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Topics of the Week.

Mr. S. V. Parulekar—

OFFICIAL attempts to stop the strike in the Ambernath Wimco Match Factory by other means having so far come to nought, the usual bureaucratic method of depriving the strikers of the assistance of their leaders is now resorted to. It is an open secret that Mr. S. V. Parulekar, member, Servants of India Society, owing to his pro-labour sympathies, has been actively on the side of the strikers. It followed as a matter of course that he should be separated from the strikers. He was in the first instance externed from the strike area and last week an attempt was made to lock him up in jail. The attempt was fortunately foiled, thanks to the independence of the Presidency Magistrate before whom the matter was argued.

THE *modus operandi* was a warrant by the Resident Magistrate, Kalyan, for Mr. Parulekar's arrest and a demand for security to be of good behaviour for a year. The case was to be heard on the 30th instant, but Mr. Parulekar was expected to vegetate in the lock-up till then as if he would have given the slip to the all-powerful Resident Magistrate if allowed to be at liberty. Why with the accused thus secured in the grip of the police, the date for his trial should have been fixed so far ahead, even allowing for the time needed for the satisfaction of legal technicalities, we are at a loss to know. But where, as in the present case, a man proves a *bete noir* to the official world his convenience or inconvenience is a matter of complete indifference in official eyes.

IN their hurry to clap Mr. Parulekar in jail, the authorities did not even pause to consider whether the magistrate under whose warrant Mr. Parulekar's

arrest was to be effected possessed the needed authority to do so. As a consequence their fond hope of finding Mr. Parulekar in their custody has not been realised. For when the matter was argued out in the Presidency Magistrate's Court, it was held that not the Resident Magistrate but the District Magistrate alone was competent to take action against Mr. Parulekar, who not being a resident of Kalyan but of Bombay City was outside the jurisdiction of the former. The Resident Magistrate's writ runs only within the limits of Kalyan. As such he would have been within his rights if he had issued a warrant of arrest of Mr. Parulekar while he was on a visit to that place. But outside Kalyan he had, the Presidency Magistrate found, no jurisdiction. His warrant was, therefore considered by the Presidency Magistrate to have been illegal and issued without jurisdiction. Mr. Parulekar's release from police custody followed as a corollary.

—Handcuffed and Roped!

IF the Presidency Magistrate deserves praise for his decision in declaring illegal the warrant of the Resident Magistrate, Kalyan, the latter deserves condemnation for the manner in which he treated Mr. Parulekar who appeared in his Court on Tuesday last to take his trial in connection with another alleged offence. The Magistrate was perfectly entitled to arrest Mr. Parulekar under a warrant which was declared illegal in Bombay. But he should have shown the courtesy of informing him under what section he was arrested. He not only did not do so but even went to the length of seeing that Mr. Parulekar was immediately handcuffed and roped in his court. We know that the Resident Magistrate was upset when he found that the Presidency Magistrate declined to give effect to his warrant. But judicial affairs cannot be conducted in anger if justice is the goal. We cannot too strongly enter our emphatic and indignant protest against the action taken against Mr. Parulekar by handcuffing and roping him. He is not a criminal nor is he a man who will run away at the sight of a warrant of arrest. To handcuff and to rope him betrays the most vindictive and wicked mentality which is unworthy of any Magistrate who is called upon to hold the scales of justice even between the conflicting parties. The Resident Magistrate showed his temper to such an extent that he ordered the arrest of about 50 peaceful spectators including women who were standing outside the court room. He even threatened an advocate of the bar with arrest and prosecution. The acts of omission and commission of this Resident Magistrate during the last and the present Ambernath disputes have been so numerous that the Government of Bombay would, we feel, be guilty of a dereliction of duty if they do not take suitable action against him for what he has done so far.

The Famine Situation.

DESPITE the appearance of rain last week in some parts of the presidency, the famine situation is as serious as ever. This is the conclusion at which Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, the Mayor of Bombay, has arrived after a careful study of the relevant facts. Except in the Konkan and the Surat district where crops may be said to be more or less in a normal condition, the whole province is faced with the prospect of famine, which strengthens the need for relief measures. The kharif crop everywhere is completely ruined and though, if the rains were to continue satisfactorily, the shortage of fodder for cattle might to some extent be remedied, it hardly does away with the immediate problem of keeping cattle alive till then by providing fodder for them. The scarcity of drinking water, as in Ahmednagar, also needs to be attended to with equal, if not greater, urgency.

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THE destruction of the kharif crop has added to the economic difficulties of the agriculturist, already heavy enough in all conscience, beyond measure. On the security of his kharif crop, says Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, the agriculturist could manage to get a loan from the village money-lender to keep himself going till the rabi harvesting season. This is rendered impossible by the failure of the first crop with the result that his sources of credit are completely dried up. The immediate problem before him is, therefore, how to keep himself alive till the rabi crop matures—a problem which ought to demand the attention of all those interested in his well-being.

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THE Mayor of Bombay has for the present appealed for a sum of three lakhs to relieve suffering due to famine. Let it not be supposed that this is all that is needed. Information about famine conditions in the Central and Southern Divisions is being collected by the respective Commissioners and will in due course be made available to the non-official relief committee that has been formed at Bombay. If this should disclose the need of larger measures of relief, the public would be requested to contribute a larger sum. We need hardly say that the Mayor's appeal deserves to be responded liberally by the generous public.

* * *

D. B. Kambli & Co-operative Movement.

AMONG the popular Ministers who have since 1921 worked the Montford reforms in the different provinces in India, the name of the Hon'ble Dewan Bahadur S. T. Kambli, Minister for Education and Excise in the Bombay Presidency, would take easily a very high rank in the list of big failures. In this Presidency no Minister has had such a long run of six years of office as Mr. Kambli had. If only he had an inclination and application, the requisite background of study and knowledge and the genuine desire to improve the condition of the under-dog whom he claims to represent he could have succeeded, on the strength of the solid support he commands in the Legislative Council, in securing several measures of reform, statutory and administrative, in the departments under his charge. Ability he possesses, we readily grant, of an average type. But his narrow outlook, lack of capacity for sustained effort and his anxiety to consolidate his own position and that of his group, wrongly called a party, have all resulted in sacrificing public interests at his hands and making him one of the reactionary and undemocratic Ministers we have ever had in recent years.

* * *

WE are provoked to make these comments on account of the parting kick Dewan Bahadur Kambli

chose to give the Council and the public by inserting a highly objectionable rule in the Co-operative Societies Rules which govern the working of the co-operative societies in this Presidency. This rule gives Government the power to supersede a committee of a co-operative society or any member thereof and to appoint a new committee or a member as the case may be, for a period of three years. In an emergency the existence of which is to be decided by Government, the latter need not even consult the Bank, if any, financing the society against which action is sought to be taken. This rule cuts at the very root on which the co-operative movement is based. The co-operative societies have their own bye-laws which are framed under the rules made by Government and which provide for the removal or suspension of their committees. Government tried to make out that cases have occurred in which, the opposing parties being in equal strength, no action could be taken by the committees. They further stated that under the Act there is no authority to call a special general meeting of the members of the society even though the Registrar of Co-operative Societies directs them to call such a meeting. If that were so, the best course would have been to amend the Act and fix some authority for calling such a meeting. It was further argued that even though a general body meeting were called, there is no guarantee that it will succeed in removing its committee and appointing a new one. To meet this contingency, the Act provides for the suspension and even liquidation of the society—which, in our opinion, is much better than the strangulation of the whole co-operative movement as would indeed be the effect of the new rule. The co-operative movement is essentially a democratic movement and for its proper growth and working, the sanctions for putting matters right when they go wrong must come from within the movement itself. Any outside agency trying to superimpose its authority on it will only result in weakening the movement and making it irresponsible. And we are satisfied that breeding sense of irresponsibility in any organisation is a sure sign of its decay.

* * *

ANOTHER, and equally dangerous, effect of the rule is going to be to arm Government with the power of interference with the internal administration of the co-operative societies—against which the Hon. Minister had himself protested strongly when he was sitting on the non-official benches and when the Bombay Co-operative Societies Act was being enacted. This is particularly so on the eve of the introduction of the new constitution under which it is not possible to say definitely whether we are going to have stable or unstable ministries. If unfortunately the latter kind of ministries become a feature, at least for some years, of our administration, the new rule gives the ministers a mischievous handle to interfere with the committees of the co-operative societies and a powerful instrument in their hands to exploit them for their political ends. To avoid this danger, Mr. Bakhale proposed an alternative amendment to the rule so as to vest the power of superseding the committees in the Registrar of Co-operative Societies with the power of appeal to Government. Sure as he was of his majority, Dewan Bahadur Kambli would not have this amendment and it was heavily defeated. To his many acts of disservice he has added one more. We hope his electorate will not fail to take note of it when he will go to it at the time of the coming elections.

* * *

Welcome.

THE South African Parliamentary Delegation which landed in Bombay on Saturday is the second

one of its kind. It consists, among others, of two ministers and representatives of the four parties in the Union Parliament. As stated by Mr. Hofmeyr in a press interview, it is visiting India on a mission of courtesy and goodwill at the invitation of her Government. From the arduous programme prepared for it by the authorities it is apparent that the Delegation will not lack opportunities of studying India and her people at first hand. Mr. Hofmeyr's diagnosis of past friction between India and South Africa is lack of knowledge. Let us hope with him that the Delegation's personal study of Indian conditions joined to a sympathetic appreciation of Indian aspirations will result in the establishment of better understanding between the two countries and the commencement of a new era of smooth and harmonious relationship.

Anti-Opium-Smoking Bill.

AN official bill for dealing with the evil of opium-smoking was considered by the Bombay Legislative Council last week. The measure has indeed been long overdue and it is a puzzle to us why the Government have been so late in bringing it forward when similar legislation was enacted in Assam nearly ten years ago. It is of course undeniable that the problem was more serious in Assam where opium-smokers then numbered as many as 50,000 while in Bombay, according to the Minister for Excise Dewar Bahadur Kamli, the number of persons addicted to the habit of smoking opium does not exceed 1,500. But the difference in the opium-smoking conditions in the two Provinces cannot, frankly speaking, be accepted as an adequate excuse for Assam outdistancing Bombay by ten years.

WE do not know whether a recital in the statement of objects and reasons of the circumstances in which the Bombay Government was forced to handle the evil by means of this bill is not intended as an indirect justification for the belated nature of the legislation. Action on the lines embodied in this bill was suggested by the Bombay Government to the Central Government by means of suitable amendments in the Dangerous Drugs Act which is an all-India measure, but the suggestion somehow failed to commend itself to that Government. They for their part made a counter-suggestion to the local Government. Under the rules at present in force for the possession of prepared opium, a maximum of one-fourth of a tola is allowed for each person. These rules are made by the local Government themselves under the rule-making powers delegated to them under the Dangerous Drugs Act. If the local Government wants to abolish opium-smoking, all that needs to be done by them, it was pointed out, was, by a modification of these rules, to reduce the limit of individual possession of opium from one-fourth of a tola to nil. But the Government of Bombay do not apparently intend such drastic and sudden action.

A SUDDEN stoppage of the supply of the drug would, they feel, cause serious hardship to confirmed addicts. The bill referred to, therefore, does not prohibit opium-smoking altogether. It only bans collective smoking of opium and is designed to suppress opium-smoking dens. Even after the bill becomes law, individual smoking would be perfectly legal. But if two persons meet together for opium-smoking, they make themselves liable to penalties laid down in this legislation. A husband and wife indulging in opium-smoking together are, however, protected persons under the bill. It is gratifying to learn that though Government have persuaded themselves as to the impossibility of the introduction of total prohibition of opium-smoking by a stroke of the pen as it

were, their efforts would be directed to making its gradual introduction possible so that this deleterious habit may be completely banished from this province before long.

Graduate Voters in University Constituency.

DR. B. G. VAD, the University representative in the local Legislative Council, recently brought forward before the Council an adjournment motion in order, as we understand it, to register a protest against the unsatisfactory nature of the qualifications laid down for graduate voters in the University constituency. He based his motion on some correspondence he had with the Bombay Government; but that, we suppose, was to make the matter one of recent occurrence as required by the rules of business. The local Government's original suggestion to the Franchise Committee was, as is well known, to confer the franchise on all graduates of seven years' standing. To this was joined the condition of registration by the Committee itself. As until recently registration involved the payment of a special fee which all graduates could not easily afford, the imposition of this condition would, it was feared, act as a handicap in the way of the enlargement of the electoral roll. As if all this was not restrictive enough, the Order-in-Council went further and insisted that the registration should have been in operation for full two years prior to the preparation of the electoral roll.

THE expected did happen and the number of voters went down from 9,000 in 1929 to less than a half of the number this year. While everybody looked forward to an increase in the number of voters, it actually showed a diminution. But the franchise qualifications have been finally laid down in the Order-in-Council which no amount of protest at this stage can modify. It was up to those who were keen upon preventing any reduction in the number of graduate voters to be sleeplessly watchful when the Order-in-Council was being considered in Parliament and to demand the withdrawal of these reactionary proposals. Public agitation at that time would have been timely, though one dare not say it would have been useful.

AND then one doubts too if the local Government can at all be held accountable for this piling of restrictions. Even if Dr. Vad's adjournment motion had been passed involving a vote of censure on the Bombay Government it would have amounted to belabouring a wrong party while allowing the real culprits to escape scot free. But we suppose Dr. Vad was never under any delusion as to the debate raised by him resulting in the redress of a just grievance. His object must only have been to give vent to the public disapproval of the present electoral qualifications for the University constituency. We have little doubt it has been amply fulfilled.

Bombay Government and Debt Conciliation.

THOUGH the problem of rural indebtedness is urgently crying for remedial action, the Bombay Government have so far done nothing to tackle it and, what is even more surprising, would not allow anybody else to do so. This is the impression one gathers from their general attitude towards a non-official measure discussed in the Legislative Council last week. The un-official bill aimed at the establishment of debt conciliation boards for the express purpose of scaling down the debts of the ryots. It sought to empower the local Government to set up such boards, consisting of a chairman and a minimum of two and a maximum of eight members, for the different dis-

tricts. The chairman and members were to hold office for a year, though they were to be eligible for re-appointment, and the jurisdiction of these boards was limited to debts below Rs. 25,000.

THOUGH with regard to the details of such a measure there is bound to be considerable room for difference of opinion, the principle underlying it is unexceptionable. It did indeed command the acceptance of the local Government, though, one feels, not a very spontaneous or even willing acceptance. A Government with a keener sense of appreciation of its responsibility for the well-being of the rural population would not only have welcomed such a non-official essay at the solution of the problem of rural indebtedness but would have done everything possible to facilitate its enactment into law. The local Government gave proof of no such anxiety.

ON the contrary when a time-limit of six weeks for the completion of the select committee's task was suggested it was strongly opposed by the Finance Member who even went the length of complaining against the bill being rushed through the Legislative Council. He also brought forward the plea of want of time for a final decision by the Government on the subject. Seeing that the bill was introduced in the Legislative Council nearly six months ago, the plea appears to us meaningless. If six months do not suffice for the Government to make up their mind, it is not surprising that six weeks should be found inadequate for the purpose.

BUT from the practical point of view, what really is the net result of the principle of the bill having been accepted by the Government, as it eventually was. Nil, we are afraid. If the select committee had worked under the six weeks' time-limit and if the Government had been in a mood to call a special session of the Legislature for its consideration, there was a reasonable chance of the bill being enacted into law before the present

Legislative Council becomes *functus officio*. But this is placed beyond the bounds of possibility by the Government's unreasoning opposition to the proposed time-limit. Even if the Government had decided of set purpose to adopt a dog-in-the-manger attitude towards the bill, one wonders if their tactics need have been very different.

"Leave the League Quickly."

UNDER the above caption the *Statesman* of Calcutta wrote a leading article in which a plea for the withdrawal of Great Britain from the League of Nations was put forth. The article concluded:

Sooner or later our youth and strength may have to play their part. We cannot be indifferent to the sufferings of the world, and must seek at the earliest moment to help it back to peace. But if to do so we must be prepared to fight let us wait till we know clearly what we are fighting for. What answer could the British Government give to-day to youth enquiring for what it is asked to fight. For collective security? That is not true, since Germany can find allies as easily as Russia. For Russian Communism? Why should we fight for that? If France or Belgium, Holland or Switzerland is invaded then indeed, if we are asked to fight we shall know why. We should be fighting to save weak neighbours being overrun by a ruthless Power which threatens us also. We should be fighting primarily to preserve the British Empire. That seems to us the best reason for which to fight, till collective security and international force become realities. At present as the Abyssinian affair proved such talk is miserable humbug. Let us not be deceived. Let us get out of the League quick, while there is yet time. In a week or a fortnight it may be too late. If Mr. Eden does not give notice of withdrawal from the League next week he will have placed the Empire in a grave position.

If England will fight only for its Empire and other countries when their own interests are endangered and no one unselfishly for another, the League is already dead.

ABOLITION OF PARAMOUNTCY.

WE knew that this demand would come from the Princes very soon after federation, and we find, now that federation on the Princes' own terms is assured, it is being voiced by their faithful spokesman, *United India and Indian States*. The Princes will retain all their autocracy in internal affairs even after federation; the federal government will have no say in the matter. They will also introduce their autocracy into the federation itself through their nominees in the federal legislature. This secured, they now aim at eliminating the only other factor that remains which, in theory at any rate, may put a curb upon their autocracy, viz. the paramountcy rights of the British Government. They know that in actual practice they have not much to fear from paramountcy. Unless maladministration in a State exceeds all bounds of decency and until continued non-intervention becomes a scandal, the Government will let the Princes do just what they please. But in the abstract paramountcy makes a great inroad upon their autocratic powers. If the Viceroy were so minded he could come down heavily upon them on the least provocation. He could say that the States'

people were too heavily taxed, that too small a proportion of the money taken from them was being spent in their interest, that they were deprived of their fundamental rights without cause, that they were given no share in the government of the States, and that these grievances must be redressed. The British Government does not merely assert its claim to a right to intervene when it sees fit, but it also says that if it gives help in quelling a rebellion, it can call for a reform of the administration which brought on the rebellion. The Butler Committee made such a statement, and no doubt the British Government accepts it. There is no limit to the scope of paramountcy. No Viceroy, it is true, will assume the rights and discharge the duties of paramountcy with a light heart and alienate the new allies secured for imperialism in keeping the British Indian nationalists in their place, but why should the Princes allow such an unsatisfactory state of things to continue even in theory? Why should not they, having obtained all they could desire from the British Indian people under federation, strike a blow at the only extra-

federal authority, the Viceroy, under whose nominal subjection they remain?

The Princes used the British Government to get what they wanted from the British Indian people; now they want to use the British Indian people to get what they want from the British Government. Look at the ingenious argument used by *United India*. It says to the British Indian people: "You are very sore about the States being allowed to be represented by nominees of the Princes in the federal legislature. We appreciate this feeling and recognise that the evil resulting from the arrangement provided for in the constitution must be remedied. But how is it to be remedied? By requiring the Princes to have their representatives popularly elected? Wrong; you will never find a solution this way. A much easier solution lies in putting pressure on the British Government. After all, what is wrong about nomination? The Princes are patriotic people; they have as much love for the country as any proletariat in British India. Only you feel—and rightly feel—that the British Government will impose its will on the Princes, that while the Princes will want to nominate patriotic and independent people to the federal legislature and they will want these nominees to act in the true interests of the country, the British Government will coerce them into nominating unpatriotic and subservient people and will compel them to act to the detriment of national interests. It is not the autocratic power which the Princes wield over their subjects that needs to be attacked; it is rather the coercive power which the British Government can exercise over the Princes that should be attacked. The British Government's coercion derives from its paramountcy over the States. Let that be abolished, and you will see that Princely nomination will work as nicely as popular election. The Princes by themselves will be unable to secure abolition of paramountcy. Their efforts in this direction will appear selfish; if, however, the democratically-minded people in British India join in the demand of the Princes, the matter will assume a very decent appearance and the demand will be irresistible. If paramountcy is ended, it will benefit the Princes no doubt; but just consider how much it will benefit you. You feel a certain amount of delicacy and awkwardness in attacking the Princes, who are your own flesh and blood. But you would love to attack a foreign Government, particularly because by so doing you can indirectly attach the Princes to nationalism. Come, then, and present a Patriotic Front to the British Government in making a dead-set upon paramountcy."

United India of course does not speak of abolition of paramountcy; it would be somewhat indiscreet to do so. It uses the more cautious phrase "constitutionalisation of paramountcy," but means nothing short of abolition. For paramountcy rights come into play when there is gross misrule in the States, and how is paramountcy to be made "subject to constitutional restrictions on itself" and to "act on definite principles through a judicial or constitutional tribunal following definite procedure" unless gross misrule itself is put under restrictions, the facts being determined by

an independent tribunal? The best restriction on misrule is to replace autocratic by popular rule. The British Government intervenes, or at any rate professes to intervene, in a State in the interest of the people, but if the Princes will entrust the government of their States to their subjects they will remove the only valid reason for the British Government's intervention. For if there is misrule in the States under popular government, the British Government will say it is the doing of the people themselves and if its wards who, having come into man's estate, mismanage their property it is no longer the affair of the guardian to set matters right. The only way, therefore, in which paramountcy can be "constitutionalised" is by introducing democracy in the States. If *United India* wants this we are all for it; but this is not what it means by constitutionalising paramountcy. It just wants paramountcy to be terminated and the Princes to be allowed to work their will, without let or hindrance, upon their subjects. Are British Indians going to allow themselves to be bamboozled by this *United India's* subtle argument that "the standardisation of paramountcy is a reform which is essential to the unfettered development of free federal institutions in this country." Some time ago there was a serious danger that British Indian nationalists, just because of their nationalism, would fall into this trap. Now, however, the danger is sensibly diminished since Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru assumed the reins of Congress politics. The All-India Congress Committee at its last meeting expressed its determination to carry on a struggle as much against the feudal rule as against the foreign rule of the British Government. It is now to be hoped that no such appeal to nationalism, however cleverly made, will succeed.

The Princes hardly ever couch their demand in respect of paramountcy in such crude terms as "elimination of paramountcy." To do so would rouse the suspicions of even those people who would be satisfied with Indian rule, however oligarchic or plutocratic in the beginning, in the hope that it will lead eventually to genuine popular rule. The Princes, therefore, say: "Paramountcy might be retained. But it must not be exercised arbitrarily by one man, the Viceroy, under the advice of his officials who are subordinate to him. One man rule is always bad. Let the Viceroy, therefore, be placed under a statutory obligation to consult and be guided by an impartial tribunal, before whom the Prince who is charged with misrule should be given an opportunity of defending himself. Even the meanest criminal has this right. Why not then a Prince who probably rules over tens of thousands or millions of people? What could be an impartial tribunal in such a case? Surely it could only be a tribunal composed largely if not exclusively of brother Princes of the accused. The subjects not only of the States whose administration is brought into question but of other States also must be excluded. Their inclusion would be a violation of the elementary principles of justice. The Princes do not form a trade union; they will not try to shield a peccant member of their order. If, however, paramountcy rights are exercised after full consultation with the Princes and after obtaining their sanction, things will go smooth-

ly. Otherwise there will be constant friction between the Viceroy and the States, which ought to be avoided." The Princes' ideas of elementary justice differ so radically from the accepted notions on this subject that no British Indian is likely to agree with them. Howsoever such a tribunal be composed, it would appear clear to every impartial observer that the rulers of States should find no place on it if the subjects do

not. If independent judges were to adjudicate on the subject of misrule in accordance with certain approved principles and if the autocracy of the Viceroy were thus to be qualified, we for our part should not object. But what the Princes want is that they should form the jury, which no decent-minded person will allow.

THE VICEROY'S APPEAL.

THE Viceroy is no doubt utterly sincere in his belief that the new constitution which the British Government has fashioned for India is "for breadth of conception and boldness of design without parallel in history", but he should realise that there are few among Indian public men, who, after "a due appraisal of the fabric as a whole" will agree with his estimate of this "political adventure" and will give it "a fair and reasonable trial" in actual working such as he desires. What Lord Linlithgow wants is that Indian politicians should accept the limitations imposed by the reforms and should content themselves with such practical advantages as may accrue to them while working within those limitations. We ought to tell the Viceroy while there is yet time that it would be impossible for any progressive politicians to take up this position. It will be their constant endeavour to transcend these limitations by every means in their power. We have not in mind here the wrecking policy to which the Congress has as a body publicly committed itself. This policy it may or may not carry out; it may or may not succeed in giving effect to it even if it conscientiously tried to carry it out. But one thing is certain. The Congress and every other political party will be compelled by the force of public opinion to adopt towards the constitution an attitude of implacable hostility and to work it in such a way as to demonstrate its failure and to necessitate its complete overhaul. A "fair and reasonable trial" of the constitution presupposes an amount of friendliness to the constitution which is not to be found in any quarter, and to expect that the Indian people will resign themselves to the new Act which our rulers have thought fit to impose upon them is to expect that the impossible will somehow become possible.

The situation is in some ways analogous to that which faces the Arabs in Palestine. For its own military purposes the British Government issued at a critical moment in the World War a declaration promising a National Home to the Jews in Palestine. Not only did it not consult the Arabs before doing so, but it avoided an authentic expression of Arab opinion on the subject by refusing to participate in a Commission which President Wilson wanted to appoint. When the King-Crane Commission of the U. S. Government alone found that the Arabs of Palestine were solidly against the Jewish National Home, the British Government wilfully ignored the verdict, and, accepting the mandate for Palestine, proceeded to give effect to a policy which it knew was bitterly opposed by the Arabs. It also ignored the promise it had made to

the whole of the Arab Peninsula to establish a confederation of Arab States; it joined with other European powers in breaking up this vast tract of country into several States, and by placing them under various mandates and Kings and Emirs made any future unification impossible. By the establishment of a Jewish National Home it effectually prevents Palestine, separated as it is from Syria and other Arab States, from ever acquiring self-government, for the Jewish Home presupposes the existence of an outside power to control the immigration of the Jews. Now the British Government says to the Arabs: "We are quite prepared to look into your grievances and see that your position is in no way prejudiced. But the establishment of the Jewish National Home cannot be allowed to be brought into question. It represents the unalterable policy of the British Government and indeed of all the Governments that met at the close of the war to distribute mandates among themselves. The world of Jewry is now under international protection. That policy will and must stand, but short of it we are prepared to meet all your reasonable demands."

Similarly, the British Government says to Indians: "The constitution is now an accomplished fact; it has passed the stage of controversy. We cannot allow you to reopen the question. You have to take the constitution as we have made it. But we shall promise you this much. We will administer with the utmost sympathy the constitution that is so distasteful to you. We will pay tender regard to your susceptibilities. The Act is replete with safeguards, but we will give you our word for it that we shall not bring them into play unless it becomes absolutely necessary, and when we have to give effect to the safeguards we shall not do so harshly. If you are prepared to waive your basic demands you will find that all will go well with you. The constitution will work smoothly, and it will benefit you beyond your wildest dreams. But if very unwisely you choose to adopt an attitude of opposition, not to any particular measures, but to the constitution itself, you will come up against the whole might of the British Government, and you know what that means." So much is implied in the very smooth words that Lord Linlithgow employed in his speech to the Central Legislature. The question really before the Indian people is whether they will accept the constitution that is forced on them and work within its limits, or they will try to overthrow these limits and create a situation in which it will become necessary for the Government to frame a new and acceptable constitu-

tion. The question before the Palestinian Arabs was whether they would accept separation from the other Arab countries permanently, acquiesce in a Jewish National Home in their own little country and within these limits try to safeguard their own interests against the flood of Jewish immigration. The Arabs have chosen the less easy path; they challenge the whole policy of the British Government in cutting up Palestine and in forcing the Jews on them. Indians too have chosen the less easy path. They refuse to submit to the constitution.

How the Indian people are to force the hands of the British Government in framing an acceptable constitution we do not presume to know. The British Government has taken the precaution, while foisting a bad constitution upon the country, of preventing an amendment of it by normal means, as Professor Berriedale Keith has fully admitted. We, therefore, do not claim to see the way out, but we shall not for that reason accept a constitution which is thoroughly unacceptable to us. Of the Palestinian problem too no solution can be foreseen. Ours like theirs is a baffling problem. In the Arab countries new vested interests have been created. For their creation not the British Government alone, but the League of Nations itself is responsible. Palestine's aspirations cannot be met unless these vested interests are disturbed, and no Government will be willing even to try to disturb them. What can the Arabs of Palestine do in such circumstances? They can only place before the Jews the grim facts of the situation: if the Jews choose to remain in Palestine under the British Government's protection, they will do so as an island in a sea of Arabs; if the Arabs of the whole Arab peninsula remain united, some solution may yet be found. So we feel that if the Indian progressives remain united in their hostility to the constitution, some solution may be found to modify even a cast-iron constitution. But because no immediate solution comes in sight they cannot change their attitude to the constitution which the Government is preparing to bring into force.

THE TRAGEDY AT AMBERNATH !

I

TO those who are interested in the welfare of labour and the establishment of harmonious relations between the employers and the workers, Ambernath, a small village near Kalyan in the Bombay Presidency, has presented a problem which has baffled solution. Not that the strike of the workers in the Western India Match Factory, which has been going on since July 25, is an extraordinary strike and possesses features which are not common in ordinary trade disputes. It is a strike with an economic grievance behind it; and had it been handled by the parties concerned—including the Government of Bombay—in the spirit of give and take, we see no reason why it should not have been settled long ago. But the manner in which the strike is viewed by the employers and the way in which the strikers and their leaders were dealt with by the local authorities have created difficulties causing

bitterness and irritation on all sides and resulting in making Ambernath an armed camp. If one surveys the situation with an unbiased mind, one cannot help feeling that Ambernath and the adjoining area have been made to appear as if they are under martial law and that the settlement of the strike has become a minor issue. For the proper understanding of the whole situation we propose to summarise the events that led to the declaration and the continuance of the strike and the methods adopted by Government, which have brought untold misery on the workers and humiliation on their leaders.

In the 1934-35 strike in the Western India Match Factory, attempts were made to standardise the wages, and thanks to the Bombay Labour Office, an award containing the rates of wages on average production was given and accepted by the employers and the workers. The method of negotiation which had at that time been recently introduced by the Bombay Government in this Presidency worked at its best in that dispute and both the sides were pleased with the award of the Labour Office. Under the award, the rates of wages were increased in most departments except in the box-closing department where there was a reduction of a quarter of a pie. To this reduction the workers agreed when the employers on their side gave up their demand of victimising a few workers and agreed to take back all who had gone on strike. We may also state that under this award the earnings of the workers were increased in comparison with the former wages; but for that the employers can take no credit whatever. The rates were fixed on average production; the workers showed higher efficiency which resulted in larger earnings than were expected. Instead of showing satisfaction at this result, the employers are now trying to make a point that the workers got more than expected—a point which has, in our opinion, no relevancy at all. Although the strike was settled amicably by the acceptance of the award by both sides, the channel of further negotiations between them was closed with the termination of the strike. In this, we fear, lay the root of the dispute that has now arisen. The management of the Western India Match Factory refused to recognise the Union and its General Secretary, Mr. S. V. Parulekar of the Servants of India Society; and thus the door of communication between the workers and the employers was closed. Had this door remained open, we feel confident that Ambernath would have been saved from the present disastrous strike. This was the first mistake on the part of the employers at Ambernath.

The factory worked well under the terms of the award for well-nigh eighteen months. The workers in the box-closing department were, however, feeling a grievance on account of a reduction in the rates of their wages. Since December 1935, they made representation after representation to the management to restore the cut. They represented their grievance also to the Labour Office. Both turned down the representation on the ground that the workers' demand was unjustifiable. We fail to understand how it was unjustifiable. It is true that the management were paying the rate as fixed by the

award. But the award is not sacrosanct for all time; it can be reopened by any side at any time. If the factory had been working at a heavy loss, would not its management have demanded reconsideration of the award? We dare say it would have. Similarly the workers have the same right to demand reconsideration of the award if they feel that they have a grievance. We may here recall the fact that the higher rates of wages than those contained in the award had been offered to the workers in the 1934-35 negotiations, but the latter were satisfied with the present rates on condition that no one from among their ranks was victimised. The last representation that the workers made for the restoration of the cut was on July 20, 1936; and it was turned down on July 24. On the next day the box-closing department declared a strike. Neither Mr. Parulekar nor the Union was aware of it. They were not dealing with the negotiations because the employers would not negotiate with them. If the Union had been negotiating, there is no reason to believe that it would not have succeeded in stopping a sectional strike. The prestige of the management stood in the way and left no alternative to the workers concerned but to decide their own course of action.

It was open to the management to consult the Union even after the declaration of a partial strike and when the other departments were working peacefully. Again, their prestige came in their way. On 27th July the management tried to work the box-closing department by engaging new men from the criminal tribes. This was the second mistake on the part of the employers. The workers in other departments naturally and rightly resented this move and on their failure to induce the employers not to take this course, joined their comrades in the strike which became general in the whole factory on the same day. The management immediately answered by a lock-out and declared that the opening of the factory would be hereafter subject to terms and conditions which they deemed fit to impose.

This in brief is the genesis of the strike. We have already stated that it could have been avoided if there had been a normal channel of negotiations between the two sides through the workers' trade union. The management seemed to have taken a vow that they would under no circumstances deal with Mr. Parulekar and his Union. This raises a fundamental issue which it is well to consider. If it is permissible for the Western India Match Factory to choose its directors and Managing Director, it is equally permissible for the workers to select their own officers for the Union. Mr. Parulekar has been elected by them as their General Secretary as Mr. Sundgren has been selected Managing Director by the Company. If the workers and the employers have to run the factory, it is only fair that both sides should recognise their representatives and deal with them. Human weaknesses there will be; but they will be on both sides. None can say that Mr. Parulekar is a devil while Mr. Sundgren is a saint. But this simple fact the management at Ambernath per-

sistently refused to recognise and wanted a settlement on its own terms. The workers did not stand on their own prestige but agreed to secure the settlement of the strike through the well-wishers of the workers. Within ten days after the strike began, Mr. N. M. Joshi, than whom it is difficult to find a more balanced and better recognised trade union leader, wrote a letter to Mr. Sundgren and asked for an interview. The letter has not yet been acknowledged! Again on August 13, he wrote a letter to the Government of Bombay, requesting them to intervene in the dispute. Messrs. Bakhale and Parulekar approached the Labour Office more than once with the same request. One or two other prominent individuals unconnected with the labour movement and wholly devoted to social work of a purely humanitarian character tried to negotiate with the management and also the Labour Office. But their efforts bore no fruit. The Labour Office seems to take the view that the demand for the restoration of a cut of a quarter of a pie is not such a grave issue as to necessitate a strike in the whole factory. We may point out that the strike in the whole factory was brought about by the management themselves—when they attempted to recruit new labour and that the workers cannot be held responsible for it. We may further point out that a cut of a quarter of a pie may be nothing to the employers and to those who deal in hundreds of rupees; but it is a good deal to the working classes whose wages are admittedly miserably low and who are perpetually in debt. The management, on the other hand, do not seem to consider the strike on its merits at this stage. To them it has become an insignificant issue. All that they are bent upon is to put down Mr. Parulekar and his Union, no matter to what straits the workers may be reduced and to what financial loss the share-holders of the Company may be put. We cannot help feeling that this betrays a frame of mind which deserves the highest censure at the hands of the public. Even assuming that the workers made a mistake in going on a strike, it is necessary in the interests of both the parties and the interests of the public to negotiate an early settlement. With that object in view, a fresh effort was made last week to bring about a compromise by suggesting that the workers should give up their demand for the restoration of the cut, that the management should take back all the workers who had gone on strike and give them the same terms of employment that prevailed before the strike was declared. We believe that, under the circumstances, no better and reasonable proposal for the settlement of the dispute could possibly have been offered. But even to this the management did not agree. They insist that they would take back only such people as they would like and victimise the rest. They further insist that they would have nothing to do with Mr. Parulekar. We have no doubt that Mr. Parulekar would be willing to withdraw from the Union if there would be no victimization and if the management thought that he was a thorn in their flesh. The management refused to accept even this proposal which clearly shows that they are more anxious to crush Mr. Parulekar than to reach a settlement. We leave it to the

public to judge how far this attitude is fair and reasonable. It may be that the management may crush Mr. Parulekar and succeed in obtaining a complete surrender on the part of the workers. But we may give a warning that a settlement such as this will bring no real peace.

The part so far played by the local officials and the Government of Bombay in this unfortunate dispute is equally condemnable and we shall deal with it in our next article.

EDUCATIONAL REFORM.

THE NEW MATRICULATION.

I

IT is one of the fundamentals of a sound system of education that its curriculum should not be a jumble of subjects beyond the capacity of a pupil to be trained under it; that, at the end of it, the pupil should feel that he has distinctly benefitted by the training, and that he takes with him in the world a trained mind, along with sound body and a definite bias to his character. Mind, morals and muscles have all to be carefully attended to during this period of adolescence, so that the pupil and his parent may be able to determine what the pupil is going to be in life, as a working member of society and as a citizen. The new Matriculation curriculum, viewed from this standpoint and as an apex of secondary education, ignores this prime factor in the education of the young. In fact, it is no education at all that the curriculum seeks for, so much as instruction, if instruction that be called which, in practice, will prove nothing better than mere smattering in a multiplicity of subjects, thus vitiating the very idea and purpose of secondary education.

In one of his lay addresses on the subject Dean Inge has pointed out how education in high schools has become useless because of the over-conscientious tutor and his ally, the over-zealous annotator of textbooks. Under the system so vitiated, it tends to become a curse rather than a blessing. The pupils trained in this manner learn neither to observe nor to do anything for themselves. They merely swallow what is cooked ready for them by the "over-conscientious" tutor and the "ever-helpful" annotator, and, as inevitably, come out at the end of it, empty and useless, whatever the rank they may show in the examination result as a product of this hot-house process.

On paper the new Matriculation curriculum may seem the acme of perfection, as it presumes to coach up the receptive pupil in so many subjects, within the shortest period of time—three languages, histories of England and India, geography, mathematics inclusive of trigonometry, and general science with special sciences to improve upon it! Taking into consideration the average age in India of the pupil who competes for these honours of learning and the intellectual calibre of the average teacher, with his pittance of a salary to enthruse him for the task we are afraid this process will turn the candidate into no better than a crammer and ignoramus—if it does not kill, once for all, the desire in him to read and learn for himself. Too much fuel is always apt to put out whatever spark there is of talent and aptitude in an

individual. The instruction imparted as per this curriculum cannot be anything else than a pumping process which will leave the pupil high and dry at the end of it.

Let us now examine in detail what the curriculum comes to. And first, as to languages. The pupil will be required under the new course to offer for examination three languages at the end of his Matriculation year. A boy has to take up Sanskrit or any other classical language. In addition he has to answer a paper in any one of the vernacular languages. And English is, of course, compulsory right through. Do you hope that the pressure of study in three languages will not be a burden upon the pupil? Is it to be supposed that this will mean for him sound grounding in any *one* of these three? English none can neglect for reasons that are obvious. If you need a vernacular in addition, why compel the boy to take up Sanskrit to accompany it? And if vernacular is to be insisted upon, why not Hindi for all rather than any *one* of the numerous vernacular languages that divide province from a province, or the several divisions of a province, one from the other? If Sanskrit is to be kept up and taught as the parent language of the vernacular, why then insist upon the vernacular? To-day, in the name of nationalism and provincialism, educationists protest too much in favour of the vernacular languages. We may understand the plea, as a medium of instruction in secondary education. But we see sense in studying it as a separate language in addition to English and Sanskrit as a part of secondary education. There was a time when only two languages were taught in our high schools and colleges. And yet no province suffered for lack of excellent scholars and writers in the vernaculars on that account. Some of our eminent Marathi scholars and men of letters of the last generation learnt under the old system. And though they learnt only Sanskrit and English in schools and colleges, they have left behind work, in every branch of Marathi literature, which few in the younger generation of our students can rival. The fact of it was that what they read, they studied well. They started with sound grounding in a few and well-chosen subjects, and, therefore, profited by their training and retained the love of reading and writing throughout their lives. Most of them did not take up literature as their profession in life; but contributed to the building of vernacular literature, precisely because they pursued it as a labour of love.

By the process in vogue to-day we beget a large number of smatterers, with their talent of learning

completely gone. In language learning, as in every other branch of learning, the sound maxim, at least in the beginning, is—*non-multum, sed multa*. The new curriculum is a contradiction, in fact, of this golden rule, and, therefore, will be fraught with greater harm than good to the pupil concerned.

So much for languages generally. What of history? Why should a pupil, who will, on an average, hardly complete his seventeen years when he appears for his Matriculation examination, be required to mug up (if the word be allowed) lessons in Indian history covering a period of 2500 years? And, in addition to this, lessons in English history and in the constitutions and administrations of both the countries? Thank heavens that the course in English history happens to be considerably reduced and does not date back to the beginning of the Norman Conquest! History teaching is misunderstood even in countries where its curriculum for secondary education is framed on proper lines. One who turns to the opening pages of Prof. Hearnshaw's lectures on the main currents of European history will know wherein the error lies. In India no one cares to understand the question, much less to frame the courses to suit the purpose of history teaching. Will it not be much better if the history of India is taught in high schools from 1858 onwards right up, say, to the end of 1935? And the history of England, also covering the same momentous period in Indian national evolution? In that case, the inter-relation of both will be better grasped, its importance well impressed, and the student, passing through such a course, even in broad outlines and features of Indian and English history will be enabled to know and understand something of the world around him today. An effort of this kind has been well made in a book by the late Mr. R. C. Dutt called "India and England," covering the period of the reign of Queen Victoria. And being along right lines, it may well be adopted as a basis for study in Indian and English history for Matriculation students.

If we turn from history to geography, we notice a similar confusion in that branch also. The pupil is called upon to study the geography of the whole world, in its commercial, physical and other aspects. The mistake lies in the fact that the members sitting down to draw up the curriculum as a whole, think that each one of them must have his finger in the pie, no matter if the dish so made up is spoiled and proves no nourishment for the pupil. If one is intent on having *so many* subjects, then the teaching of minor ones among them should be so limited as to fit in with the whole, and the whole may not be a heavy and unbearable burden on the mind of the candidate. We do not surely mean to turn our students into prigs

either in our schools or in the colleges to follow them. What we should seek really is to awaken curiosity, rouse interest, create love for reading, to train the mind and make the pupil choose his own line at the end. If he is so inclined and has aptitude for the same, he may later on become an expert in any branch and reap, in due time, the reward of the study so pursued. Prof. William James, in his Talks to Teachers, has impressed this truth with a wealth of learning and insight which no sound educationist should ignore when he sits down to prepare a proper curriculum for the education of the young.

As regards mathematics and science in the new curriculum the less said the better. The Matriculation examination should be regarded primarily as the end of secondary education. As such arithmetic should not be neglected in it for the sake of algebra, geometry and trigonometry, for the reason that these are useful for college studies to follow. In fact, arithmetic is of greater use to an average pupil than either algebra or geometry, though these may be of special value to budding mathematicians in our colleges, reading for science and engineering. As regards science, as it is prescribed in the new curriculum, the new is no improvement on the old. General science and particular branches of it—what a course prescribed in them for a pupil reading for his Matriculation examination! Science is a subject which proves instructive only by work in the laboratory and by experiment with things observed and noted by the pupil himself. And any one subject in science, well taught even in its rudiments and outline, is more valuable than a number of them hurriedly learnt and taken second-hand. Thoroughness, precision, sound grasp, are of the essence of useful instruction in science. It is essentially a training in method. Does any student or teacher, we frankly ask, hope to cope with the curriculum in science and finish it with benefit to the pupil and satisfaction to a conscientious and able teacher? The study, as it is today, is a mere eye-wash. And in the new order of things it will be a mere mechanical drill in terminology and formulae, and in set answers to questions for use in an examination paper. Rather than have such science, either general or particular, it is better to go without it, and learn a few subjects better, more thoroughly and to purpose. The pupil at college after this sort of training in science, will have to go over the same ground again. And his time and energy spent on it in schools will be a sheer waste, if it did not mean a positively vicious bias given to his habits of study in the most crucial period of his young life.

V. N. N.

INDIANS OVERSEAS.

DURING the last week the Government of India laid on the table of the Assembly two statements relating to the disabilities of Indians within the Empire and one of these deals exclusively with the position of Indian labourers in Malaya. The information contained in these statements seems to have caused so much satisfaction in certain quarters as

to make them advise us to give up all agitation for the redress of grievances of Indians overseas and to divert our energies to some better purpose. We really wish the prospects were so rosy as we are required to imagine they are or they will be. Even a cursory reading of the statements, though couched in general and indefinite language, cannot but convince any unprejudiced observer that all is not yet well and that

the inequities imposed on our Indian brethren still remain, even threaten to extirpate them in some places from the position they already occupy. It is the purpose of this article to deal with some of the prominent disabilities which, however much one may argue, are neither compatible with the interests of the indigenous populations nor of the Colonials.

Now that the South African Delegation will soon be in our midst, it is well to recall the disabilities suffered by our countrymen in that Union. A great deal of propaganda has been carried on both in South Africa and India regarding the passage of the Asiatic Land Tenure Act of 1936, alleging that it is a landmark in the history of the struggle of the Indians in South Africa, and that it is an epoch-making measure marking the triumph of a 'patient and reasoned statement of our case'. The Act no doubt confers the right not only of occupation but of ownership of property in *segregated areas*; but such allocation of areas can take place only in consultation with the local authorities and the approval of both Houses of Parliament. In the case of individual pieces of land scattered about townships the Act confers a qualified and terminable right of occupation taking away the right of permanent exemption enjoyed under the Gold Law. But those who enthuse so much over this measure forget the fact that the stigma of segregation remains, the existence of Indian locations is perpetuated, such exemptions as are given are temporary and for mere occupation only and that this legislation is entirely opposed to the terms accepted in the Smuts-Gandhi agreement of 1914 and the principle enunciated by the late Sir Fazli Hussain before the Cape Town Conference in 1932, viz., 'that the policy of the Union Government should be to allow Indians in the Transvaal facilities for residence and trade and for owning and leasing property without segregation'. Nor is the policy underlying the measure consistent with the principles accepted by the Union Government at the Cape Town Conference of 1927. The inequity of this measure will be realised if it is known that the segregated areas are occupied mostly by the Colonial-born Indians who by virtue of their birth and their position as tax-payers are as much entitled to full civic rights as the South African European. As pointed out in the Memorandum submitted by Sir Kunwar Maharaj Singh to the Feetham Commission, the policy of segregation sought to be perpetuated will undoubtedly tend to degrade the Indians, put the stigma of inferiority on them and such degradation or retardation would inevitably react adversely upon the whole community. The deplorable condition of many of the Indian locations to which the Agent General had to draw the attention of the authorities time and again, will continue as long as segregation persists in however modified a form, especially as the Indians enjoy neither political nor municipal franchise. The question of occupation of land and residence apart from ownership is closely connected with the method of granting licences to Indian traders.

Virtually Indians cannot trade in areas other than segregated areas. In spite of the protest of the Agent not to alter materially the immigration law which embodied the conclusions of the Cape Town Conference of 1926-27, the Government of South Africa passed the Immigration (Amendment) Act, 1931, which has put a stop for ever to registration certificate holders staying outside South Africa for more than three years and also destroyed the prospect of return to South Africa of Indians who failed to return before 5th July, 1930, after over three years' absence or, having returned, have once more sailed for India. The passing of the Transvaal Licences Control Ordinance, 1932, is a distinct violation of the Cape Town Agreement of 1927 and a serious menace to

non-European traders in that it conferred upon Municipal Licensing Committees wide and autocratic powers. Though better facilities are now provided for the education of Indian children in Natal, the progress cannot by any means be considered satisfactory and is not in keeping with the spirit or the letter of the upliftment clause of the Cape Town Agreement. There have been other pieces of objectionable legislation such as the Liquor Act and the Slums Act which, though they appear harmless, are designed to affect the interests of Indians. When it is remembered that the laws mentioned above have all been enacted after the Cape Town Agreement of 1927, it will be clear that there is no real change of heart of South Africa and much that was expected to happen as a result of friendly discussions by the visits of deputations has not been realised. The solemn undertaking given by the Union Government in 1927, that when the time came for the revision of the existing laws they would give due consideration to the suggestion made by the delegation of the Government of India has been honoured more in the breach than in the observance. Not only have the existing laws been rendered more stringent, but also fresh legislation of an outrageous character has been undertaken.

As regards Kenya, the Orders-in-Council recently promulgated set the seal of approval to the existing administrative practice which imposes certain unwarranted restrictions on transfer of land to an Asiatic though the Orders do not impose as such any legal disability. It is a distinction without a difference. During the debate on the Orders, Major Milner, M.P., pointed out that the present law permits alienation of land to an Asiatic and the Orders would interfere with the existing position. If, as stated by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the existing practice is to remain undisturbed, it is not known why the Orders-in-Council were deemed necessary at all. It appears to be in fact the perpetuation in a subtle way of the policy of White Highlands in Kenya. This policy seeks to reserve permanently large tracts of land and extend these reserves for the exclusive use of Europeans and to provide European farmers with certain 'adventitious and unheard of props' at the expense of other communities. The fact that the Secretary of State for the Colonies did not accept the recommendations of the Morris-Carter Commission designed to perpetuate an unadulterated policy of wholesale racial segregation does not in any way minimise the evil effects of the White Highlands policy, though practised as an administrative measure.

In Fiji also the demand for a common electoral roll on which so much insistence was laid by the Indian community has not been accepted. In the revised constitution the nominated official majority is maintained and this will consist mostly of European officials as Indians are excluded from superior services.

The Europeans have been given representation far in excess of the number they are entitled to on population basis as 8700 Europeans secure five seats while 85,000 Indians also get five seats. Introduction of the principle of nomination to both European and Indian seats, two out of five seats allotted, is a subtle way of exercising patronage to strengthen the position of Government on the pretext of holding the balance even. It is doubtless that Fiji will be governed by Europeans and in their interests. Neither the superior services are thrown open to Indians nor even one of the executive Councillorships reserved for Indians. Besides there are serious grievances such as the denial of the right of ownership of land, the municipal franchise which is an attempt to introduce the policy of racial segregation and the utter inadequacy of educational facilities.

What are generally known as the Clove decrees passed in Zanzibar practically driving out petty Indian traders without proper appreciation of the important position held by the Indian merchants in the economic structure of the Colony is another instance in point of discriminating legislation in the supposed interests of the native population. Only after repeated protests the Binder Enquiry was ordered. The delay in the receipt of the Secretary of State's sanction pending the consideration of the Binder Report necessitating the extension of the moratorium in respect of debt payments by the Arabs and Natives of Zanzibar has no doubt created some hope. It may not last long for it will not be a surprise if the Secretary of State gives sanction for the anti-Clove legislation on the usual plea that it is in the interests of the natives of Zanzibar who are being ruthlessly exploited by the Indian traders, though as a matter of fact the legislation is designed with an anti-Indian bias.

The judicial Commission appointed to enquire into the labour disputes in British Guiana, more in the nature of an *ex-parte* trial, is one more instance of the helpless lot of Indians overseas. The disputants were the European sugar planters and the Indian employees. Though indentured labour does not exist today, the fact that the Union labourer is entirely dependent upon the estate for his existence including residence places him wholly in a dependent position. The Government of India took no steps to depute anyone to render assistance to the unorganised Indian labourers to present their case before the Commission.

Even in the case of Ceylon the disabilities are many. Apart from the improvement of the conditions of Indian labour in Ceylon, about which much can be written, Indians other than estate labourers labour under certain disadvantages which deserve mention. In the Land Development Ordinance of 1935, the term 'Ceylonese' has been so defined as to exclude even domiciled Indians from its scope and they cannot get the benefit of the concessions in regard to Crown lands under the Colonisation scheme. Lately with the approval of the Secretary of State for the Colonies the Governor has defined 'Ceylonese descent' in the regulations governing admission into Ceylon Civil Service. It is said the cadets must be natural-born British subjects of European or Ceylonese descent, or of mixed European and Ceylonese descent, and no candidate will be regarded as of Ceylonese descent unless he is the son of a Sinhalese Burgher, Ceylon Tamil, Ceylon Moor, or Ceylon Malay parents. This definition excludes all Indians, even domiciled Indians, unless the Governor is pleased to grant permission to appear for examination for a natural-born British subject normally resident in Ceylon whose family connections and interests are in Ceylon.

In Malaya also the discrimination against even Malaya-born Indians still persists and the High Commissioner did not hesitate to declare openly that he could not support the proposals for the appointment of non-Malays to administrative posts. Many Indians belong to what may be termed as 'domiciled' communities who, though they are non-Malay, have been there for more than a generation and whose children and children's children have been born there and who have no other country but Malaya to call their own. To dub them as 'foreigners' and deny them the same opportunities as the European British subjects is to act against all principles of justice and fair-play. Sir Samuel Wilson recognised the just claims of

Indians and opined that they should be given the same professional and business opportunities as European British subjects. Adequate facilities for the education of Indian children are not provided. Outside the estates there are practically very few vernacular schools for Indian children. Only children born in Malaya are admitted into Government schools for higher education. But about what is to become of children born in India who perforce accompany their parents to Malaya, the Government seems to be least concerned. The Indian element is not adequately represented on the various councils and local bodies. There is one Indian member nominated to the Legislative Council and one member to the Federal Council. There is also one Indian member nominated to the Negri Sembilan State Council. It is not known for what reason Jaffna Tamils were considered competent to represent Indians on the Perak, Selangor and Johore State Councils especially now when the Ceylonese are least friendly to Indians in their own Island. The provisions under the Passenger Restriction Ordinance are being used to refuse permission to land in Malaya. It is complained the powers under this Ordinance have been used somewhat arbitrarily. Also the accommodation provided for those detained under the Ordinance is from all accounts considered distinctly bad. Besides these grievances of Indians in Malaya there are many relating to labourers working on estates. To deal with them would occupy large space.

In the foregoing paragraphs an attempt has been made to represent the existing state of things in some parts of the Empire. Neither the list of places nor the treatment of disabilities is by any means exhaustive. All those who believe in Imperial unity and in the promotion of cordial relations between the different parts of the Commonwealth will not hesitate to work unceasingly for the removal of disabilities. Whatever may be the present position, by virtue of the fact that the Government of India is a subordinate government, a self-governing India would not tolerate the perpetuation even for a day of the inferiority status accorded to her nationals in any part of the world. Though the Government of India have never failed to stand by the Indians overseas in their struggles, they have not for some reason adopted bold retaliatory measures. The innocuous Immigration into India Act of 1924 has remained a dead letter. It is hoped the Overseas Reciprocity Bill, when it becomes an Act, would share a better fate and the self-respect of India would be vindicated. Dictates of prudence and caution cannot and should not always hold sway when patience and forbearance have been sorely tried and the only solution is prompt and effective action.—R. S. R. in the *Hindu*.

WANTED.

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