involve the immediate preparation of electoral rolls on the basis of the new franchise which, we suppose, was one of the practical difficulties referred to by the Minister. We do not think the difficulty was insurmountable. It would have been easily met by sufficiently post-dating the enforcement of the new franchise or by giving power to Government to fix the date of its enforcement. But when the Government are sure of defeating any proposal, however reasonable, on the strength of numbers at their command, where is the need for them to deal gently or even reasonably with non-official bills, resolutions, etc.? Such conduct might enable them to brush aside inconvenient propositions for the time being but cannot be called statesmanship. And in no case will it command the approbation of reasonable-minded people.

Grossly Misleading.

SIR A. H. GHAZNAVI was recently reported to have made himself responsible for the statement that "the Muslims to a man are opposed to a joint electorate." That is too sweeping a statement on the face of it and it is surprising that a person of the long experience of public life like Sir A. H. Ghaznavi should not have been more cautious in the choice of his words. It is well that the statement is not going to be allowed to pass unchallenged. It is observed that in a press interview Mr. Abdus Samad, M. L. C. controverts the statement by a reference to the birth and activities of the Nationalist Muslim Party. As observers of contemporary affairs need not be reminded, it is a party whose sole aim is to fight communalism and communal electorates and during the time it was active it gave proof that it did live up to this ideal. That it was not able to prevent the perpetuation of communal electorates in the coming constitution is of course a different matter. But the mere existence of the party, however small its following, is enough to disprove the correctness of Sir A. H. Ghaznavi's statement.

In this connection, Mr. Samad also refers to the resolution favouring joint electorates which he himself moved in the Bengal Legislative Council a fortnight before the publication of the communal award. It is important to note that the resolution was passed by the Council by 47 votes to 32. And what is still more noteworthy is the fact that those who voted in its favour included as high a proportion as 60 per cent. of the Muslim members present at the meeting. In face of these facts it is clear that Sir A. H. Ghaznavi's statement making it appear as if joint electorates could not boast of a single friend in the Muslim community is grossly misleading. And Mr. Abdus Samad has doubtless rendered a public service by exposing its misleading character.

Sir John Anderson and Terrorism.

THE comparatively small number of terrorist outrages in Bengal during recent months might lead the unwary into the belief that terrorism was on the wane. That is however far from being the case. The situation has no doubt improved somewhat in the last two or three years, but as the Governor of Bengal had to admit in the course of a recent speech, the terrorist virus is still active and malignant. In spite of the pursuit of a relentlessly repressive policy in regard to terrorists by Sir John Anderson's Government, the terrorists do not seem to lack fresh recruits. What is the moral to be drawn from these admitted facts? The answer would differ according to the angle of vision of the answerer. While to the bureaucratic mind they would dictate the need for coercion and still more coercion, to the non-official they would seem to proclaim the utter futility of repressive methods and the need of the adoption of a conciliatory policy. While the policy of repression has had a long trial, the policy of conciliation has never been tried in Bengal as a means of combating terrorism. It is time it was seriously set in motion even if as an experimental measure and its reactions on terrorists carefully and sympathetically watched. We do not know if Sir John Anderson and his advisers pin their faith to the new reforms for the purpose of canalising terrorist energies into constructive channels. If so, a great disillusionment must be said to be in

store for them. For unless they are too much blinded by prejudice to read the writing on the wall, they should by now have known that the reforms have failed to satisfy even the sober moderates, not to mention hot-headed youths like the terrorists.

It is comforting to learn from the Governor of Bengal that action is being increasingly taken to relax restrictions on personal liberty in the case of suspected terrorists. This has taken the form of their removal from detention camps to their village or home domicile. We should have liked him to give us some definite idea as to the extent of such action so as to enable one to judge whether it has gone sufficiently far in the proper direction. He also referred to an experiment now being tried in Bengal under which detenus are allowed to live in their homes provided responsible non-officials are prepared to superintend their movements and actions. A small number seems also to have been released on passing bonds of good behaviour and on their parents' security as to the observance by their wards of the terms of these bonds. It seems also to be under the contemplation of Government to devise means whereby under proper safeguards detenus will be given a chance to qualify themselves for some occupations so that they may eventually turn out good and honourable citizens. We hope the effectuation of such steps will not be delayed too long to be useful.

Underground Women Workers.

THE question of the underground employment of women was among the topics considered by the International Labour Conference recently held at Geneva, at which Begum Shah Nawaz acted as adviser to the Indian Government Delegation. Following the usual procedure, this question was remitted for fuller consideration to a sub-committee of which the Begum was appointed reporter. From the speech made by her in that capacity it appears that international opinion is steadily veering round to the total exclusion of women from underground employment, with the result that the draft convention as it emerged from the hands of the sub-committee recommended the abolition of the practice of employing women on underground work in mines or otherwise, a convention eventually passed by the Conference.

To people in India it will be a matter for satisfaction to learn from her speech that the proposed convention has the support of the Indian Government who have been following a process of the elimination of women from underground employment for some time past. It was in pursuance of this policy that a regulation promulgated by them about six years ago prohibits the employment of women on underground work. The result is to be detected in the consistent reduction in the number of women underground. In 1933, out of a total of 1,12,355 underground workers, 99,556 were men and less than 14,000 were women, which represents 13¼ per cent of the total number of underground workers. The number of women so employed five years before that date was more than double this figure, being in the neighbourhood of 32,000. During the following year as a result of the enforcement of the regulation referred to already, it fell to 24,000, a drop of nearly 25 per cent. in a single year. In 1930 it went down to 18,634 and in 1932 to 14,711.

BUT this is not the whole story. The coal-mines in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and the C. P. and the salt mines in the Punjab are exempted from the operation of the prohibitory clauses of the regulation. In their case the prohibition, we find, is to become operative by successive stages spread over a period of ten years. Thus by July 1, 1939, the exempted mines too will be subject to the rules enforced in the case of other mines since 1929. In other words, it is expected that in another four years the practice of employing women on underground work in coal-mines too will have become a matter of the past.

Reactionaryism in Fiji.

REACTIONARYISM of the worst type seems to be rampant in Fiji at present. The evil of replacing election by nomination, which was strongly criticised in a recent issue of this paper, does not promise to stop with the municipalities; it threatens to spread to the legislative council itself. It appears from press reports that a motion rejecting election in favour of nomination in the constitution of the Council has recently been introduced in it, be it admitted to our shame, by an Indian who owes his seat on it to popular election. Whether, as in the case of the earlier instance of municipalities, the Government of India have allowed themselves to be persuaded of the reasonableness of the proposed undemocratic move we cannot pretend to know. Whatever that be, the fact that the measure has been greeted by fierce hostility from all sections of local opinion including the European cannot be gainsaid.

TWO separate Indian and European mass meetings were recently held in Fiji at which the unwanted innovation was subjected to severe and unanimous condemnation. The view was unambiguously expressed that the proposed change was not in the best interests of the Colony and, as a matter of fact, constituted a retrograde step, violating as it did British ideals of democracy and rights of citizenship. The Europeans went one better in characterising it as "a dangerous measure." It need hardly be stated that the prayer unanimously went forth to the Secretary of State to put his foot down on the proposal in due course. We hope the request, if backed by the Indian Government, as it deserves to be, will make the desired impression on proper quarters.

AND for obvious reasons too. We do not know whether the motion is already passed by the legislative council. Perhaps it has not been; but probably it will be. But the question is whether a decision by an official-ridden body like the Fiji legislature can at all be regarded as an authoritative expression of public opinion. Should such an important change as is contemplated in Fiji be carried out merely on the strength of a resolution passed by the Council? If the Secretary of State wishes to know how public opinion really thinks about the whole thing, it behoves him to refer the issue to the electorate by ordering a general election. So far as can be seen, no more satisfactory method of ascertaining public feeling authoritatively on any given point is known to constitutional usage and we hope it will be resorted to in this case too. From the resolutions passed at the Indian meeting, it is clear the Indian community is prepared to stand or fall by the verdict of the electorate, and not by the opinion of a body in which officials predominate.

SPARKS FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY ANVIL.

House of Lords: 8th, 9th, and 10th July.

"VOIDABLE, THOUGH NOT VOID."

THE Secretary of State thus explained the object of the Second Schedule :

Since the Princes enter the Federation, as set out in the Act, of their own volition and in accordance with their Instrument of Accession, it would, of course, have been quite unfair to them, and indeed their adherence could never be obtained, if there was an unlimited power for subsequent Parliamentary legislation to alter the Federal constitution, leaving the States completely bound by the amended Act, which might constitute a Federation of a totally different type to that which the Princes had agreed to accede to. On the other hand there are, of course, provisions in the Bill, and in particular nearly all those relating to the purely British India side, to the subsequent amendment of which the States cannot possibly offer any objection.

The solution of this difficulty which has been adopted is the following: Those provisions of the Act which it was proposed should be amendable without the States being able to object, are set out in Schedule 2, and under Clause 6 (5) amendment may be made of these provisions of the Act "without affecting the accession of the State" with the addition that no such amendment (unless agreed to by the State) should extend the powers of the Federal authority in relation to the State itself. These provisions are set out, as I have said, in Schedule 2. They may be amended without affecting the accession of the State, and may be conveniently referred to as "unprotected" provisions of the Act. Those provisions in the Act which are not mentioned in the Second Schedule may be called the "protected" provisions of the Act. These are, of course, the provisions which deal with the fundamental parts of the Federal constitution, and with other parts which directly affect the States.

It will be noticed that Clause 6 (5) does not say positively what is to happen if a "protected" section is amended by Parliament, but by implication such an amendment would be one which "affects the accession of the State," that is to say, if the "protected" provisions are amended by Parliament the State has the right to reconsider its position, or in more technical language it may be said that if "protected" portions are amended, the State's Instrument of Accession is voidable, though not void.

Lord Zetland asked the noble Lords to observe carefully that the Bill does not say what will happen if Parliament makes an amendment which is not agreed to by one or more States. May we inquire why the Bill is silent on the point? Does it not clearly imply that the State or States will thereby acquire the right of going out of the Federation? Certainly it does. What then does the Secretary of State mean that in such a case the Instruments of Accession of the States in question will be voidable, but not void? If they become voidable, the States have it in their power to make them void. Of course they may not choose to leave the Federation; they may acquiesce in the amendment, not for themselves since in any case it does not come into effect in the States which may object to it, but for other States. They may let these other States come under the amendment and themselves remain within the Federation without accepting the amendment. But anyhow the fact remains that if the States take the contrary view they may secede from the Federation

if an amendment to which they do not agree is made in the "protected" provisions, which cover, as Lord Zetland said, all the provisions "which deal with the fundamental parts of the Federal constitution and with other parts which directly affect the States."

MOST-FAVOURLED-NATION TREATMENT.

TWO amendments were moved, one by the Earl of Mansfield imposing upon India imperial preference of a substantial amount and the other by Lord Darcy (de Knyath) requiring India to give most-favoured-nation treatment to imports from the United Kingdom. The first amendment was withdrawn and the second negatived. The claims upon the basis of which these concessions were asked were the usual ones. Lord Mansfield said: "As we were giving this new Constitution to India of our own free will, and it is not being extorted from us by force, it would be only reasonable that we should have as a result some form of imperial preference in India;" and that at any rate "it should not be possible for India to put the manufacturers of this country in a worse position, with regard to the entry of goods into India, than the manufacturers of, say, Czechoslovakia or, still more, Japan." Lord Lloyd said:

Our claims for this fair play are absolutely solid and good. Surely they are these: first and foremost, it is due solely to the protection we are affording on the sea routes of the world that Indian exports are able to travel, that it is on our naval protection that they depend; secondly, that we give access to Indian trade, on exactly equal terms to our own, to the vast Crown Colony markets, which we protect and which our energy and our money have developed; and thirdly, there is the actual right of partnership which has been laid down by Sir Samuel Hoare when he was Secretary of State as an essential condition of this Bill. There is no partnership in politics at all if economics is to be excluded and if there is to be discrimination against our trade. Those, to mention only three, are ample reasons for claiming that our trade in India should be secured under this Bill and be given, not only equal, but preferential treatment; we have a right to be treated better than foreign countries who discharge none of these duties and give none of these benefits to Indian trade. That case is absolutely unanswerable.

The Government's opposition was based, first, on the fact that the imposition of such a tariff policy upon India would mean the scrapping of the Fiscal Autonomy Convention, secondly, on the fact that the power given to the Governor-General to prevent the levying of penal and discriminating tariffs would in effect give most-favoured-treatment to England, and, thirdly, on the ground that trade would not be promoted by such coercive measures, which would only lead to ill-will and boycott. The right-wing Conservatives in the House of Lords challenged the Government on all these three grounds, which they said were mutually contradictory. They contended that the Fiscal Autonomy Convention was subject to limitations, one of which was, as Lord Lloyd observed,

that no tariff must be levied which was "so unfair to any constituent part of the Empire as to bring India into conflict with it." To give full play to the Fiscal Autonomy Convention, the Government must not endow the Governor-General with the power, vested in him by the Bill, of preventing the levy of penal duties. The Bill places the sole responsibility for such prevention upon the Governor-General, while, the Earl of Derby remarked, "in this amendment you are removing this responsibility from the shoulders of the Governor-General and putting it on this House by putting it into the Bill itself." Why should the Governor-General incur the Indian people's ill-will personally instead of Parliament coming forward boldly to face it? Again, having done their best to provoke ill-will by foisting upon India a constitution that India does not want and by inserting into the constitution all sorts of safeguards and limitations, why should the Government boggle at this one more safeguard for British trade and industry? Will this additional safeguard alone produce a boycott and not the other safeguards? The Marquess of Salisbury said: "My Lords, the Bill crawls with limitations and fetters. There is no reason why they (the Government) should suddenly find that they think that in this one respect they should be so free." Further:

The noble Marquess, the Secretary of State, said it is very dangerous to override the fiscal autonomy of India. To hear him speak one would have thought that no limitation on fiscal autonomy was contained in the Bill. But the whole Bill is full of what the Government call safeguards which are really limitations. There is the penal clause, which the noble Marquess himself recited to prevent anything like penal use against the Mother Country of fiscal autonomy. Then there are all the clauses dealing with discrimination. We do not allow India under this Bill to do what it likes about policy. All these clauses which are designed to prevent discrimination are all limitations. My noble friend does not use menacing language about the indignation which will be felt in India if they are not allowed to discriminate in their policy against commercial interests in this country. He does not say that it will result in a boycott. Why not? If one kind of discrimination is so formidable, why not the other kind of discrimination? Really, the whole thing rests upon a complete misunderstanding of the actual policy of the Bill.

One thing seems clear, that if there is nothing else which British statesmen are afraid of they are afraid of an economic boycott in India. The Secretary of State said: "If noble Lords will cast their minds back to 1930 they will realise, I think, that the boycott against British goods which was the result of the fear on the part of Indians that we were not going to carry out our promise did a great deal more harm to British goods than any tariff is likely to do." Viscount Elibank remarked:

My noble friend who moved this Amendment knows just as well as I do what were the effects of the boycott in Bombay two or three years ago. We know that the effects of that boycott have hardly disappeared to-day, and probably the alarming figures given by Lord Lloyd are due, in great measure, to that boycott, or the aftermath of that boycott, in Bombay two or three years ago. I suggest that we cannot afford, in the future, to risk boycotts of that nature in India. Boycotts have now been

worked out, if I may put it in that way, on such a basis, and so scientifically framed, that they would be extremely difficult, especially after a Constitution of this kind had been passed, to contend with, and to find a solution.

All one can say as a commentary on this is that if Indians find economic boycott an effective instrument it is a mistake to think that they will employ it only if the additional restriction asked for by Lord Darcy is imposed upon India, but that they will stay their hand if the constitution without this safeguard is introduced. The Earl of Derby said: "I had the opportunity of talking with many Indians who were on the Joint Select Committee and with many who came over during the sittings of that Committee. All of them assured me that there was no real ill-will against England and that if this constitution were granted then good-will would most certainly come." Nothing could be farther from the truth than this; the new constitution will create not good-will but ill-will, whether with the new safeguard proposed or without.

INDO-BURMESE TRADE.

THE EARL OF DERBY moved to insert an amendment in Clause 448 dealing with Indo-Burmese trade in the following words:

Provided that no Order in Council shall be made which shall authorise for a longer period than two years the imposition of duties in India on Burmese goods or duties in Burma on Indian goods at levels lower than the duties applicable at the same time to like goods of United Kingdom origin.

This amendment was naturally interpreted by Lord Zetland to mean not only that the existing free trade between India and Burma shall last only for two years and that at the end of the two years there shall be duties on Indian goods going into Burma and on Burmese goods going into India, but further that "Burma is not to be a free agent at the end of the two years to negotiate for herself," but that "it would be laid down by the Amendment that the customs duties Burma is entitled to levy on Indian goods must in any case be as high as the customs duties levied on British goods." It was on this footing that Lord Zetland considered the proposal and showed how unfair it would be to India and injurious to the interests not only of Burma but of England herself. Lord Derby, however, disavowed any such intention. He interpreted his amendment thus:

There is an Order in Council which will have to come before both Houses, which will make valid the interim arrangement arrived at between Burma and India. I want that interim arrangement confined to two years, and that is why, in that part of my Amendment, I say that the duties in India on Burmese goods, or the duties in Burma on Indian goods, shall not be at levels lower than the duties applicable at the same time to like goods of United Kingdom origin. In other words, I only want it to be for the same time as the interim arrangement is arrived at.

In view of this explanation it is unnecessary to consider the arguments which Lord Zetland used in opposing it. In regard to the duration of the interim arrangement he hoped and expected that it would be three years.

THE PREAMBLE TO THE 1919 ACT.

CLAUSE 473 says that the present Government of India Act shall be repealed save the Preamble. Lord Rankeillor asked: What is the good of preserving the Preamble to an Act which is being repealed? Will it be merely suspended in space? The Lord Chancellor explained that the Preamble was being kept alive to show that "Parliament did not intend, and Parliament does not intend, in any way to depart from the statement of intention contained in the Preamble to the 1919 Act." Lord Rankeillor expressed satisfaction at this, saying that the Lord Chancellor "had made a most valuable declaration riveting attention on the Preamble to the Act of 1919, which is the only thing to which Parliament has hitherto been pledged." The Lord Chancellor, in explaining the purpose of the preservation of the Preamble, said: "There is a considerable body of authoritative opinion which supports the view that the repeal of an Act of Parliament does not repeal the Preamble, the reason being that the Preamble has no operative or objective effect at all." If so, why save the Preamble from the general repeal? Lord Haileham will probably reply: "Orientals don't understand this, and they would think that the gradual (very gradual) introduction of responsible government is no longer the objective of Great Britain's policy in India." The Marquess of Reading suggested that in the Sixteenth Schedule which mentions the Enactments repealed, the Preamble to the 1919 Act should be excepted to bring it into consonance with Clause 473, for the Schedule mentions the whole Act among the Acts to be repealed.

COMMUNAL ELECTION IN THE STATES.

LORD STRABOLGI raised the question of communal electorates in dealing with the Fifth Schedule. Naturally he condemned the whole system and condemned it violently, and one point that he made is very instructive. If the system is at all necessary, it is more necessary in the States than in British India. Hyderabad is a predominantly Hindu State ruled by a Mahomedan ruling family and Kashmir is a predominantly Mahomedan State ruled by a Hindu ruling family. This is just the state of things in which the communal system may have some use, but the British Government did not use any pressure or even influence in the introduction of the system in the States but introduced it in British India. The object is plain—"to divide and rule." The Government unnecessarily meddled "in this hell's kitchen"; they did it because they "thought to base future government on a minority of Moslems and, in one Province, of Sikhs." They should not have interfered at all in this matter.

We were told it was necessary to make this Award by the former Prime Minister, now Lord President of the Council, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, in August, 1932, because the different communities could not agree among themselves as to the fractional proportion of seats they were to have in these Provincial Legislatures we are now discussing. Was there any reason at all why we should give way to that kind of pressure? If they could not agree,

was it for us to impose this division upon them, this which I am afraid will be a permanent division? I am speaking with the greatest seriousness. Could we not have told them to come back to us when they had agreed? Could we not, above all, insist on the common electoral roll?

Again:

We have surrendered to this, we have given way to it, and this alone condemns the Bill in my eyes. If my casting vote could destroy this Bill, I would vote against it for that reason, because you are perpetuating this terrible rift in the democratic life of India, which I believe will be permanent.

Lord Halifax was bitterly resentful of the speech and said that he could imagine nothing more mischievous and more dangerous than that, and he declared that "communal electorates must only and can only go by the consent of the communities affected."

SINGLE VOTE IN PLURAL CONSTITUENCIES.

UNDER the Bill there will be a certain number of multi-member constituencies; it was proposed by Lord Lothian in an amendment that in all such constituencies each voter shall exercise one vote only. He said: "Under the more usual practice of the block vote—that is to say, that each voter casts as many votes as there are candidates for election—it means that if there is a majority party they carry all the seats, even though they may have only a small majority in the constituency.... The effect of the single vote (on the other hand) is to make it possible for a constituency in which there is a very considerable minority—say 2,000 out of 6,000—to return every member." Lord Lothian suggested that if a provision to this effect could not be inserted in the Bill a definite instruction should be given to the Delimitation Committee "to consider very seriously the advantages of this system." Lord Zetland said he was a good deal attracted by this method of voting and promised that the India Office would give an instruction to the Delimitation Committee to consider the proposal. The House, he added, "would have an opportunity of considering the matter at greater leisure when the recommendations of the Delimitation Committee were brought up, as they must be brought up, by Order-in-Council, for the consent of Parliament."

SEATS FOR WOMEN IN BENGAL AND ASSAM.

LORD LOTHIAN moved an amendment for increasing the number of seats reserved for women in the lower House in Bengal from five to seven (one seat being added for a Hindu and one for a Muslim) and in Assam from one to two. He said there was "a curious discrepancy" in allocating women's seats in different provinces. "In the case of Madras, which has a total of 215 seats (in the lower House), eight seats are reserved for women. In Bombay, with only 175 seats, six seats are reserved for women. In Bengal, with 250 members, only five seats are reserved for women. If there is one Province in India in which I think it is important that women should be directly represented in the Legislature it is in the Province of Bengal; where social conditions are

exceedingly difficult it is more important that you should have a certain number of women in the Legislature than anywhere else." The Secretary of State was sympathetic to his proposal in regard to Assam but had no sympathy to give in the case of Bengal. He said:

With regard to Bengal, it would, I am afraid, meet with very considerable opposition from the community in that Province which happens to be in the majority, and which does not always take the same view of the advantages of women in public life as the noble Marquess does. But all these figures which are delicately balanced have been worked out very carefully and in constant consultation with the local Governments, and I should really be rather averse at this stage from accepting an amendment of this kind. So far as Bengal is concerned I am afraid I should be very unwilling, but if the noble Marquess wishes to press me very hard with regard to Assam, I would enter into further consultation with the Government of Assam, where I think perhaps popular feeling would not be quite so strong as in Bengal, with a view to seeing whether they would be willing to agree to the alteration proposed by the noble Marquess. I am afraid that he will not regard that answer as very satisfactory, but I have done my best.

APPLICATION TEST FOR WOMEN.

LORD PONSONBY on behalf of Lord Snell moved an amendment for exempting women, where qualified for the vote, from having to make a special application in the prescribed manner. Lord Zetland had already announced his intention of moving an amendment, which was afterwards passed, for the removal of the necessity for application by a woman for inclusion in an electoral roll in virtue of her husband's qualification after the first election, and Lord Ponsonby explained that his was a wider amendment seeking to exempt from the outset all women from the need of having to make special application. Lord Zetland referred to his own amendment and said, "It does provide that in those Provinces where there is no social difficulty in connexion with the registration of women the wishes of the noble Lord will be met after the first election." In view of this explanation Lord Ponsonby withdrew his amendment.

THE COUNCIL OF STATE.

THE Secretary of State informed the Committee that the electorate of the Council of State, which is now to be directly elected, "would be some four or five times as large as that" for the Council under the present regime, which is about 20,000 strong, excluding Burma. Lord Lothian thought 100,000 was too small a number of electors and suggested enfranchising a million voters, or all those who had voted at the Assembly elections for the last fifteen years. He argued that, for a popular body that the Council of State would now become, it must have a large electorate if it was to pull its full weight and perform its proper function of a Second Chamber; otherwise it would in effect be a powerless and uninfluential body. He said:

The situation under this Bill is going to be very different from that which exists under the Montagu-Chelmsford

reforms, under which the Executive is irresponsible to the Legislature and is, in effect, an emanation of the Secretary of State himself. The Council of State to-day is, therefore, merely, so to speak, an outer entrenchment of the irresponsible power vested in the Viceroy. Under this proposal the position will be changed. Except in the field of the reserved subjects the primary responsibility in Federal matters will rest on a Ministry responsible to the Federal Legislature. Therefore you will begin to get reproduced in India the same situation as you have long had in this country, in which you will have a Lower House which will claim to be representative of the masses of the people confronted by an Upper House avowedly constituted to act as a brake and a safeguard against the Lower House but which will represent the people to a far less degree.

If you make the franchise for the Upper House too low, if, for instance, the representatives from the Legislative Assembly are able to point to the fact that they, indirectly it is true, represent 33,000,000 votes and the Council of State represents only, say, 100,000 in sum total, you may get to the same position that has arisen in this country, where the Upper House is unable to exercise the very considerable powers conferred on it by reason of the fact that it lacks adequate authority to enable it to do so. That is not an imaginary possibility. It is exactly what has happened to your Lordships' House. Therefore I venture to think that if the purpose of this Amendment is to strengthen the all-India point of view on the one hand as against Provincial separatism, and on the other hand make the Upper House a suitable conservative body to act as a check on the possibly more reckless proceedings of the Lower House, it is well to consider whether 100,000 voters is not too small a number and whether it would not be better to make it nearer the figure I suggested on the last occasion—namely, the voters who already for fifteen years have voted for this Assembly; because in the long run you thereby create a Council of State which will in practice be much more likely to do the work which you expect it to do than a House which is constituted on a more narrow vision.

A POPULARLY ELECTED BODY.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY asked whether the conversion of the Council of State into a popularly elected body did not make necessary any further changes. For instance, the Council of State had some limitations imposed upon its power of appropriation and still more of taxation on the assumption that it was a less popular Chamber than the Legislative Assembly; but now it had become a more popular Chamber. In view of this it would be appropriate, he suggested, to remove these limitations. Further, he asked, would the Central Cabinet be answerable to the Council of State, the more popular House, instead of to the Legislative Assembly, the less popular House? Would an adverse vote in the Upper Chamber displace the Ministry? He said:

We have had a great deal of difficulty in deciding what exactly responsibility means. Does it mean responsibility to one Chamber or to both Chambers? That has been asked again and again. Under the Constitution of this old Mother Country there is no question that responsibility is to the Lower Chamber, but what is it going to be in India? The vote of which Chamber will be able to turn out the Government? That is the real point. I wonder whether the Government have really contemplated the question of which is the Chamber whose vote is going to turn out the Government.

As the Bill was drawn, with indirect election, there was no doubt that the greater weight of popular authority

lay behind the Lower Chamber, because although indirectly elected the Lower Chamber was indirectly elected by a much more popular body, but now the weight of the direct Chamber is very different. It is the Upper Chamber. That is the only body to be directly elected, no doubt by a very high, mysterious franchise, but undoubtedly the members are to be directly elected. I put this question to the Government: In the altered circumstances, now that the Upper House, the House of Lords, is to be the democratic body, and the House of Commons is to be the Select Body, which Chamber will have the power of turning the Government out, because that is what responsible government means? It has no meaning at all except that the popular Chamber will be able to turn out the Government. I want to know in those circumstances which Chamber is going to have that power of turning the Government out.

Lord Zetland did not answer the question about the Cabinet's responsibility, but he refused to believe that the Legislative Assembly was any less popular a body because it was going to be indirectly elected. He said:

The noble Marquess thinks that the Lower Chamber now will be less popular than the other. I cannot agree with him, because after all the Lower Chamber is going to be elected by persons who in their turn have been elected by far larger electorates than the electorates which will elect to the Council of State. It is only a case of the election being one place removed; the election takes place in two stages instead of in one stage. The voters in the Provinces, to the number altogether of many millions, will vote for the representatives in the Lower Houses in the Provinces, and then in their turn those representatives, who have been elected by a very big popular electorate, will elect the representatives to the Lower Chamber at the Centre. I cannot therefore regard the Lower Chamber at the Centre as being of a less popular character than the Council of State will be.

Thus "the Lower Chamber will still be the Lower Chamber as it was before", and therefore the Council of State will not have any larger financial powers than were given to it originally in the Bill, and we suppose Lord Zetland also meant to add, the Ministry will not be responsible to it. Needless to say, he refused to entertain Lord Lothians's suggestion for the extension of the franchise.

COMMERCIAL AND LANDED INTERESTS.

THE EARL OF LISTOWELL asked that the representation of Labour in the Council of State should be provided for by direct election, but if that was impossible it should be "laid down in the Bill (and not left to the Governor-General's discretion) that at least two (of the nominated) seats should be allotted by the Government to the representatives of Labour, and, besides that, he should make his choice in consultation with organised Labour in the Provinces of British India."

Lord Faringdon moved an amendment for the deletion of the provision giving special representation to the commercial and landed interests in the Legislative Assembly. He had, of course, no hope that the amendment would be carried, and it was, it need hardly be said, not carried, but he moved it "rather in the spirit of protest." He said:

I do not know why the Government have insisted on putting in these additional representatives for commerce and industry and for landowners. I can only think that

it is from some fear of Congress, for really, with a franchise such as that which is going to choose the representatives for the Legislative Assembly, I do not think that anybody need have much fear of hot-headedness or that the particular classes I have just mentioned will not be represented.

Unfortunately, I am afraid the representation of those classes will have a very disastrous result. Surely the first work of the new Indian Government will be to press forward certain reforms for the benefit of Indians, more particularly reforms of the land tenure and methods of coping with the present debt situation in India and Factory Acts and social legislation of that kind, and this legislation is pretty certain to be fairly strenuously resisted even under the present franchise. I hardly think there is very much hope of necessary reforms coming about with the full weight which has been given to just those classes which profit by the abuses and which are bound to resist their removal.

Further:

A point which seems to me to be of some importance is the fiscal one. These new Governments are going to cost money, everybody says so; in fact that is one of the principal grounds of attack; and to pay for them new taxes will have to be raised. The only forms of taxation that I can see available are a proper enforcement of Income Tax which, as is known, is not properly enforced in India on those most capable of paying it; and the taxation of incomes from land. I hardly see any prospect whatever in these new Assemblies of effecting these forms of taxation. Fiscal reports suggest taxes on matches and some other little detail which will, quite certainly, not produce anything like the necessary money which is required. Money can be raised from those two sources I mentioned, but it cannot be raised from elsewhere, and I am convinced that the new representatives will not allow the Government to raise the necessary money from those sources. You are, therefore, reduced to adding further taxation upon those who are already paying excessively and, in point of fact have nothing to pay. I fully expect to see an enormous increase in the tax on salt, than which nothing in the world would be more unpopular in India and nothing is more likely to cause trouble to the Government.

Additional representation of industrial and landed magnates will result, Lord Faringdon said, in a "most invidious weighting of the Legislature. It is weighted in any case. The franchise weights it, but special representation seems to weight it unnecessarily and is bound to make the working of the Constitution more difficult and its financial support impossible."

DEPRESSED CLASS WOMEN'S REPRESENTATIVE IN THE ASSEMBLY.

IN the Legislative Assembly, too, women's representation from Bengal is less than from Bombay and Madras. While the latter Provinces have two seats each, the former has only one. Lord Lothian proposed that Bengal's share of representation should be brought up to the same level as that of the two other Presidencies. He did not suggest that the total number of Bengal's representatives in the Assembly should be increased. He suggested that the seats reserved for the Scheduled Classes should be reduced from three to two, and that women's seats should be raised from one to two. The Scheduled Classes would have no grievance as it would be provided, if his amendment was accepted, that the extra woman's seat would be filled by a woman belonging to the Scheduled Classes-

Under the Bill no special representation had been given to the women of the Depressed Classes. The arrangement suggested by him would ensure that in the Assembly there would be at least one woman member who would have intimate knowledge of the peculiar difficulties of these classes. Lord Zetland opposed the proposal. He said:

I think the Depressed Classes question in Bengal is practically non-existent. By far the greater part of those persons who now are described as members of the Scheduled Classes are not really members of the Depressed Classes. I think therefore it is very unlikely that, by restricting this proposal to Bengal, the noble Marquess would achieve what I believe he wants to achieve—namely, that a woman representative of the real Depressed Classes should have an opportunity to make her voice heard in the Federal Assembly.

COMMUNAL ELECTORATES.

THE two amendments that have been made on Report stage in Clause 304 laying down a procedure for amending certain provisions of the Act, in so far as the Communal Award is concerned, were discussed at great length in Committee. If the Indian Legislatures pass a resolution proposing an amendment in the constitution, the Secretary of State is to lay the resolution before Parliament, and the head of the Government in India, when forwarding the resolution, is to send therewith "a statement of his opinion as to the proposed amendment, and, in particular, as to the effect which it would have on the interests of any minority." Lord Middleton moved an amendment in Committee asking that the head of the Government should also send "a statement as to the extent to which the minorities affected are in favour of the proposed amendment," in order to ensure that Parliament will have before it the views of the spokesmen of the different communities concerned. This amendment procedure is to come into force only ten years after either the federal or the provincial part of the constitution comes into effect. But, even before the lapse of ten years, His Majesty's Government, on its own initiative, may make an amendment, provided that steps are taken "for ascertaining the views of the Governments and Legislature in India who would be affected by the proposed amendment." In this respect, too, and with the same object, Lord Linlithgow proposed an amendment making it obligatory upon the Secretary of State to take steps also for ascertaining "the views of the representatives in any such Legislatures of any minority likely to be so affected." Lord Zetland expressed his general willingness to accept the spirit, if not the exact words, of these amendments, which he has now done.

This certainly ensures that, before any amendment is made in the terms of the Communal Award, the communities concerned will be consulted. But the major grievances of the minority communities remain. They are two: the Communal Award is capable of being amended, under the Clause as now adopted, within ten years after the commencement of the constitution, and without their consent. On these two points the Government's pledge is specific. As the White Paper says:

His Majesty's Government stated in their Award that modification of the communal electoral arrangements might be made after ten years with the assent of the communities affected, for the ascertainment of which suitable means would have to be devised.

Contrary to this pledge, the Government take power under the Bill to alter the Communal Award even before ten years. Lord Zetland said: "Supposing before ten years have expired some community, such as the Indian Christians, were really anxious to give up their special electorates and to take part in the joint electorate, it would then be possible, if they made that perfectly clear, for Parliament to take action under this Clause." This is clearly going against the pledge, and besides what words are there in the Act to show that the communities concerned will not merely be consulted, but that their consent would be taken before a change is made in the Communal Award? This in fact is the second complaint of the minority communities. Lords Lloyd, Salisbury and Lytton raised this question in a pointed manner. The Earl of Lytton said:

What, I think, my noble friends who moved this Amendment wish to know is, whether, supposing there is hereafter a change of Government, and there is a Government which does want to change the Communal Award, is there machinery in this clause which will enable it to be done? My noble friends are nervous that if the Legislatures in India propose a change, and in the course of the discussion of that change it becomes quite clear that one of the parties concerned is not agreeable to it, it might still be possible under this clause for an Address to be presented and for Parliament to carry out the change. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State assured us—and I entirely agree with him from my own experience—that it will not be possible for such a change to be attempted in India without the views of the communities concerned becoming known. We can all agree that their views will become known; but the point at issue is this: Supposing their views, when they become known, are hostile to the change, what is going to happen? The noble Marquess said that if their views are hostile no further action will be taken. I rise to put this question to the noble Marquess: What are the words in the clause which will ensure that if the opinion of the communities is hostile to the change no further action will be taken?

I do not see, in the clause as it stands, any words which will ensure that if there is opposition to the clause the proposed Amendment will not be proceeded with. I fully accept the statement of the noble Marquess that it is not intended, and that the clause is not so drafted as to enable a change in the Communal Award to be made without the consent of the parties, but it is not clear yet to my mind that the words of the clause will prevent such a change from being carried out if the views of the communities are hostile to the proposed change. If the noble Marquess could clear up that point it might help to get rid of the misunderstanding.

Lord Lothian in fact insisted that the Bill should make provision only for consulting the minorities and should leave it to Parliament to decide whether their consent, in the terms of the Communal Award, has been obtained or not.

I do not think we should put in the Bill how the assent shall be determined. What matters is that it should be quite clear that the opinion of the minorities concerned will be consulted. It is then for Parliament to consider whether it has assent or not.

The Duke of Atholl: Is it not the case that the whole idea is to obtain the assent of the communities concerned? It does not concern Parliament. The point is that you

have given a promise, and now you are going to break it.

The Marquess of Lothian: It is for Parliament at the time to determine whether there is assent.

The Government's pledge definitely was that a general formula would be evolved for determining in what circumstances the consent of the minority communities might be understood to have been obtained, and Lord Lothian's suggestion that Parliament should decide in each case as it arose whether the requirement of the communities' assent was fulfilled or not is clearly against that pledge. It is very bad policy first to give a pledge in cast-iron terms and then, on second thoughts, to place limitations on it and try to show that they are reasonable. It cannot be gainsaid that on this matter there is a definite violation of pledge on the part of the British Government.

EDUCATIONAL REFORM.

I

EVERY one thinks and expresses that reform in the system of education prevailing to-day on this side of India is both urgent and overdue. But it is not so clear to him how and where the reform has to be effected. Some suggest that the University alone must remodel the Matriculation examination to suit the requirements of University education. Others desire that the Department of Public Instruction must take control of secondary education and so shape its curriculum that those who pass the Matriculation test may be equipped fully not only for the college career, but other careers in life, if they do not desire to go in for higher education. There are some who would give an entirely vocational bias to our education from a certain standard in secondary education upwards, ignoring altogether the needs of what is known as a broad-based system of general education to precede it. There are others, again, who would have a uniform standard of studies up to the sixth class of the High Schools, to be followed by bifurcation or trifurcation so that those who would go in for higher education shall be examined by the University, and the rest by the Department for the clerical or any other vocational line, the studies of these three lines being completed, so to say in the 7th and, perhaps, the 8th standard, on the principle of division and specialisation. Supposing that a boy begins his primary education from the sixth year at the earliest and the seventh year at the latest, the primary stage should not occupy more than four years on an average, and the secondary three years to follow it, so that the boy would be fourteen years old by the time he completes his sixth standard or fifteen at the most. A year or two, preparatory towards entering the College or entering life at once, will not mean much either to the parent or the pupil himself. The difficulty in India about this arrangement is that, owing to the many vernaculars in India, the boy re-learns in English in Standards I—IV what he has learnt previously in the vernacular in the primary stage. If, excepting English, all the studies were taught in the vernacular right up from the 1st to the

6th, and there were no such thing as the first four vernacular standards to be followed by six English standards, there would be so much saving in time and better and more varied instruction to accompany it. That is the problem for the Department to tackle in consultation with the parents, the public and the teachers in general. An Indian boy today has to pass four years in a vernacular school and six more years in an English elementary school and High School, without proper return in instruction and training that ten years in a school ought to give him. Bifurcation or trifurcation after the sixth standard would be feasible and worth having, only if a way is found out of the difficulty pointed out above.

Vocational training is desirable so far as there are vocations to follow and sufficient openings in that direction. So also of the clerical and kindred lines and the learned professions. In that respect the suggestion put forward by our Vice-Chancellor in his address to the Bombay Division Educational Week some time ago, proposing certain centres in the Presidency for opening vocational schools, is worth consideration. Otherwise, we shall be once more throwing upon the country a vast number of trained boys without suitable occupations to absorb them. Knowing as we do the evil of the existing system, we should take care not to repeat it in another form. The law of supply and demand must be recognised in education as much as in any other sphere of work. There should be no unnecessary wastage of talent, money and effort resulting in aimlessness, disappointment, and bitter discontent. Competition and struggle for existence one cannot avoid in the conditions of the world as it is to-day. But we must, at least, take care not to render them acute for future generations by our improvidence and lack of proper attention today.

The object of education up to a certain stage is more to train the mind than to equip the student directly for a career. If the student's mind is trained along proper lines and his physique built up along with it, then, within a year or two to follow, he can easily pick up any line and, with proper guidance, make himself fit to pursue it profitably. Those who have read the late Prof. Huxley's addresses on liberal education need not be told what the training of such a mind means and of the means towards that training. These addresses will bear re-reading even to-day by educationists in India, and especially by those who value the teaching of science more than of "mere" literature. They may well compare notes about science as it is taught in Indian High Schools to-day, and as to how it ought to be taught as laid down by Prof. Huxley. In India, unfortunately, there are no continuation schools or classes to follow elementary and secondary education. If a provision of that sort could be made, always in relation to available occupations and trades in the country, then the foundation of liberal education for all to the age of sixteen can be easily and well laid. Then, there will be no need of bifurcation or trifurcation, till the pupil reaches the Matriculation standard by whatever name you call it, provided it completes the

course of secondary education. It will be easier then for those who choose for the learned professions to proceed to the University and for the rest, through the continuation classes, to be equipped for any other line of work. If we keep in mind the idea that in these days every adult has to be a good citizen in addition to being a bread-winner, then, the conclusion is clear that the system of education beginning from the primary and reaching up to the highest standard of secondary education must be, more or less, framed on the same pattern. Those who are anxious to know the aim of such an education and how that can be attained cannot do better than read carefully the pamphlets issued on the subject by Prof. H. A. L. Fisher, during his regime as President of the Board of Education in England.

It is an accepted principle of education in these days that specialisation should follow only after a sound and broad-based system of general education. That does not exclude training in handicraft or some such practical courses from a certain stage in primary and secondary education, as education really does not connote mere book-learning or learning by rote. "The mind, the muscle and the moral", as Gokhale would have put it, must all be properly tended and developed till the pupil reaches his adolescence. Education, being a training for life, is essentially a training in character and in healthy, hopeful and brave outlook on life. On no account should our education, in its early stages, be allowed to be of the shop, shabby. For, in that case, it is rather to be preferred that the pupil should be apprenticed to a trade or business so soon as he has finished the three R's. The tendency to-day is rather to raise the age during which the pupils acquire their education than to lower it, the obvious intention being to give him as much of general education as his opportunities will permit him to take, before he plunges himself in the work of life.

Those who cry down the system of education introduced by Lord Macaulay in India miss the aim that he had in view. It was not merely to train and provide clerks for Government and other offices, as it

is sought to be made out, but, to make the student understand many things but for which he would not be a good man and citizen. For, if clerks alone were needed, there would have been no need to include in the curriculum framed for such a purpose history, geography, classical languages, mathematics and science in addition to English. The idea was to provide as much for the liberalisation of the understanding as the opportunities and ideals of those days had made possible. If we have not progressed in India from the days of Lord Macaulay and Raja Ram Mohan Roy—a proposition open to exception in itself—then the blame does not rest on them. Our Universities in India, at the start, were modelled on the University of London. If we have remained where we were in 1857 and the London University has been remodelled from top to bottom, it would be foolish, indeed, to blame the latter for our stagnation, if not decay.

The utility of education to-day lies not so much in the defect of curriculum as of the methods and standard of teaching in schools. To improve that method and raise the standard do not necessarily imply the conflict of aims between the University and the Department of Public Instruction. It does not mean that they should stand opposed as rivals and fight each other. Let us be wary on both sides, not to impart political motives and methods in the field of education with the crop of misunderstanding, suspicion and dilatoriness, which is their usual result. If the two work together and with the interest of the rising generation as their sole objective, they can easily devise a comprehensive, un-wasteful and properly co-ordinated scheme spreading over five or six years, which, at the end of it, will train an average pupil so well as to enable him to choose for himself definitely whether he would begin life at once or go in for further studies. In the former case, he can be taken up in continuation schools, where, in two years' time, he will learn whatever he finds useful for the business of life.

V. N. NAIK.

The Servants of India Society.

REPORT FOR 1934-35.

THE four original founder-members of the Society took a solemn vow to dedicate their lives to the service of the Motherland with a whole-hearted devotion and swore to regard all Indians as their brothers and to seek no personal advantage for themselves. Of these four, three, viz., Messrs. G. K. Devadhar, A. V. Patvardhan and N. A. Dravid, are happily still among us, while the place of Gokhale, alike in masterly leadership and in modest and practicable idealism, has been fittingly taken up by the Right Honourable V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, F. C., C. H. These have certainly done much in spiritualising and elevating the public life of the country and in comprehending social, humanitarian and other varieties of work in the scheme of public

service, which, till then, was too exclusively equated with political agitation at periodical congresses and conferences. The sense of duty of the members of the Society has made them ever eager to offer their services in every task of social and economic amelioration of the bulk of the peasantry. Relief operations among distressed villagers rendered homeless by flood or earthquake, communal strife or other calamities, a bold participation in the work of rooting out endemic outbursts of disease, the starting and countenancing of organisations for rural welfare and sanitation, the furthering of the co-operative movement and spirit among the masses, the fostering of a sense of real civic responsibility and pride among the lower classes—these have supplemented

the political and educational activities of the Society that has now brought up a second generation of workers who are as sincere and devoted as the pioneers and are nevertheless content to do their tasks unobtrusively, modestly and with such a sense of doing only their duty that attracts the admiration of us all.

As has been pointed out elsewhere, the Society allows complete freedom to the members to make a clear distinction between private judgment and conscience and to defer to those decisions of the general body of the Society which do not absolutely go against the verdicts of their conscience, however much they might deplore these decisions otherwise. This feature has enabled the Society, more than any other factor, to survive all the crises that have confronted it and to serve as a common stem round which the members could cling together in a close brotherhood.

Not to speak of great stalwarts like Mr. Sastri and Mr. Devadhar, the Society can show to the nation

models of tireless devoted workers like Mr. Vaze, Mr. V. Venkatasubbaiya, Mr. Kunru and Mr. Bakhale. This is not, however, to throw into shadow the work of other members whose record has been as true and unsullied as the pages of the work of the former that have been more prominently before the public eye. We have only to remember the journals that the Society has been conducting, the rural welfare centres it has been maintaining and the educational activities with which it has always been so closely associated, in order to create in everyone's mind a sense of due admiration and pride that cannot be effaced by a sense of disagreement that may be shown with the political attitude of the Society towards the fundamental problems of constitutional advancement. We join hands with others in felicitating the Society on its successful completion of three decades of solid national work and hope that this record will be but the basis of a grander edifice of national service that the Society will build up in the future.—*Federated India.*

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