

The Servant of India

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Topics of the Week.

Sir Cowasji Jehangir's Speech.

THE National Liberal Federation opened its session at Lucknow on Tuesday last, with an inaugural speech from the President, Sir Cowasji Jehangir. The President is in a minority in the Liberal Party in holding that, objectionable as the new constitution is in many ways (and Sir Cowasji himself pointed out several of these defects), it "is a definite advance on our present constitution." Starting on this premise, which most Liberals consider wrong and unfounded, he naturally takes an optimistic view of the future, which few Liberals can share. If only we work well, he says (and by well he means never creating unnecessary deadlocks though never shirking necessary ones), "our claim to dominion status will become irresistible within the next ten years". It is easy enough to say to Pandit Jawaharlal: "You want to destroy the constitution, but how are you going to do it?" Sir Cowasji defines his aim thus: "First and foremost, we would make strenuous attempts to secure an early revision of the new constitution with a view to attain dominion status at the earliest possible date"—by "the earliest possible date" he probably means within five years, for the demand will be irresistible in ten. What would be his answer if some one were to ask him, "How by constitutional action are you going to do it? Have you at all heard of the *liberum veto* of the Princes?"

BUT the Princes don't worry him at all. He proudly states that he is "by no means nervous about representatives of the Indian States co-operating with us in the federal government. They will, after all, be Indians and cannot but have the interests of India as a whole at heart. They may even be a little retrograde in the beginning (rather unfair to the Princes!), but association with those of more advanced views must have its effects (what self-gratulation here!)." So all Indians have national interests at heart, and therefore our

political fight reduces itself to the expulsion of the Britishers and replacement of them by Indians, who may be a little retrograde in the beginning but with a little push can become progressive. His chief objection to the safeguards presumably is that they will be in the hands of the Viceroy and Governors, who will be foreigners and will therefore necessarily be retrograde, not merely in the beginning but for a long time in future. But here too he is not without hope. The letter of the constitution is nothing to him. "It is the human element that is most important." And since foreigners too have a human element, the constitution which looks so bad may in fact be better than the best democratic constitution if only the Viceroy and Governors are good, foreigners though they be. "The very best constitution that we might possibly frame for this country might fail hopelessly, if the wrong type of men were called upon to work it." And, conversely, the very worst constitution that our enemies can devise for our enslavement will be a roaring success if we have the right type of men to work it, that is to say, men who "will be" Indians and thus who will have the good of the country at heart, who may be a little reactionary in the beginning but who will mend their ways when they come into contact with better fellows. No one who can reason in this way need ever be a pessimist.

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Congress Methodology Through Socialist Eyes.

THE Congress Socialists recently met in their third annual session at Faizpur and from the presidential chair of the Conference Mr. Jaiprakash Narain delivered an address which is valuable as helping a better appreciation of the difference in the mental make-up of an average Congressman and a Socialist. There is a section of Congressmen who, not being adequately alive to the seriousness of the crisis through which the country is passing, is, Mr. Jaiprakash Narain believes, inclined to take a complacent view of things. In the eyes of such people, success for the Congress at the elections is the be-all and end-all of their existence. What is to be done after such success is achieved they do not know and do not care to think about. The other class of Congress worker, according to Mr. Jaiprakash Narain, does not bother even about elections. "In the midst of the tumult and the gathering storm," this section goes on pursuing "with unruffled serenity" its "lofty dream of reviving the dead and dying industries" of this ancient land. Mr. Jaiprakash Narain frankly admits that this attitude alarms him.

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WITH people with a complacent belief in the way in which the struggle for Indian freedom is at present conducted, there is of course no question of its being gingered up. "A few months spent in jail at periodical intervals," says the President of the Socialists' Confe-

rence, "is about all that most of us in the Congress conceive our anti-imperialistic struggle to be." If this sort of mentality persists Mr. Jaiprakash Narain is afraid that the Congress will soon find itself completely ineffective, and he would have everybody realise that the next struggle of the Congress with imperialism must be its last.

INDEPENDENCE first or socialism first? Mr. Jaiprakash Narain's answer, so far as can be seen from press summaries of his address, is that the Congress must simultaneously strive for both. He thus describes the mentality of the average Congressman:

We think the British rule is responsible for the plight of the peasantry and it cannot be improved so long as that rule lasts. This of course is true, but then we conclude from this we have first to rid ourselves of that rule and then improve the condition of the peasants. Therefore no attempt is made at present to relate the dire needs of the peasants with the struggle for independence, to make that struggle itself a struggle for reduced rents, revenue, freedom from debt, a more just distribution of the burden of taxation, a juster system of tenancy and so on.

This sort of reasoning, he says, is typical of the middle class. "Clearly, we have not yet learnt to think like the masses because we are not yet close enough to them."

Indian Christians and New Constitution.

IN his presidential address to the Indian Christian Conference which met at Delhi immediately before Christmas Dr. P. B. Hivale gave it a lead on the subject of its attitude towards the reforms which was unreservedly accepted by it. The President made no secret of the fact that the Hoare constitution did not come up to the expectations of Indian Christians. All the same, he said, it had to be worked to the utmost public good. He also talked of "destroying" the new constitution, by which he meant replacing it in due course by one more acceptable to public opinion. The resolution passed by the Conference rules out obstruction along with non-co-operation and calls upon the different political parties to utilise the constitution so as to extract from it the utmost public good it is capable of yielding.

SIDE by side with the constitution being worked, Dr. Hivale would like all possible avenues of a communal settlement being explored by the leaders of the different communities. He is obviously under no delusion either that the task is an easy one or that the present is a propitious time for the effort. His reference to the question was only with a view to stressing its importance and was provoked by the recent communal riots in Bombay. Like all far-sighted patriots Dr. Hivale attaches so high a value to the banishment of the communal spectre that he feels that so long as its banishment is not an accomplished fact, Indian self-government is a misnomer.

DR. HIVALE'S advice to such of his co-religionists as might find their way into the Legislative Councils is also pitched in a non-communal key. Let them remember, he said, that their watchwords must be service to India and humanity. In serving India, he thought the best interests of the Indian Christians would also be served. It is in this spirit that he wants the Indian Christian members of the reformed legislatures to carry on their work. But before everything else he would like them to devote themselves to the preparation of an intensive programme of spreading literacy amongst Indian Christians so that by 1941 every Indian Christian would be able to read and write.

Women's Conference.

THE Women's Conference which met at Ahmedabad has completed ten years of its very useful existence and had Mrs. Cousins for its president. We have no doubt this is a well-deserved honour. Those who have any idea as to the tireless energy which Mrs. Cousins brought to bear on the organisation of the first session of the Conference at Poona and her deep and abiding interest in the problem of the uplift of Indian womanhood will rejoice at this recognition on the part of Indian women of her disinterested espousal of their cause.

A CONSIDERABLE part of Mrs. Cousins' presidential address was devoted to a recital of the achievements of the Conference which is such as would do credit to any organisation. The Conference now has 36 constituent areas with 114 sub-constituency areas. Their annual conferences serve as a valuable training ground in public service and public speaking. The Conference is no longer confined to the upper strata of Indian society, as was the case in its initial stages. As pointed out by Mrs. Cousins, its present membership includes all classes of society, from Maharanees to Harijans. The strength of public opinion on women's questions now observable in India must be ascribed in a large measure to the ceaseless endeavours of the Conference. The passage of the Age of Consent legislation and what is known as the Sarda Act is also largely the result of the activity carried on by the Conference. The abolition of the devadasi system, the stoppage of brothels, rescue and care of delinquent children—the Conference has consistently pressed on Government the desirability of action to bring about these reforms. Out of a fund of Rs. six lakhs collected by the Conference the Women's College for Home Science, the first of its kind in India, was founded. It is a matter for satisfaction that the College is daily growing in popularity and usefulness.

WHILE all this is matter for congratulation and thankfulness, the very slow spread of education among Indian women is doubtless a matter for deep regret. In twenty years, says Mrs. Cousins, the percentage of literacy among them has hardly risen by one per cent. This is due to sufficient funds not being made available for the purpose. While India spends Rs. 8 crores on the elementary education of 270 millions of her people, Britain, according to Mrs. Cousins, spends Rs. 86 crores for only 40 millions of her people and U. S. Rs. 347 crores for 130 millions.

BUT even in the distribution of such meagre funds as are available for education of all kinds, Mrs. Cousins complains that female education finds it difficult to get its proper share. She points out that fourteen times more money is spent on boys' education than on girls'. The result is that only one out of every 100 girls gets elementary education and only one out of every 1,000 gets secondary education. This means that the Conference must concentrate its attention for some years on ensuring a more rapid expansion of female education and must launch upon a programme of intensive work to that end. Let us hope Mrs. Cousins' regime will be characterised by strenuous endeavours to make this possible.

French India Assembly and Detenus.

AN emphatic protest against the system of detention without trial for indefinite periods practised on a large scale in British India in respect of young Bengalees was recently recorded by the French India Assembly. How was it concerned with what goes on

in British India? it may be asked. It would appear that the detenus include a number of French Indian subjects whose welfare is naturally a matter of vital concern to the French Government. These men are under detention since 1931 and there is no sign of their release coming about in the near future. They are consistently denied all opportunity of proving their innocence in a law court but have to put up with arbitrary restraints on their liberty. Nor is any limit placed on the period of such detention.

If the French Government so keenly feels this invasion on the part of a foreign government of the civil rights of its nationals, why did it keep quiet so long? Should it not have raised its voice against the evil very much earlier? As a matter of fact the French authorities are not guilty of inaction. It was given out in the course of the debate that the Governor of French India has all along been straining every nerve to secure satisfaction. He even interviewed the Governor of Bengal specially in order to ask for the release of the subjects of the French Government. An assurance was given by the Government spokesman that nothing will be left undone to bring about the release of the persons concerned.

India and the late King.

THE *Spectator*, commenting upon the proposed marriage of King Edward VIII with Mrs. Simpson says, in its issue of 4th December, after referring to the effect the marriage would have upon opinion in England and the Dominions: "In India above all, knowledge of the ground for any breath of criticism of the King-Emperor would have disastrous consequences." Why in India above all? We suppose it is thought that Indians look upon their rulers as little divinities, in whom all the moral and social virtues are centred in their perfection. We do not know if this was the belief of Indians in any past age, but if it ever was it vanished long ago. They are aware that their rulers have their share—and sometimes more than their share—of human frailties, and all that the people of India desire is that the rulers, whatever be their private life provided that it does not give rise to scandal, should leave public affairs to their constitutional advisers. They do not, now at any rate, exalt the royalty above the common run of mankind. If the rulers are like common men, it is enough for Indians. And do Englishmen expect a higher standard from their king? If they did why would they put him under restraint in affairs of State and make him a mere ornamental head? If they cannot trust him to display any superlative virtue in government why do they expect him to observe a moral code more exacting than one which his subjects follow? No disgrace attaches, according to their notions, to a person who marries a twice divorced woman; why is a king who does this to be forced to relinquish his kingdom? Indians of the present generation are free from this kind of superstition. They respect purity in private life; but they respect it equally in all men, whatever their social status. What is right for ordinary persons is also right for kings.

THE King's marriage, the *Spectator* says, is not a matter for him alone; it is one in which his Ministers and his people have a part. But what part had the people in deciding this question? The Ministers decided it for him. Who can say that the decision would not have been otherwise if the people could have made their influence felt? The Indian people at any rate would have taken no objection, seeing that marriages like the one which the King had proposed are a common enough occurrence in British society.

The *New Statesman and Nation* takes a saner view of this matter. It says: "According to the law of England and according to the laws of morality, common sense and common honesty, the King's marriage must be his own decision," but because of the objections expressed by the Cabinet and religious authorities, it suggested a compromise solution which might well have been adopted. It wrote in its issue of 5th December, when the question had begun being publicly discussed:

The King stands on his right as an individual to marry as he wishes. It is a right which should not be denied to any man. The Cabinet stands on the solid ground that according to the existing law the King's wife is Queen of England and mother of the successor to the throne and that they regard his choice as completely unsuitable. This should not be an inescapable dilemma. We should have thought it possible, indeed not difficult, so to alter the law that the King's wife should not be Queen of England. A new Act of Succession could be passed, which would exclude any issue of the marriage from the throne. Mrs. Simpson would then no doubt receive titled rank and become the wife of the King without becoming Queen of England.

Such a solution would surely go far to satisfy the reasonable views of King and Cabinet alike. It would also have the incidental advantage of being in accordance with morality, decency and common sense. It has not been sufficiently emphasised in the press that the present crisis is a tribute to the honesty and straightforwardness of the King's character. If he had been willing to conform to old and dishonourable precedents and had gone through the form of marriage with some royal personage whom he did not love, this farcical ceremony would have been accepted by the Cabinet and solemnised by the Church.

But the greatest asset of Edward VIII is his dislike of shams. Everyone knows that his speeches, both as Prince of Wales and as King, have commonly expressed his personal feelings; everyone knows when he visited a distressed area that he does so, not because it is a correct thing to do and not because his Ministers desire it, but because he is genuinely and deeply troubled about the misery and poverty which successive Governments have failed to relieve. The King, frankly, is not a conventional person and has a dislike for all forms of humbug. We believe that the country would welcome an honest solution of the kind we have suggested. It would end scandal and it would avoid the prospect which everyone deeply deplors that the present crisis may end in the King's abdication.

Time-Table of Agrarian Reform.

PROF. N. G. RANGA who presided over the Kisan Conference held at Faizpur tells us something about the new methodology to be adopted for transferring the question of agrarian reform from the region of talk and consideration to that of practical action. As everybody knows, the programme of agrarian reform includes a change in the present land revenue system, relief of agricultural indebtedness, adequate and cheap irrigation facilities, etc. A time-table for the effectuation of these and similar reforms would be prepared beforehand and as soon as the new provincial Governments are formed, they would be given six months' notice to carry these reforms into effect. It may be explained here that the least that would be expected of the future ministers is that they would make a beginning in the desired direction. It must also be added that satisfaction will not be demanded in respect of all these reforms at one bound, but that the so-called notice will relate only to one reform at a time. If no beginning is made during this period, a real fight will start "to demonstrate the strength of our sanctions."

Sir T. B. Sapru on Unemployment.

THE prevailing unemployment has led to one very unfortunate result. It has created a revulsion of feeling against literary and cultural education. This is proved to be valueless in practical life by the existence of thousands of highly educated men willing to work but not getting work and as a result either starving in the absence of means of livelihood or living on the charity of their better placed relatives or friends. Why waste time in receiving such useless education? Instead, why not take to technical or industrial education? This kind of talk is often indulged in even by many of our public men who ought to realise that the mere change-over from literary to technical education unaccompanied by an increase in opportunities of employment is not going to be a lasting or even a satisfactory solution of the problem. The real need of the hour is more openings and not a change in the educational habits of the rising generation. The only way to remedy unemployment is employment, for which adequate provision is necessary. Unless this is forthcoming the problem cannot be said to have been solved.

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IN his convocation address to the Punjab University Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru particularly stressed this view of the matter. It is well known that since his work on the U. P. Unemployment Committee as its Chairman he has been crying himself hoarse with a demand for a thorough overhaul of the existing system of education. This he did not fail to do even on this occasion. Proceeding he said:

Side by side with this and as an indispensable accompaniment of educational reform we have actually to provide more careers for our educated young men, to establish on modern lines cottage industries, to absorb those possessing technical, scientific and practical knowledge in large scale industries and to open other avenues for work. While I realise the growing importance of vocational education and industrial training, I also feel that such education and such training by themselves cannot solve the problem unless each Province assumes responsibility for developing those wealth-producing activities which alone can find employment for our young men. I think the time has come when our Provincial Governments should definitely recognise the importance and the urgency of the problem. . . . I think the problem is big enough in all its ramifications to engage the attention of a whole-time Minister, and in any case, I sincerely hope that it will not be relegated to a subordinate position in the departmental work of Government.

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Excise in Bihar and Orissa.

IT is observed from the excise administration report of Bihar and Orissa for 1935-36 that less country spirit was consumed than in the preceding year. The consumption in the year under report was 604,422 gallons as against 613,341 in 1934-35. But such satisfaction as may be caused by this phenomenon will be materially lessened by the rise in the consumption of all kinds of foreign liquor that is reported. We may as well give the relevant statistics so as to enable the reader to judge how disquieting the increase is. The amount of foreign spirit consumed in 1935-36 was a little over 14,000 gallons, of foreign wines nearly 4,700 gallons and of foreign beer about 87,000 gallons, the corresponding figures for 1934-35 being 13,837, 5,829 and 76,102 gallons respectively.

LICENSING boards and local advisory committees were, we are told, duly consulted at the time of the yearly settlement of excise licenses. Information is also given as to the action taken on the recommendations of these bodies. From this one finds that the sites of about twenty shops were changed and nine new shops opened. We must, however, say that the information is inadequate and unsatisfactory from the public point of view. What the public wants to find out in this connection is not so much the number of changes in the sites of old shops or even the number of new shops opened or old ones closed as to what extent public opinion as expressed by these bodies was respected. To enable the public to form its own judgment on the subject, we would very much favour the inclusion in the report of a detailed statement, as in some provincial excise administration reports, giving information as to the recommendations made by these bodies and the action taken thereon.

THE bureaucratic theory about excise crime being in inverse ratio to licit consumption receives a rude shock by the smaller number of excise offences—4,069 in 1935-36 as against 4,467 in 1934-35—accompanied by reduced consumption. Even if illicit distillation is taken separately it is found that it occurred to a lesser extent, the number of such offences having decreased by 600 to a little over 1,000. The number of convictions for drunkenness on the other hand increased, so far as the bigger towns are concerned. Lest this should be taken to indicate greater drunkenness in the urban population to which the above statistics relate, it is stated in the report that the increase in crime only reflects greater police activity. We have little doubt that the explanation will be found unsatisfactory by the general public to whom the increased drunkenness is bound to cause considerable concern.

THE CONGRESS.

IF the speech of the President of the Indian National Congress, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who was called to the office for the third time this year and twice in immediate succession, was just what could have been expected, so are the resolutions of the Congress. There is no element of surprise in either of them. In saying this, however, we do not wish to depreciate the remarkable character of the presidential utterance in any way, nor the wonderful exhibition of mass enthusiasm evoked by the proceedings of the Congress. India is at the cross-roads, and no political organisation, however averse to change, can afford for long to stand just where it did, undecided as to what road it shall take. The Congress has not taken final decisions yet on its future policy,

but whatever those decisions may be the trend is clear, and it is such that the monopolists of political power and social wealth cannot but regard them with dismay. Pandit Jawaharlal, even in his brief speech, devoted a fairly long portion of it to the crisis in the international world. Some are disposed to cavil at it, but such carping criticism can come only from those who fail to appreciate the quick reaction every important event in one country has at the present time upon the course of events in another. We cannot in these days live in a position of splendid isolation from the world outside, and weak as we ourselves are, we cannot afford to neglect, even in our national interests, taking the fullest possible advantage of what happens in seemingly far-off

countries. "If war comes or other great crisis," says Mr. Nehru, "India's attitude will make a difference. We hold the keys of success in our hands if we turn them rightly." This may be too optimistic a view of India's position in the world of nations, but it is nevertheless our duty to be wide-awake at the turn international politics is taking and cast our own influence, however limited it be, on the side of peace and democracy, and if we do so we shall not fail to ameliorate and improve our domestic position. If Indians have now begun to turn their attention to foreign affairs, it is due in large measure to the stress which Mr. Nehru has laid on them in his speeches, and it is no mean achievement.

Congress opposition to the new constitution *in toto* has been expressed in the election manifesto and the resolutions of the Working Committee of the Congress, and it is emphasised in the speech of the President and the resolutions of the Congress itself in a way which leaves little to be desired. "The Government of India Act of 1935, the new constitution," Pandit Jawaharlal declares, "stares at us offensively, the new charter of bondage which has been imposed upon us despite our utter rejection of it. . . . We go to the legislatures not to co-operate with the apparatus of British imperialism, but to combat the Act and to seek to end it, and to resist in every way British imperialism in its attempt to strengthen its hold on India and its exploitation of the Indian people." A convention is to be called soon after the elections to the provincial legislatures for the purpose of determining what can be done to end the constitution in the provinces which will come into operation at the beginning of April next and to prevent the very introduction of federation at the centre. The vexed question of office acceptance is left undecided for the present, but if the object of those who seek election, both those who will come to be invited to take office and others, is to put a speedy end to the provincial constitution, it is obvious, as Mr. Nehru observed, that "that limits the field of our decision in regard to offices, and those who incline to acceptance of them must demonstrate that this is the way to non-co-operate with the Act and to end it." This was perhaps meant as a warning to Mr. Satyamurti and others who are with him on this question. If so, they do not seem to be dismayed by it. For Mr. Satyamurti in the open session of the Congress reaffirmed his desire, perhaps for the hundredth time, that the advocates of acceptance of ministerships like himself favoured the policy merely because it would precipitate deadlocks in the constitution better than any other policy. He said: "To prevent reactionary elements and communalists working it for their own benefit and to the detriment of the country's interests, we must enter the legislatures, capture positions of vantage and create deadlocks and bring about crises. . . . I cannot think of a better way of wrecking the Act than mine. We want to terminate effectively and speedily the entire constitution and destroy the sham. . . . We are determined to bury the Act and build on its ashes the structure of New India." If such things are said by any Congressmen with a

mental reservation, it seems hardly likely that Pandit Jawaharlal will permit of any deviation from the lines of policy laid down by the Congress. As to preventing the introduction of the federal structure, Mr. Satyamurti is known to be as keen on it as the Pandit himself. Mr. Nehru's observations on the underlying motives and effects of the introduction of federation are worth quoting *in extenso*:

Next to this demand for the Constituent Assembly, our most important task will be to oppose the Federal structure of the Act. Utterly bad as the Act is, there is nothing so bad in it as this Federation and so we must exert ourselves to the utmost to break this, and thus end the Act as a whole. To live not only under British imperialist exploitation but also under Indian feudal control, is something that we are not going to tolerate, whatever the consequences. It is an interesting and instructive result of the long period of British rule in India that when, as we are told, it is trying to fade off, it should gather to itself all the reactionary and obscurantist groups in India, and endeavour to hand partial control to the feudal elements.

The development of this federal scheme is worthy of consideration. We are not against the conception of a federation. It is likely that a free India may be a federal India, though in any event there must be a great deal of unitary control. But the present federation that is being thrust upon us is a federation in bondage and under the control, politically and socially, of the most backward elements in the country. The present Indian States took shape early in the nineteenth century in the unsettled conditions of early British rule. The treaties with their autocratic rulers, which are held up to us so often now as sacred documents which may not be touched, date from that period.

It is worthwhile comparing the state of Europe then with that of India. In Europe then there were numerous tiny kingdoms and principedoms, kings were autocratic, holy alliances and royal prerogatives flourished. Slavery was legal. During these hundred years and more Europe has changed out of recognition. As a result of numerous revolutions and changes the principedoms have gone and very few kings remain. Slavery has gone. Modern industry has spread and democratic institutions have grown up with an ever-widening franchise. These in their turn have given place in some countries to fascist dictatorships. Backward Russia, with one mighty jump, has established a Soviet Socialist State and an economic order which has resulted in tremendous progress in all directions. The world has gone on changing and hovers on the brink of yet another vast change. But not so the Indian States; they remain static in this ever-changing panorama, staring at us with the eyes of the early nineteenth century. The old treaties are sacrosanct, treaties made not with people or their representatives but with their autocratic rulers.

This is a state of affairs which no nation, no people can tolerate. We cannot recognise these old settlements of more than a hundred years ago as permanent and unchanging. The Indian States will have to fit into the scheme of a free India and their people must have, as the Congress has declared, the same personal, civil and democratic liberties as those of the rest of India.

Till recent years little was heard of the treaties of the States or of paramountcy. The rulers knew their proper places in the imperial scheme of things and the heavy hand of the British Government was always in evidence. But the growth of the national movement in India gave them a fictitious importance, for the British Government began to rely upon them more and more to help it in combating this nationalism. The rulers and their ministers were quick to notice the change in the angle of vision and to profit by it. They tried to play, not without success, the British Government and the Indian people against each other and to gain advantages from both. They have

succeeded to a remarkable degree and have gained extraordinary power under the federal scheme. Having preserved themselves as autocratic units, which are wholly outside the control of the rest of India, they have gained power over other parts of India. To-day we find them talking as if they were independent and laying down conditions for their adherence to the Federation. There is talk even of the abolition of the viceregal paramountcy, so that these States may remain alone in the whole world, naked and unchecked autocracies, which cannot be tampered with by any constitutional means. A sinister development is the building up of the armies of some of the bigger States on an efficient basis.

Thus our opposition to the federal part of the Constitution Act is not merely a theoretical one, but a vital matter which affects our freedom struggle and our future destiny. We have got to make it a central pivot of our struggle against the Act. We have got to break this Federation.

Pandit Jawaharlal has done us the honour of referring, in his interview with the *Statesman*, to the criticism in the *SERVANT OF INDIA* of the attitude taken by Mahatma Gandhi towards the question of federation at the R.T.C. He assures us that "Mahatmaji is opposed to the federal scheme as it has emerged." We accept the assurance, but we would like to point out that the scheme has not undergone any important modifications since 1931, that the picture was fairly complete even at that time, and that no one who could oppose it now would be so friendly to it then as Mahatma Gandhi was. We wonder if Pandit Jawaharlal himself can imagine Mahatma Gandhi speaking of federation even now or at any time in future in anything like the terms of denunciation that the Pandit has employed or making the breaking of federation a central pivot of the Congress struggle against the constitution. But anyhow we are glad to know from him that the Mahatma is opposed to federation.

The question that will be of the greatest practical importance in the immediate future is whether we shall work exclusively or even principally to break the Britishers' monopoly of power or we shall also seek to counteract the domination of vested interests which will be so strongly entrenched behind the constitution. This is not a question of a pro- or anti-socialist policy though it is often discussed on these lines. Mr. Nehru averred that the Congress

stood for the present for democracy and not for socialism; he also laid the chief stress in his speech on bringing about an anti-imperialist front. But the question of federation at once brought him up against one of the reactionary forces in Indian society. Ending the Act or even utilising it to the full advantage of national interests necessarily implies a struggle with all the upholders of special privilege, and to the extent a fight with these vested interests is avoided to that extent the attainment of swaraj, in whatever connotation the word be taken, will be postponed. There is not yet as vivid an appreciation of this inter-relation of political and social freedom in nationalist circles as there should be. Comments of the *Hindu* on Pandit Jawaharlal's speech furnish a significant proof of this fact. Not content with his climb-down from his former position, this journal is unhappy at the thought that, if not now, later on an internal struggle in Indian society may be commenced. "We do not fight for socialism to-day, for we have to go far before we can act in terms of socialism," said Pandit Jawaharlal. But the *Hindu* is not satisfied. "It is very necessary," it replies, "not merely that the socialists should refrain from raising the issue of socialism till swaraj is won, but that they should make their readiness to do so plain and not wrap up their meaning in ambiguous language." It is not a question here of a socialist or any other philosophy, but of bringing matters to an issue with vested interests. There is not much room for priority here: the British Government first and Indian vested interests afterwards. A struggle for swaraj implies, under the new constitution, a struggle with the privileged classes, behind whom stand the British Government. This will become clear to anyone who will give a moment's consideration to the question as to how the proposed federation is to be broken unless one is prepared to incur the hostility of the Princes. There is nothing that is commendable in the new constitution, but one good result of it is that a struggle which till now could have been carried on on racial lines, i. e. against the foreigners, must now be carried on against all the reactionary forces in the country. Swaraj is identified, whether we wish it or not, with democracy.

NATIVE TAXATION AND NATIVE SERVICES.

BY a curious coincidence three inquiries have recently been held dealing in whole or in part with the question of the taxation of native Africans in Kenya Colony and their reports published: one by Sir Alan Pim on "The Financial Position and System of Taxation in Kenya," another by the Treasurer and Chief Native Commissioner on "Native Taxation," and a third by a Commission on the alleged abuses in connection with the native and non-native Poll Taxes. The conclusions arising from these inquiries are, however, so conflicting that the question, urgent as it is, does not appear, on account of them, to have made any appreciable advance towards solution.

The natives of Kenya are subject to a Hut and Poll Tax of 12s. a year though in certain areas the tax levied is smaller, ranging from 10 to 6s. Every adult, male or female, has to pay the tax, and everyone who has attained the age of 16 is considered to be an adult. This tax is exceedingly unpopular among the native tribes, and there are not many even among officials who are happy about it and who can envisage its indefinite retention with a feeling of satisfaction. It breaks the most important canon of taxation, having no relation to capacity to pay, and in fact it bears hardly on the population as a whole. Poll taxes become inevitable in a country where the population is in the lowest depths of poverty and

where there is no scope for property or income taxes, and they are even justifiable among communities in which there is no very great distinction between rich and poor. But in a country like Kenya with a mixed population, the native peoples being sunk in poverty and the immigrant settlers having a competence and even affluence, the question of devising an equitable system of taxation becomes exceedingly difficult. The non-natives, if they afford avenues of employment to the natives and thus help to raise their standard of living, also add enormously to the cost of government, and what share of this cost should be borne by the two sections and what share of the social services should be enjoyed by them is a matter that requires scientific treatment. Ever since the penetration of Kenya by European colonists, the question is before the British Government, and it has now assumed a threatening aspect on account of the economic depression with the consequent fall in the prices of primary commodities and in wages on the one hand and on account of a steady but sure growth of political consciousness among native Africans on the other.

That the tax, apart from its theoretical inequity, is as a matter of fact oppressive in normal times and that its incidence has become very much heavier on account of exceptional difficulties through which Kenya, like other countries, is passing admits of no doubt. All natives above the age of 16 have to pay the tax, women just as well men. It may be said that women go out to work in the reserves and on Europeans' farms with men, and therefore there is no reason why they should be exempted. But nowhere are women as free to do outside work and can do it as continuously as men, and if they do not earn enough to pay the tax their husbands or relatives must pay it. If widows stay at home, their children must pay the tax on their account. When men grow old and are past work, somebody must step forward to pay the tax on their behalf. If a man has a separate hut for occasional visitors and guests he must pay for this luxury as much as if he had another man to help him in his work throughout the year by paying the tax, for it is primarily a hut tax and only secondarily a poll tax. Thus it is not as if a breadwinner in each family pays only one tax; every individual in the family, if he or she is above 16, has to pay it and the breadwinner perhaps pays two or three taxes, one for himself and the others for those who do not or cannot work. Dr. Norman Leys has calculated that the average is about two and a half taxes, or 30s. If this is the tax, what is the wage? It is about 8s. a month at the present time. That is to say, every one who is capable of doing work must labour for nearly four months to be able to pay his tax. The natives were of course not in so bad a case before the depression, but even then their condition was bad enough; now it has become almost desperate. The wage level has fallen, and with it also have fallen the prices of the natives' produce. Whether the native thus works on his own farm or works for a wage, the real burden of taxation on him has increased, though the tax itself, burdensome enough before, has remained the same, measured in money-units. Lord Moyne

has given certain figures in his "Report on Certain Questions in Kenya" (May, 1932) which show that some of the goods the native sells dropped in price from one-half to one-fourth between 1928 and 1932, and some goods could not be sold at all. There has been no improvement in their position in the last four years. A sack of corn is sold for 50 cents.

The result is that the yield of the tax is diminishing, and even in collecting this smaller yield the Administration meets with grave difficulties, and the methods of collection give rise to complaints of cruelty and oppression. Last year the Colonial Secretary, in presenting the Estimates, told a doleful story about the tax. "We have to admit," he said, "that the collection of the tax seems to be becoming more and more difficult. In 1934 it eventuated as being the most disappointing item in the Estimates, realising only £514,000 as compared with the estimate of £571,000. In the 1935 Estimates allowance was made for arrears of the 1934 collection and the figure was put at £562,979." The actual amount realised was only £502,000. "And yet in 1933, in the depths of the depression, when that depression was with us for three years, the collection of hut and poll tax amounted to £557,791." Archdeacon Burns on 9th January, 1936, related in the Legislative Council how great was the corruption that went on in the matter of collection of the hut and poll tax and how scandalous was the physical ill-treatment to which those who were unable to pay it were being subjected. A native headman, before he is installed in his office, is often a poor man; he may have, he said, "three or four head of cattle, a few goats and sheep, he may have his little garden or big garden as the case may be. But after five years or so return and examine that man's property, and, as was told me by one of these very headmen, placed there by his chief: 'All this land round about is mine.' And it extended a couple of miles in every direction." How does this happen? Dr. Burns was told, when a man who cannot pay his poll tax appears, the headman says: "I will give you your poll tax for your garden." Many natives thus lose their *shambas* either to the headman or some one else who can advance the tax, which they are often given to understand is 13 instead of 12s. About the ill-treatment of people by the *askari-kanga*, Dr. Burns gave details of a case that came under his personal knowledge. "A woman, with her infant baby on her back, was taken because the man who was supposed to pay the poll tax was not available and hid himself somewhere. This woman was escorted around by the askari during a wet stormy night until the early hours of the morning until every stitch of the clothes on her poor body, with that of the little infant, were saturated with rain, and until her father-in-law came and released her from the hands of those who had arrested her the previous evening." He told of other things—"things that would make one not able to sleep if one knew of the cruelty that is meted out to some of these people by the *askari-kanga*." He said:

They are beaten, and I say this positively, they are beaten and worse. Their womenfolk are taken and brought to the chief's village, put into the chief's village to cultivate his garden, it may be for two or three or four

days. They get nothing for it and sometimes are treated in a way of which I cannot speak here in this honourable Council. Your Excellency, it won't make matters any better for me to enlarge on these things, but I do say, Sir, and I stake my reputation upon it, that these things are happening to-day throughout the whole of this land of Kenya.

When a man of the position of Archdeacon Burns makes such allegations things must be very serious indeed. It was probably on account of these allegations that the Commission to consider complaints of abuse in the collection of the tax was appointed. The Commission finds that practices like those of which Dr. Burns complained, though wholly indefensible, "were not uncommon in the past", but "are now less common."

This Commission recommends "the substitution of a poll tax upon all males of taxable age in place of the present hut and poll tax." A hut tax is capable of some defence inasmuch it introduces to a certain extent the element of gradation according to capacity to pay, but the Commission says, and quite truly, that "the present system of hut and poll tax is not now such an equitable system of taxation as it was in the past, owing to the individualistic payment which is now prevalent instead of the family payments of the past. Sons do not now help their families to pay as they used to and the result is that a man is often unable to pay taxes for his wives." Besides a hut tax is essentially a wife tax and leads to many abuses in collection. If it be abolished, "it would eliminate the women and so, to a large extent, do away with some of the malpractices of which we have heard. An overzealous headman might still try to keep in unlawful restraint a woman whose husband had absconded to evade payment, but there would be less inducement to do so." The financial aspect of this recommendation was not considered by the Commission, but it is calculated that the receipts from a universal male poll tax at the present rate would be less by about £103,000 than receipts from the hut tax joined to the poll tax, and that in order that the present proceeds may be realised the poll tax will have to be raised from 12 to 15s. Apart from the difficulty of collection at the increased rate, it is recognised by all those who think about it that the poll tax is highly objectionable. The Commission recognises it when it says that "poll tax is not an ideal form of taxation as rich and poor pay alike," but apparently thinks that there is no alternative to it. A poll tax is in fact a tax on existence, and "no man should be taxed simply on the ground that he exists." Various suggestions have been made to transform the present tax into a tax, part of which at least would be based upon a system of taxation according to means. Lord Moyne proposed, when the country's finance would permit, a reduction of the male poll tax to 6s. supported by a sliding scale hut tax varying according to capacity to pay and subsequently the introduction of a tax on wealth in the form of livestock owned by a native over and above what is required to provide the necessities of life and also of a cultivation tax.

Sir Alan Pim recommended the raising of the taxable age from 16 to 18 and the lowering of the

rate of tax on extra huts. The second suggestion, viz. reduction of the tax for each extra hut, as in Tanganyika where the tax is half the full tax, may entail a loss of some £25,000, but, according to Sir Alan, such reduction is necessary in order to make the levy more equitable in its incidence. The first was considered by Lord Moyne but rejected as involving a loss of £40,000. Sir Alan's estimate of the probable loss is only £20,000. In South Africa, in Uganda and now in Tanganyika the age fixed is 18 and in Kenya itself for non-natives it is 18. A discrimination to the disadvantage of the Kenya native is hard to maintain even if there should be financial loss. But Mr. Hemsted, an official appointed to look after native interests answered this argument in the Kenya Legislative Council on 30th July, 1934, thus: "It will doubtless be held, Sir, that the revenue would suffer if the age was increased to 18, but I am by no means certain that that would be the case. Taxation becomes more and more difficult to collect, and I think if the burden of taxation were slightly reduced and some relief afforded, the tax would be collected with greater facility." Dr. Burns, the other representative of native interests, adduced another reason of great social consequence. He said:

We have in our towns a large number of boys who flock in to those centres from the native reserves. They are a problem, and the authorities are up against it very often with regard to these boys, and they are also the seed-bed for criminals. A boy would have to go into Nairobi, provided he has no means and the father cannot provide the hut and other taxes; he would have to leave the reserve to come to some centre or some farm, between 15 and 16 years of age. And I submit, Sir, that that should not be the case in practically compelling these boys to leave the reserves at 15½ years of age to come to centres or to go on farms to produce their hut and poll tax.

In fact, the evil result to which Dr. Burns adverts, viz. that the tax forces a great proportion of natives from the reserves on to the farms of the white settlers, though aggravated in the case of boys, is perceived in the case of natives of all ages. The Rev. T. Cullen Young writes in the *Journal of the Royal African Society* for October, in reviewing Sir Alan Pim's report: "Hut and poll tax methods in lands devoid of local income-producing activity involve an inescapable choice—either the break-up of home and village life through male absenteeism or the annual (and quite fruitless) flooding of local goals with these same men as tax-defaulters." But Sir Alan Pim insists that the suggestions he makes are mere palliatives and are to be recommended only as preparatory to the introduction of an improved system of native taxation suited to the conditions of today.

The Commission consisting of the Treasurer and the Chief Native Commissioner in its report, however, turns down every one of these suggestions and advises the Government to maintain intact the present system of native direct taxation by means of a hut and poll tax. "Until individual land tenure has been established," it says, "and native society has sufficiently advanced in its conception of civic duty to regard the payment of fair taxes as a moral obligation and in its organisation and education to make it possible for the individual to make an accurate

return of income," nothing else is possible or desirable. Lest one should suspect that such advice was tendered from an overwhelming sense of financial exigency, the Commission states: "The above recommendations are based neither on political nor financial expediency, but on broad principles of taxation morality and procedure which have been accepted as nearly perfect over a period of years." And the Committee in fact quotes Adam Smith's canons of taxation and claims that all its arguments are in strict conformity with them! It also says that it has had prolonged discussions with men connected with native tax legislation and that there is a surprising unanimity of opinion in favour of the recommendations! All that the Commission does is to suggest means of improving the method of collecting the hut and poll tax which, in its opinion, "represents as nearly as possible reasonable contribution on the part of the individual to the support of the state." It recommends the continuance of the system, introduced in the beginning of 1936 as an experiment, of collection of the tax by revenue stamps, and it goes further. It recommends the initiation of legislation "making it mandatory on employers to provide, and on employees to purchase, two one-shilling stamps in respect of each month of the first six months of the year, in lieu of the cash equivalent of the monthly salary," and further "that legal responsibility for affixing these stamps to the collecting card should attach to both parties." It also recommends "the imposition of an automatic penalty of 2s. in respect of every several tax, either hut or poll" outstanding after the due date. It is something that it considers summary arrest of tax defaulters unnecessary and objectionable.

But it is not as if the hut and poll tax is the only tax that the native pays. He pays, in addition to this 12s., another shilling or two to the Native Councils. And his contribution to the customs must also be taken into account in considering the total burden of taxation that he carries, though it is indirect. Lord Moyne estimated that in 1931 natives' share in the customs duties was 28.55 per cent. That at first sight appears but reasonable, if we consider the kind of goods on which the duties are levied in order to make him pay we cannot but conclude that these duties are open to serious objection. Cotton blankets and cotton piecegoods are subjected to a duty, which produced in 1931 £99,673. in all, of which the contribution of the natives was as much as £73,463. Kerosene duty was responsible for a revenue of £20,527, of which the natives' share was £14,000. The duty on rice yielded £17,117, and the natives contributed £8,500 to these receipts. This will show that the bare necessities of the native people are taxed. And Dr. Burns, as a representative of native interests, found it necessary to enter a protest against it in the Legislative Council. He said:

I know that the customs duties offer a very easy way of raising money with little apparent damage to any one class, but I do urge Government not to lose sight of the desirability of reducing or removing as soon as possible the duty on such imported articles as are really essential for the African if he is to rise from a state of savagery to one of civilisation. It is a generally accepted economic principle that a young and promising industry should not be hampered in its early stages by heavy taxation on

materials required for that industry. The native population of Kenya may be regarded as a very promising industrial concern if we see to it that it is allowed and encouraged to acquire the materials necessary for its social advancement.

It would, therefore, not be enough merely to carry out the suggestion of Lord Moyne to return to the natives in direct native services half of the proceeds of the hut and poll tax or other direct taxation substituted for it. This suggestion both the British Government and the Kenya Government have accepted and the Kenya Government has, it would appear, been carrying it out. The current year's budget provided £265,680 for native services, while half the average native hut and poll tax for the last six-year period for which figures are available is £270,791. In this connection it must also be borne in mind that a great part of this amount devoted to native services—for the moment we cannot say what part—is absorbed by the salaries of a highly paid European personnel. The salaries of these officials are determined, not in accordance with the resources of the native Africans of Kenya, but by the necessities of Englishmen coming out to that country. If a less expensive but equally efficient agency were employed—and it cannot be maintained that such an agency is not available—the money set apart for services of direct benefit to the natives would go far; but as it is, apart from inequalities in taxation from which the natives suffer, they have to support an extravagantly paid European service in order to get the benefit of half the proceeds of their direct tax. Moreover, it should be remembered that Lord Moyne's suggestion that the Native Betterment Fund composed of half the receipts from the hut and poll tax should be taken out of the purview of the Legislative Council and be administered by a Native Betterment Committee meets with strong opposition from elected official members who think that they are the custodians of the country's revenue. Mr. O'Shea took great offence at the suggestion which this institution of a separate Committee for the disposal of the Fund contains viz. that there was suspicion of European members administering the Fund. The Colonial Secretary in 1932 very neatly turned the tables upon Mr. O'Shea by quoting a passage from his own speech showing how vigorously he had opposed native development. Mr. O'Shea had said on a former occasion:

I want to express the opinion now that 50 per cent. of the money spent upon native education is absolute waste, that another 25 per cent. of the total includes probably a lot of waste, and I am doubtful about the value of the other 25 per cent. The policy of that department in relation to the native population of the country is, in my opinion, absurd. To be told time after time that we have got to spend large sums of money on native education merely because there is an incessant demand is, I think, the most absurd way of basing your expenditure.

When in the Legislative Council there are men who hold such views it is obvious that the money to be spent on native services must be placed outside the control of European unofficial members, since natives themselves have no place in the Council. But it is doubtful whether the Kenya Government will be able to carry out this part of Lord Moyne's suggestion. As it is, as Mr. Parkinson said in the House of Commons on 1st July, 1932, when the House debated Lord Moyne's report, the whites are there in Kenya "to pick up all the plums in the orchard and leave the natives derelict to fend for themselves in the best way they can."

A SPANISH CATHOLIC SPEAKS OUT.

WE cannot understand how highly esteemed Catholic journals—and we have taken care to see a few—identify the rebellion in Spain with the cause of religion and wish without any reserve victory to the arms of the insurgents. The civil war that is being waged in that country is, as Wing-Commander James said in the House of Commons, “a war to the death. Each side is out, quite ruthlessly, to utterly and absolutely exterminate the other side. It has all the ferocity of the religious wars of the Middle Ages and superimposed upon that the political theories of the twentieth century.” In this fratricidal carnage there is certainly a great deal of unnecessary torture and cruelty due to partisan hatred on both sides and no right-thinking person can extenuate this barbarity, on whatever side his sympathies may lie. But we see very little of protest against it in Catholic papers, which reserve all their condemnation for communists and have nothing but praise for fascists who they think stand for Christianity. As a matter of fact the burning of churches upon which every one looks with horror, is the work, not of communists, but of anarchists in Spain, and the inner struggle that is going on among the loyalists is between communists and anarcho-sindicalists. Whatever that be, we are very greatly puzzled to find that good Catholics can support the cause for which fascists or, as they call themselves, Nationals stand. We are therefore greatly relieved to find a Spanish Catholic boldly pointing out the error of Catholics in general in the November issue of the French monthly, *Esprit*. His point of view should not be misunderstood: he rejects both communism and fascism and flays both sides with equal vigour. But he recognises that the Spanish Government is on the defensive, and the Nationals on the offensive. He admits that it was the duty of the Government to resist the revolt but blames the Government for going beyond this duty. “If armed opposition to the insurgents,” he says, “was absolutely justified, even with the help of those improvised and irregular bands (of militiamen), from the moment that the action of those armed bands was directed against all society, by pillage and red terror exercised against peaceful citizens who made up the non-insurgent civil population, this abuse of means, going beyond defence, weakened the right which in the beginning was very manifestly on the side of the Government.” We quote this to make clear that he has no manner of sympathy with the loyalists. But our immediate purpose now is to show that he cannot support the Catholic Church either, which places herself “at the service of the vested interests and the powerful of the world.” He says: “Fascist totalitarianism ignores the human person, corrupts the spiritual in it, mechanises thought by an obligatory uniformity which it imposes as a condition for expression, covers under dictatorship, with no recourse, all kinds of injustices and a world organised to favour exploitation by profiteers.” There is thus no reason for men to prefer fascism to communism. He therefore would like Catholics to follow a policy of

double refusal—of fascism as well as communism—and to hold back from both combatants. If they cannot support the Reds, they should also refuse to “bend to that conformism of the Right which throws all blame on its adversaries, to that inadmissible pharisaism of those who persuade themselves that they are ‘the good’ in opposition to ‘the bad.’” We are glad to quote here some passages from the article in which he shows how wrong it is for Catholics to countenance the fascists, thinking that they stand up for religion. A. M. V. writes in the French magazine as follows:

If one considers the conditions laid down by theologians on the right of insurrection, it would be very difficult for the partisans of the insurgents to plead their cause. No doubt the laws of the Government of the Popular Front could be called tyrannical. The real motives for revolt were furnished by the partiality of a public power which was exercised against half the people. But if motives existed, the conditions, evidently, were lacking. Neither had the situation reached such extremes that no peaceful means remained, nor was the moral certitude of success assured.

The very open and provocative existence of thousands of socialist and communist workers was known; only too well was the strongly armed organization of the anarchists known as well as the attachment to the government of some Army corps and police headed by favoured officers precisely because of their Leftist leanings. All those elements lined up with the constituted power increased the chance of government resistance against the assault which the Army was carefully preparing for some months. In fact, the coup d'état, the pronunciamiento as such was a dud. But the men who found themselves at the head of the insurrection did not hold back. They embarked on war, that war from its first moment being offensive on the part of the insurgents and defensive on the part of the government. That war which is the most criminal and the vilest means and also the most futile and the most contradictory that could be employed to save a country.

It is always necessary to recall, to those who forget it the permanent vigor of the fifth commandment of the Divine Law. What are we to think of so-called Catholics who believe themselves free from its observance because their own particular conception of patriotism is at stake? It is as Catholics and among Catholics that we have to denounce the wrong sense of those of our coreligionists who deliver themselves up to violence, to insult for the pleasure in vexing, to reprisals for the pagan principle of the claw. Wherein all this is the teaching of the Gospel?

We must speak our indignation at those ferocious Moorish warriors, disciples of Mahomed, with insignia of the Sacred Heart pinned on their breasts, as they come to kill Spaniards and avenge their ancestors for the cause called National and Catholic. But there is something worse. Combatants shout out “For Christ Our King”; this cry which should be one of peace and love turned into a cry of war and hate to mark the moment of assault by bayonet. Those young boys, Carlist “recruits” who go to kill their brothers outwardly wearing big crucifixes, and who die (even at the age of 16) “for God and for Country:” Is it “for God” also that they kill?

On the first page of a “Catholic” journal of Navarre there is a photograph of young traditionalist

soldiers on their knees and they are communicating. This picture of piety carries a monstrous inscription: "they receive in the full fury of war (en plena furia belica) the Body of the Lord." How harmonize what is incompatible?

We shall keep returning to the critique of means. The holiest end will never suffice to justify a criminal action, for all politics must serve morals. Now war, and from the strongest reason, civil war is avowed to be the most wholly immoral of all means. It is the sum of all the vices and all the passions.

It may be that our action will lead up into isolation, it may be that this our romantic spirituality will be condemned as a folly in this time of dynamism and realism, as scrupulosity about questions of doctrine. We prefer this solitude to certain compromises, this folly to the wisdom of those who run before the chariots of the victorious. The peace we want will not be established until order shall bow before justice. To this order, there is opposed, on one side, the moral disorder installed in the bosom of bourgeois society, and on the other side blind revolutionaryism, in the blindness of which upright wills are seduced.

The revolution for order is one for true Christians to make, but it will be no mere single revolt, no explosion of unbridled violence. It will begin only from the moment when a number of Christians will set themselves to live socially their Christianity by a sort of re-conversion. How far removed is this ideal from the actual tragedy of Spain where many Catholics compromise the Church by binding it to a political cause which is not hers, while in revenge furious hordes pillage, burn and kill all that in their eyes represents religion. This religion which suffers equally from the hatred of its enemies and the mystification of too many who call themselves its champions.

In the beginning of the insurrection right was indisputably on the side of the government and against the insurgents. The latter were the aggressors. The regime had to defend itself with all its forces. Unhappily the forces under control of the government soon proved insufficient to break the action of the revolt; and the cabinet calling upon the support of the proletarian revolutionary militia, launched upon a path full of perils which it could no longer retrace. The original bond between the militia and the government is their attachment to its cause.

The whole task of reabsorption undertaken by the power desirous for the successful integration of party militias into a sort of popular disciplined army, will end in a sad consequence. These militias are the ones who withstood the first insurgent attack, and for that the government is their prisoner.

Two-thirds at least of the land of Spain lies under the power of the insurgent Nationals. Because they are the probable victors and they call themselves defenders of religion and fatherland, we shall have to place ourselves before them with a Christian sincerity, being persuaded that the day will come when only Spaniards whose hands shall have remained free from blood will be able truly and without remorse to speak of peace.

From this moment on we shall ask of such men: What is your inspiration? Our mistrust of this youth and more so of these regimented ranks of children whose warlike ardour is praised as a virtue, of these "phalanxists" who would willingly abolish the Christian era for the "year I of the Fascist era," of this "hero" head of the Legion proclaiming the paradoxical word of command "Long Live Death" as the ideal for action.

A weighty question already is pressing on the coming regime. This war has been made a kind of crusade against communism, a crusade declared, more-

over, by him who is the least suitable by character to lead it, by this dictator who has begun by folding up the arms of the true Cross, by deforming the sign of salvation, in order to turn it into a sign of oppression.

Spain mastered by the military men will become a continuous round of blocs with dictatorial powers with fascist tendencies. It will see itself consecrated to a foreign policy against its interests, to the service of pseudo-mystics who will be able to drag it into a world war of doctrines and by that very reason into a still more atrocious revolution than the present one. Escaped from Soviet imperialism it will be the prey and the instrument of fascist imperialism. The nations according their aid to the combatants do not do so without interest. Soon they will present their note.

And then those other powers, those of money, will come as ghouls over this land strewn with the corpses of brothers. Whence come the resources for a war which is costing so many millions every day? We are well acquainted with this business man, this billionaire, this former smuggler whose prodigious purse has been open to the insurgents. Less is known, however, about those other financiers, or groups of over-the-water High Finance who for some time have been furnishing all the money needed to keep the war going. And capitalists, no more than dictators, do not lend their aid in any disinterested manner. What a future for industrial monopolies and financiers, for huge scandalous transactions, the scandal of which will never be brought out, stuffed in the chamber of "indifference to blame!" In spite of all the good-will which might rise up in favour of a reign of social justice for the worker, this reign can never happen so long as those influences of the world of money shall rule the State.

Is the Christian tragedy back of this impasse understood? Democratic institutions have been overthrown in Spain before they were known. Two forms of dictatorship are clashing in front of us and around us. If we desire to be freed from bolshevism, if we do not wish to plunge into the chaos of anarchy, it is not to erect new idols like those which threaten us in a fascist future. The present time offers to the Christian the hard need of having to safeguard (against each and if needs be against all) the independence of spiritual and the liberty of indissoluble man bound to the dignity of the person. It is only in CIVIL PEACE that this task will succeed. But since we shall have to undertake it, in this muddle of a hostile world, let us recall to man the essential truths.

Miscellaneous.

CONGRESS RESOLUTIONS.

The following are amongst the resolutions passed by the National Congress in its Session at Faizpur last week.

THE NEW CONSTITUTION.

THE Congress reiterates its entire rejection of the Government of India Act of 1935 and the constitution that has been imposed on India against the declared will of the people of the country. In its opinion any co-operation with this constitution is a betrayal of India's struggle for freedom and the strengthening of British imperialism and further exploitation of the Indian masses who have already been reduced to dire poverty under imperialist domination. The Congress, therefore, repeats its resolve not to submit to this

constitution or to co-operate with it but to combat it both inside and outside the legislatures so as to end it. The Congress does not and will not recognise the right of any external power or authority to dictate the political and economic structure of India and every such attempt will be met by organised and uncompromising opposition of the Indian people. The Indian people can only recognise a constitutional structure which has been framed by them and which is based on independence of India as a nation and which allows them full scope for development according to their needs and desires.

The Congress stands for a genuine democratic state in India where political power has been transferred to the people as a whole and Government is under their effective control. Such a state can only come into existence through a constituent assembly elected by adult suffrage and having power to determine finally the constitution of the country. To this end the Congress works in the country and organises and this objective must ever be kept by the representatives of the Congress in the legislatures.

The Congress endorses the election manifesto of the A.I.C.C. and calls upon all candidates standing on its basis and after election to conduct their work in the legislatures in accordance with it. The Congress members of the legislatures should take the earliest opportunity to put forward in the new Assemblies the demand for a constituent assembly elected by adult suffrage and this demand should be supported by mass agitation outside to enforce the right of the Indian people to self-determination.

The question of acceptance or non-acceptance of office by the Congress members elected to the legislatures under the new constitution will be decided by the All-India Congress Committee as soon after the provincial Assembly elections as is practicable. Immediately after the elections the various provincial Congress committees will take steps to consult their district and other local committees and send their own recommendations on the subject so that the A.I.C.C. may be assisted in deciding this issue by the opinion of the mass of Congressmen and the country.

SUPPRESSION OF CIVIL LIBERTIES.

The Congress again draws attention to and condemns the suppression of civil liberties in India which continues intensively and prevents normal public life, interferes even with personal liberties and crushes the present generation of India. Hundreds of Congress committees continue to be banned as also labour and peasant unions and other organizations. Ordinance laws function in addition to the widespread and punitive use of the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure to suppress public activities and even expression of opinion. Press laws and censorship muzzle newspapers. Books and periodicals are banned or stopped under the Sea Customs Act, free movements are restricted by externment and internment. Concentration camps of detenus detained without trial continue. The Criminal Tribes Act and the Foreigners Act are applied to political workers, passports are not issued to Indians for the purpose of going abroad and many Indians in foreign countries are not allowed to return home and have to live in exile. In Bengal and the North-West Frontier Province additional restrictions have put an intolerable burden on public work and private activities.

The Congress further deeply regrets that many of these and in some cases additional disabilities and suppression of civil liberties prevail in Indian States. The Congress stands for full personal, civil and democratic liberties in the whole of India, including the

States, and will continue to work for the establishment of such liberties. But the Congress realises that political freedom is essential for this purpose and the nation's energies must, therefore, be directed to the attainment of independence.

CONVENTION OF CONGRESS LEGISLATORS.

The Congress resolves that after the elections to the provincial legislatures a convention shall be held consisting of Congress members of the various provincial and central legislatures, members of the All-India Congress Committee and such other persons as the Working Committee might decide upon. This Convention shall put the demand for a constituent assembly in the forefront, shall determine the feasible methods for ending the constitution in provinces and for opposing the introduction of the Federal structure of the new constitution, and will consider what other steps should be taken in the legislatures to give effect to the policy laid down in the Congress election manifesto and the Congress resolutions and the decisions of the All-India Congress Committee. The Working Committee shall take all necessary steps for the calling of this convention and shall lay down the procedure governing it.

THE KING'S CORONATION.

The Congress, pledged as it is to independence for India and elimination of all imperialist control and exploitation of the Indian people, has for many years consistently followed a policy of not participating in any function or activity which is meant to or which tends to strengthen the hold of British imperialism or add to its prestige. This policy must be adhered to by all Congressmen. In particular, the Congress wishes to declare that Congressmen cannot participate in any way in any imperialist celebrations or functions that might be held in India in connection with the new King's coronation and trusts that the nation will abstain from participation in all such functions. The Congress, however, desires to make it clear that this is in no way intended to express any ill-will or discourtesy to the King's person.

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