

THE Servant of India

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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

EXCEPTIONAL circumstances call for exceptional action. Within living memory India has not been so sorely outraged and humiliated as under the martial law régime in the Punjab. Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer have still to be punished for their part in the grievous misdeeds. Precisians would advise us to hold our souls in patience till the Hunter Commission should have reported, but Congress leaders might well plead that they were only following the example of the authorities who set up the Commission. Why did these authorities appoint Sir Michael O'Dwyer to a position of trust and responsibility in Indian affairs? Why did they give official promotion to General Dyer (if our information be true), while yet the inquiry is in progress?

AS a general rule all harshness and severity of judgment are to be avoided, for they are likely to be based on some strong emotion and therefore to be unjust. Moreover their tendency is to harden feelings all round and embitter the situation. We should not like to be responsible for the resolution demanding the recall of Lord Chelmsford, but how is one to oppose such a motion on its merits? It might be criticised as being inexpedient, disrespectful to the Commission of Inquiry and as likely to defeat its own object by putting up the backs of the people concerned. These considerations must have been taken into account in the beginning and prevented the resolution being tabled at all. Once, however, some people made up their minds that their anger, being just, was to receive sharp expression, the best course is to let it go. Mr. Sarma's opposition was spirited and afforded proof of his courage and presence of mind, but the occasion only served to throw into strong relief the inherent weakness of the cause which he espoused.

HOW far is the Indian National Congress representative of the educated community in India? The psychology of the crowd greatly complicates a discussion of this question. There are doubtless several hundreds of men who took part in the Congress at Amritsar who, if tackled separately and at leisure each by himself, would pronounce the Government of India Act of 1919 a measure conferring enormous constitutional power on the duly elected leaders of the Indian people. Lashed into a fit of passion by fiery speeches, they caught the spirit of denunciation and intensified it. The press and the platform will help the spread of these pessimistic doctrines. Will they strike deep root? Will they spread all through society? We would fain trust that when the operation of the Act begins, the innate good sense of the ordinary citizen will assert itself and he will know how to make the most of a measure which critics may denounce as they please, but cannot rob of its liberal provisions. The experience of 1921 and 1922 may establish what now can only be surmised, that the three last Congresses, though they included unprecedentedly large numbers, neither wisely led nor correctly reflected the opinion of the people of India. Actual use of political power is an education, both efficacious and profound.

THE Congress at the instance of Mr. Gandhi and Swami Shraddhananda adopted a resolution, condemning in unreserved terms the excesses committed by the mob during the recent disturbance and both the leaders expressed beautiful sentiments in moving the resolution—sentiments which are shared by a very large proportion of the thinking classes in this country. Mr. Gandhi regarded this resolution as the most important before the Congress. It was, he said, the country's expiation for the dastardly deeds committed by the infuriated mob. "It is to purify our soul. I want my brothers and sisters to burn their souls at the sight of wrong, even when that wrong has been done by their own countrymen. True heroism consists not in returning wrong for wrong, but in facing wrong without submitting to it. To my brethren of the Punjab I say: you must suppress your anger and follow the path of truth and justice, and you could become great and become a jewel in the crown of India." "I admit," he proceeded, "there was great provocation. The Government went mad at the time, but return madness with sanity and the whole situation will be in your hands."

MR. JINNAH in a powerful speech seconded Mr. Gandhi's amendment to the resolution on reforms moved by Mr. C. R. Das in the Congress, but his objection was evidently not confined to the specific points raised in the amendment, but went deeper and covered a wider ground. For instance, the first clause in the resolution declares that India is now fit for full responsible government—a view from which Mr. Jinnah seems to dissent. This particular point came up in his cross-examination before the Joint Committee, when Mr. Jinnah thus answered Sir Henry Craik's questions:—

You said, I think, that you thought that India was now completely ripe for responsible government, and you compared the United States of America—?—No, I did not.

You compared the conditions?—Yes; but I did not say that India is ripe for complete responsible government. I say the provinces.

But I think in your opening words you said: "We are now ready for full government"?—No; I never said that. I said the provinces.

We shall see what the shorthand note says as to that. I certainly understood that you said it?—If you understood it it is incorrect, and if I said it like that—I do not think I have—but if I have then I made a mistake. (Questions 3725—3728.)

THE non-Brahmans of the Madras Presidency are still unwilling to accept the compromise, offered to them by the Joint Committee, of the reservation of seats for them in general electorates—a compromise which indeed would have been included in the Franchise Committee's recommendations if that would have ended the unfortunate controversy. At the third sessions of the South Indian Non-Brahman Confederation, Mr. Theagaroya Chettiar in his welcome speech declared that the protection afforded by separate communal electorates was absolutely indispensable to them. "Our existence depends upon this," he said. "If we fail to get communal electorates we are lost. I must ask you all to be firm and unyielding." The President of the Conference, Mr. Subbarayalu Reddiar spoke as if their demand for separate representation through communal electorates had been granted, and congratulated the non-Brahman community on the success which had attended their labours. This was explained the next day by Mr. K. V. Reddy Naidu in speaking to the resolution on reforms. He observed that there was not a word about plural electorates in the Joint Committee's decision, which was that "the non-Brahmans of Madras must be provided with separate representation by reservation of seats." There cannot be the slightest doubt that what the Joint Committee meant was the reservation of seats in mixed electorates as, in current discussions, reservation of seats is usually contrasted with communal electorates. As the Committee is to be reappointed to consider the rules under the Reform Act, this matter can easily be put beyond the possibility of doubt.

FROM the irreconcilable attitude of the Madras non-Brahmans, one turns with a sense of relief to the very reasonable attitude of the non-Brahmans of the Deccan. Here, again, the recom-

mendation of the Joint Committee left an element of doubt, and if the Mahrattas were so minded they could contend that the reservation of seats recommended by the Committee was meant for themselves alone and that all the other backward classes were excluded from this electoral protection. The leader of the Mahrattas, Mr. Jadhav, however, who represented all the non-Brahman classes before the Joint Committee, promptly came forward with an explanation that the Committee put a wide interpretation upon the term "Mahrattas" and thus averted a controversy which would have been easily aroused. Mr. Latthe argued in a recent issue of this paper, with convincing force, that to afford protection to any of the non-Brahman communities singly would only tend to its eventual demoralisation. In regard to the Brahman competition, all the non-Brahman classes stand in the same position, and any concession to be granted to them must be conferred upon all the classes together.

THE Indian Economic Association, whose members held their third annual conference in Madras in Christmas, is capable of doing considerable good to the country by stimulating and directing the close study of questions affecting the economic condition of the people. A body of scientific economists is expected to carry on investigations and discussions in a responsible manner, so that their conclusions may render help in the solution of the many problems that confront us with respect to industry, trade, currency, taxation and prices. At the Madras session, four such questions were selected for discussion, and we hope that the papers read on them will be published for public information and education. Co-operative stores and the true place of central banks in the co-operative movement, welfare work among the working and the depressed classes, post-war taxation and currency developments are all questions regarding which the public will like to have the considered views of economists who have made a special study of them. We wish the Indian Economic Association a long life of usefulness and practical work for the promotion of the material advancement of this country.

THE wave of industrial unrest has at last reached the city of Bombay and has thrown its life into a sudden turmoil. On the morning of Friday last the mill hands, employed in the Jacob Sassoon Mills, went on strike, demanding that the payment of bonus should not be delayed till February, and the contagion spread like wild-fire among the labour population. By Monday evening out of the eighty-four mills situated in the city, not a single one was seen working. The situation developed in a remarkably peaceable and orderly fashion and has come on the general public as a surprise. At present nearly two lakhs of mill operatives are lying idle. On account of the peculiarly disorganised condition of labour in India, it

has become a matter of extreme difficulty for the capitalists to ascertain the real grievances of the strikers. The causes are wholly economic and it appears mill-owners are showing laudable anxiety to remedy them at an early date. From a pamphlet circulated over the signatures of the secretaries of the mill-hands' association, their demands appear to be: (1) 85 p. c. allowance to be given instead of the present 35 p. c.; (2) ten hours' work a day instead of the present 12 hours; (3) yearly bonus to be paid within ten days from the day of resuming the work; (4) monthly payments to be made before the 15th of the month instead of the present 24th or so.

* * *

ELSEWHERE we reproduce the speech made by Mr. N. M. Joshi on November 19 at the International Labour Conference, in support of Miss Margaret Bondfield's amendment that the following modification be effected in the application of the labour convention to India: "Children under 12 should not be employed (a) in factories working with power employing more than 10 persons, (b) in mines and quarries, (c) on railroads, (d) on docks." The general convention arrived at was that no child should be employed in industrial occupation below the age of 14 years, and it was proposed to the commission that the limit of age for India be fixed at 12. The commission, however, in deference to the representations made by the Government delegates and the employers' delegates, preferred to wait for one year in order that the recommendations of the Indian Government might be received. The fact that the Government of India had not had time to consider the convention and had not given instructions to their delegates does not go a long way, for any resolution at which the Conference may arrive is only a recommendation to the Government which they can turn down at will. Hence Miss Bondfield's amendment.

* * *

SHE pleaded strongly for the raising of the age limit for the employment of children to 12 years. In answer to the objection that the parents would oppose, she said:

We have all had to fight that in our respective countries. I perfectly well remember being mobbed in my own country when I advocated the abolition of half-time in the textile mills. The parents, they said, would never consent to being deprived of the right to work their children when they chose. We don't think that is a purely eastern argument; we have met it in the west. We have conquered it in the west by educational methods and organization, and we do not admit that as a sound and valid reason. I recognise there is a very serious objection, and that is the fact that in India the educational machinery is so entirely defective. That of course is another grave responsibility of the Indian Government, but I venture to suggest that one of the quickest ways of securing the speeding up of the educational provision in India is by the prohibition of child labour.

* * *

MR. A. C. CHATTERJEE gave the assurance that the number of children employed in factories being small, the Government of India was not likely to be influenced in the discussion of the

matter by any consideration that any raising of the age limit would affect the economic conditions or the industrial development of the country; but he urged two objections in the following words:

Until there are adequate educational facilities available for children in India and until such children can be compelled to avail themselves of the facilities, the raising of the age of employment will only throw such children on the street. In a country where children develop much earlier than in the north or in the west, or where the customs of the country do not enable the mothers to look after their children with the same freedom and capacity as they could do in the west, the result would be more disastrous to the children than otherwise.

Now, both of these objections will remain as valid a year hence as at present, and must have dispelled the impression created in the Conference that the question only awaited solution for a year. If economic considerations do not weigh with the Government, the objections urged by Mr. Chatterjee, although we must confess they have force, cannot be said to be decisive and it will be generally agreed that Mr. Joshi gave a convincing answer to them. The Conference, accordingly adopted the amendment under discussion, recommending (for it is not a prescription) the raising of the minimum age of children's employment in India from 9 to 12.

* * *

THE attitude of ruling princes to internal reform in their states is well typified by the observations made by His Highness the Maharaja of Kapurthala in his Durbar speech. "During my reign," said the Maharaja, "numerous measures for bettering the lot of my people have under my orders been enforced from time to time. Representative institutions such as municipalities, local boards, etc., culminating in the inauguration of the State Assembly in 1916 on the occasion of my silver jubilee, have been introduced, though necessarily conceived in a cautious spirit and endowed with a limited scope. I am fully aware that my people are thoroughly contented and my Government is in every way satisfactory and efficient, and I see no signs at present of a pulsation of a general demand for a further liberalisation of those institutions."

* * *

THE representative institutions of which the Maharaja speaks with much unction cannot be worth much if they have not taught him yet to abandon the self-laudatory style of speech which he adopted on this occasion and which is so characteristic of the rulers of Native States generally, in favour of a style indicating searchings of heart, in view especially of the large measure of reform introduced in British India. The Maharaja intends appointing a committee to "ascertain what steps for further developing the existing constitution can with advantage and without unduly forcing the pace be taken in the near future." We can confidently tell the Maharaja, even without the assistance of a committee, that the present "constitution" of his state admits of immense immediate development, which will inure to the abiding benefit of his subjects.

THE REFORM ACT IN THE CONGRESS.

THE conflict between the views of the Moderate and the Extremist parties on the reforms manifested itself even in the Congress. The points of divergence between Messrs. Tilak and Das on the one hand and Messrs. Gandhi, Jinnah and Malaviya on the other were none else than those which divide the Liberals from the Radicals. The controversy in the Congress centred itself round the question: shall the Indian nation cordially co-operate with the authorities in making the reforms successful? and this in its turn revolved upon the correct valuation of the constitutional advance made by the Act. For it is clear that the question of co-operation will arise only if the reforms are regarded as substantial, though not fully adequate. In Mr. Tilak's view, they are unsatisfactory and disappointing, and therefore it is but natural that he does not think it necessary to offer to the Government the co-operation which those who hold a much more favourable opinion of the reforms would equally naturally do. Mr. Gandhi takes a fundamentally different view of the value of the reforms and therefore of the course the country should pursue in giving effect to them. If the reforms are in fact disappointing, the only course open to one, argued Mr. Gandhi, is to have nothing to do with them. He would to have learn the English language again, he said, before he ventured to call that disappointing which they wanted to accept and utilise. The Congress resolution, however, proceeds on the theory that whatever fails in any degree to give complete satisfaction is unsatisfactory and therefore disappointing. Apart from the necessary implication of the use of the word 'disappointing,' to which Mr. Gandhi alluded in his speech, one may well ask: why, indeed, are the reforms to be used if they are so thoroughly worthless as they are represented to be? You stand to lose nothing, to put it only negatively, by a boycott of reforms if the latter are, as a matter of fact, hollow. But the case for boycott is really much stronger, and can be supported on positive grounds. It is confidently asserted that the Labour party will come into power some four years hence, and that on its so doing it will confer upon India at one blow the status of a self-governing colony. Will it not materially help the party to counter any possible obstruction thrown in its way, say, by the House of Lords if Indians in the meanwhile resolutely stand aside in protest from the very fragmentary and indeed unreal and even suicidal reforms? And, after all, at what insignificant cost is this immense prospective gain to be secured? To abstain from taking advantage, supposing it is capable of yielding any, of the Reform Act—a "disappointing" Act—for the brief space of four years, in view of obtaining full dominion autonomy at the end is certainly not too heavy a sacrifice for those who are out to win home rule. What is Mr. Tilak's answer to the objection urged by Mr. Gandhi, viz., that reforms "disappointing" in their character ought

not to be touched? It is, forsooth, that, as loyal citizens, we are bound to obey the behests of Parliament and work the Act. But Parliament by enacting the reforms has not prescribed for us any line of conduct departure from which would involve us in disobedience. It has conceded to us certain rights which it is for us to decide, in our discretion, whether to accept or to reject. We can adopt either alternative at will, and if the reforms are to our honest thinking disappointing, and if the Labour party is pledged to grant us, and is in a position to grant us, full self-government in the immediate future, there is no getting away from the only conclusion to which these premisses lead—that the interests of the country require us, by way of protest, to hold aloof from the so-called new régime to be inaugurated under the Reform Act. Those who depreciate the reforms as Mr. Tilak does and yet cannot restrain themselves from "licking this little bone," proclaim to the world by the very act of "licking," more clearly than by any words they could employ, that the reforms, even in their judgment, are substantial and calculated to do solid good to the country.

But the good which the reforms are capable of doing will result only if there is hearty co-operation between officials and non-officials, as well as between all the constituent classes of the Indian community. This co-operation is imperatively required as we have to work a system of dyarchy which is particularly liable, in the hands of a fractious opposition, to produce friction and thus end in failure. Are Indian leaders prepared to give the system a fair trial and work, among themselves and with officials, in a spirit of perfect *camaraderie*? Mr. Gandhi insisted that the Congress should give a lead to the country in the right direction; the lead was specially needed in view of certain pronouncements by men who have lately attained a position of eminence in Nationalist circles to the effect that it was their duty to demonstrate in actual working the failure the reforms deserved to be. It is too much to say that, by the addition of another clause to the resolution regarding co-operation, the Congress has succeeded in giving the necessary lead. At this supreme crisis in the country's fortunes, when its labours in the past have visibly borne such rich fruit, the Congress, we grieve to say, failed to rise to the occasion. We are confident, however, that when the reforms come into operation, a far different spirit will be at work and that we shall reap from them a full harvest in a vast amelioration of our conditions, socially, economically and politically. It is not surprising that Mrs. Besant could not accept the compromise ultimately arrived at and that she pressed her amendment to the vote. Her estimate of the reforms, though just, differs radically from that of the Congress, and consequently her attitude to their future working. The essential weakness of Mr. Gandhi's position was that he did not explain in detail, as did Mrs. Besant, what exactly he thought of the provisions of the

Act in their aggregate. In the absence of this general estimate founded on a detailed consideration of the Act, his advice not to cherish a mental reservation towards those in authority who are well disposed to the cause of the country must have struck the average Congressman as too idealistic. It is by no means certain that if Mr. Gandhi had set out to examine the Act as Mrs. Besant did, he would have been more successful in inducing a right temper in his audience, so sedulously has pessimism been fostered. But we wish he had thrown his tremendous influence into the scale to its fullest extent. As it is, the Congress failed to give the guidance which it was its high privilege to do.

THE INDIA BILL IN COMMITTEE.

THE debate on the Government of India Bill, which was postponed last week in order to give no ground for the impression, fostered by those who would be glad to see its progress obstructed, that His Majesty's Government wanted to rush the Bill through Parliament in order to avoid criticism, opened yesterday and is likely to last for two days more. Although a large number of members left the House after question time, the attendance was much fuller than it is on days when Indian subjects are under consideration and the discussion was far from being tedious or dull, except when Col. Yate, who was pulled up several times by the Speaker took part in it. The proposed amendments to the Bill, some of which are designed to enlarge its scope and some to curtail it, cover eighteen printed pages. The hostile amendments either constitute an attack on dyarchy or are intended to increase the power to be given to the official element. The amendments moved by the Liberal and Labour members follow generally the lines of the Congress resolutions and the most important of them have been published in *India*. The following statement, made by Mr. Ben Spoor to a representative of the *Daily Herald*, shows what significance is to be attached to them. "The Labour party," he said, "has put down a number of amendments, all of which are important. They have no intention, however, of spending too much time on these, as they agree with Mr. Montagu that it is important the Bill became law without further delay. The Labour party will make its position clear that whenever it comes into power a larger measure will be put through. In the meantime, it hopes, once the Bill is law, all India will co-operate to use the limited powers granted to the fullest extent."

DILATORY TACTICS.

The first amendment on the agenda paper which stood in the name of Col. Yate asked that provision for the various matters enumerated in clause 1 should be made not by rules but by statute. Its effect, if passed, would have been to suspend the consideration of the Bill till the rules were ready. It was, in fact, tantamount to a motion for the rejection of the Bill. The arguments brought forward in its support were that the matters referred to in

clause 1 were too important to be left to be dealt with by rules and that, as it was not expected that the councils would be started on their new career before June, 1921, the plea of want of time could not be raised. Mr. Montagu stated in reply that both the India Office and the Government of India hoped that the elections to the new councils would be held in November, 1920, and that the councils would be able to meet in January, 1921. He had no difficulty in showing that whatever prejudice might exist against him personally it could not be said that the Bill would increase the autocracy of the Secretary of State for India. The rule-making power would be exercised only in consultation with the Standing Committee which would recommend in regard to important rules that the express consent of Parliament should be secured before giving effect to them. He referred to the Act of 1909 under which the rules were made without any reference to Parliament, and he contended that the Secretary of State's powers had never been so restricted as they would be if the Bill under discussion became law. He was supported by Major Ormsby-Gore and Sir Henry Craik. Both of them pointed out that it would be a disaster if the consideration of the Bill were postponed and emphasized that they were in complete accord with the recommendation of the Joint Committee in regard to the framing of rules. I believe they appealed to Col. Yate to withdraw his amendment, which however, was put to the vote and declared lost.

OPPOSITION TO DUALISM.

Colonel Yate's next amendment (which did not come immediately after the first) related to dyarchy. He moved that clause 1(d) which provided for the transfer of provincial subjects should be deleted and that "the Governor's executive council should consist of an equal number of official ministers and of ministers chosen by the Governor from the elected members of the provincial legislature." Were it not for the fact that the mover of the amendment was Colonel Yate, one might have thought that the language had been borrowed from the Congress-League Scheme. Sir Henry Craik, Mr. F. D. Acland, Major Ormsby-Gore, Mr. Bennett, Sir J. D. Rees and many others took part in the debate, but the speeches of the first two deserve special notice, of Sir Henry Craik because of his former opposition to dualism in provincial Governments and of Mr. Acland because of the cogency and clearness of his arguments. Sir Henry Craik said he was one of the strongest opponents of the division of provincial functions into two sections when the Bill was read a second time in June last, but that he had found himself compelled to change his views. No one was enamoured of dyarchy but there was no feasible alternative to it. No scheme for a unified executive fulfilled the essential condition that it should provide for a gradual transference of power. Colonel Yate's amendment was so revolutionary that he thought it might have been drafted by Mr. Patel. Mr. Acland contended that the proposal of Colonel

Yate secured unity only in name. So long as the executive Government consisted of elements selected in different ways and in practice deriving their strength from different services it was essentially dual. Besides, as he pointed out, Colonel Yate's proposal did not lay down that the popular half of the Government should be chosen from that section which commanded a majority in the legislature. It did not even ensure that the ministers would be entrusted with any real power. The only reply that Colonel Yate gave to these objections was that "Indo-European" control over all the departments was more desirable than the exclusive control of any section of the Government over particular departments. And he reinforced his argument by referring to the department of education where joint control was necessary to prevent the Bengalis who were clamouring for cheap degrees from lowering the standard of education. This wise observation illustrated the truth of a remark made by Sir J. D. Rees during the debate that the real objection to dyarchy was not that it was unworkable or untried, but that it made half the Government Indian. I need not add that Colonel Yate's amendment found no favour with the House.

RESERVATION OF LAND REVENUE.

Two amendments were moved respectively by Mr. Spoor and Lieutenant-Commander Kenworthy, the object of both being substantially the same, *viz.*, the inclusion of land revenue and irrigation among transferred subjects. A third amendment on the same subject was moved by Mr. MacCallum Scott asking for the transfer of the subjects mentioned above in Bombay. All the speakers referred to the principle laid down in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report that subjects which were intimately connected with the well-being of the people should be under the control of the legislature and to the unanimity which prevailed on this point among the witnesses representing the main political parties of India. The amendments were opposed by Mr. Montagu and were rejected by the House. He said he hoped that land revenue would soon be under popular control. He was convinced that the Bill made India's progress towards full responsible government irresistible. But in his opinion two conditions must be satisfied before land revenue could be transferred. The rural population must be capable of looking after its own interests and adequately represented on the councils, and the revenue laws must be codified. If the rules governing assessment are not embodied in law, surely the responsibility for it cannot be laid on the shoulders of Indians. The Government ought not to make its own fault a ground for punishing the people. The argument employed by Mr. Montagu is similar to that brought forward by Lord Meston when he asked that secondary and higher education should not be transferred because the Government had failed hitherto to place them on a sound footing. In any case Bombay differs from the rest of India in having given to land revenue a legislative

basis. But both Mr. Montagu and Major Ormsby-Gore dwelt on the undesirability of differentiating between the various provinces. Even Assam they said claimed to be an advanced province. They believed that to give more to one province than to another would excite jealousy and lead to discontentment.

A passing reference may be made to two amendments to clause 4, one moved by Lieutenant-Commander Kenworthy to the effect that the arrangements for the administration of reserved subjects should last only "for a period of six years after the passing of this Act," and the other moved by Mr. Oman or Col. Yate, asking that if a minister "be domiciled in India his salary shall bear the same proportion to that of members of council domiciled in England as does that of a member of the Council of India domiciled in Great Britain to that of a member domiciled in India." Both of them were defeated. The latter was resisted on the ground that as the salary of ministers was to be placed on the provincial estimates, the provincial legislature should have the right of fixing its amount. If it were fixed by an Act of Parliament, the legislative councils would be deprived of one of the means of calling ministers to account.

A CHAMPION OF THE I. C. S.

Of the amendments that followed those which related to reserved and transferred subjects the most important was that moved by Sir Henry Craik (to clause 3), asking that the Governors of the provinces the heads of which have been known hitherto as Lieutenant-Governors should be appointed "by the Governor-General with the approval of His Majesty" and that they "must have been at the time of their appointment at least ten years in the service of the Crown in India." It was opposed by Mr. Montagu who pointed to the success which Sir George Lloyd, Lord Willingdon and other Governors appointed from England had achieved. He felt sure that the new Governors would, for a pretty long time, continue to be chosen from the Indian Civil Service, and referred to the case of a province, claims of which to an enhancement of its status had been pressed on him, which desired that its first Governor should be its present Lieutenant-Governor who was a member of the Indian Civil Service. But he would not lay down that merit and ability outside the I. C. S. shall not be taken into account. Sir J. D. Rees, who had been Private Secretary to three Governors, Major Ormsby-Gore and Col. Wedgwood also spoke against the amendment which was thrown out.

PROVINCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

The injustice and inequality of the burden imposed on the provinces by the contributions required of them and the exclusion of Burma from the scope of the Bill were also among the matters that figured in the debate. In regard to the first complaint, Mr. Montagu announced that a commission presided over by Lord Meston would soon examine the question of provincial contributions. He has, if I may say so,

taken a double revenge on Lord Meston. It is a matter of common knowledge that the latter was the author of the separate purse scheme which was pressed by the Government of India on the Joint Committee. I have no doubt that in the House of Lords he will give his support to the scheme which he persuaded the Government of India to oppose. And, as president of the proposed commission, it will be his duty to suggest measures which will place the financial relations recommended by the Joint Committee on an enduring basis.

In regard to Burma, Mr. Montagu assured the House that he would do all he could to give her a substantial instalment of reforms before the end of 1920. He was in telegraphic communication with the Government of India and he felt certain that either Burma would be made a Governor's province and thus come under the Reform Scheme or a new Act would be passed which would not leave her at a disadvantage as compared with India.

There is a general desire that the Government of India Bill should become law before the Peace celebrations, which will take place from the 16th to 19th December. The hope is entertained that it will be passed by the 13th instant. Its passage through the House of Commons is not likely to be obstructed, but the fate in the House of Lords of the clause giving the Legislative Assembly a limited control over the Indian budget is still doubtful. A great deal depends on the attitude of the Government of India.

H. N. KUNZRU.

London, December 4:

A LETTER FROM LONDON.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

LONDON, DECEMBER 11.

FINAL STAGES OF THE INDIA BILL.

WE are still awaiting the final stages of the Government of India Bill. Having passed the third reading in the House of Commons on Friday afternoon, it was hoped that it would be taken in the Lords on Monday or Tuesday of this week. As a fact, it was given a first reading in the Upper House on Monday, since when its further stages have been delayed, doubtless owing to the domestic bereavement just suffered by Lord Sinha, who is to pilot the measure through the Lords, with the able assistance of Lord Meston. In order to inaugurate the Peace celebrations in India by an announcement of the enactment of the measure and, as was anticipated, the proclamation of a general pardon for political offenders, the remaining stages of the Bill would have had to be hurried through the Lords to-day and to-morrow, in order to secure the King's assent in time. But it is announced that the debate on the second reading will be taken this week and the remaining stages early next week.

I learn from Mr. Lajpat Rai himself that the embargo upon his return to India has been removed and that he is to be issued a passport enabling him to proceed to his motherland directly, instead of *via* England.

Mr. N. M. Joshi, having completed his labours at the Washington Conference, ought to be returning here soon, after a study of American labour conditions. He arrived in the United States at an exciting time, and he has been in the centre of an economic storm ever since. His official colleague, Mr. Chatterjee, returns here a sad and bereaved parent. I met his daughter, who had been married to the Hon'ble Mr. Sinha only in October, just before Mr. Chatterjee's departure for America, as recently as the Keshub Chander Sen commemoration, three weeks or so ago, when she looked the picture of health and happiness, and Lord Sinha was proudly introducing his daughter-in-law to his many friends. That our tenure of earthly existence is frail is generally recognised, but the recognition is strongly enforced upon occasion by sad events such as this.

FEMALE FRANCHISE.

The final scenes in the Commons, during the passage of the Bill, were hardly exciting. During the whole of the proceedings, only two divisions were taken, one on the Congress proposal for complete provincial devolution of all subjects save law, justice, and police; and the other, on a motion to embody the principle of female suffrage in the Bill. In neither case did the movers of the amendments succeed in their object. Naturally, the Government whips were put on, as the Government could not take the responsibility of accepting any amendments at all, for fear of worse things, and the minority in each instance was small. It might even have been converted into a majority on the second issue—though I personally think this unlikely—but the Bill was eventually reported to the House as having passed through Committee without amendments. Whereas, on the first day, the attendance in the House was rather large, the remainder of the proceedings, being regarded as a foregone conclusion, did not attract the same attention. The female franchise debate was the only one where real feeling was shown. It was sincere and animated, and there was a time, I know, when Mr. Montagu was not absolutely certain that the Government might not suffer a defeat. Lady Astor was prevented from making her maiden speech only because of loyalty to the party whips, who were anxious that there should be no unnecessary delay in the progress of the Bill. She interjected a couple of pungent sentences, however, reminding Mr. Montagu that in this country the franchise had been granted by a masculine electorate and Parliament only under great pressure from the women, and she voted against the Government in this division.

EARNEST ADVOCATES.

For the rest, Colonel Yate, Mr. Oman, Capt. Elliott, and Mr. Stewart remained to the end unconverted. Colonel Wedgwood, Mr. Spoor, and Commander Kenworthy, representing the left wing point of view, having set up a good fight for as much in the way of amendment as they thought possible, gracefully conceded that, after all, the Bill was

not so black as it had been painted and recognised that, though the ten years limit for the first commission was incorporated in the Bill, as Mr. Montagu said, if the condition of India improved with such rapidity as to warrant an earlier interim commission, there was nothing in the Bill to prevent it. That the two Labour members and the Liberal put up so good a fight ought to be generously recognised in India. On the whole, they showed themselves to be well-informed and earnest advocates. They put forward their case often with eloquence and nearly always without bitterness. Indeed, the most noticeable characteristic of all these proceedings has been the lack of bitterness and the generally conciliatory and moderate language used on all sides. Here and there doubts and fears were expressed, but almost always with a restraint and a courtesy that did great credit to the members concerned and to the standing of Parliament. Mr. Montagu and Earl Winterton gave well-deserved credit to the left-wing representatives for the valour and moderation of their efforts, and Mr. Montagu paid a special tribute to the Labour party for the interest that it had begun to show in Indian affairs. He welcomed the advent in India of trades unions, and hoped that the Labour party here would assist in their wise growth and development.

APPRECIATION OF MR. MONTAGU'S SERVICES.

As to Mr. Montagu himself, the occasion was a personal triumph for him. He spoke, on the third reading, with undisguised emotion, of the day being the proudest in his life and he fully merited all the fine tributes that had been bestowed upon him by the House, and notably by Col. Wedgwood. The Bill was his Bill, and his name will be ever associated with it, as the *Times* rightly remarks. He has spent laborious days and sleepless nights devising means to emerge from the morass of doubts and the jungle of difficulties with which he was surrounded, and the least that can be done to show appreciation of his splendid efforts, without which the Bill would never have come to fruition, is to work the measure to the full and with the utmost loyalty, to prove merit for a further great advancement at an early date by the result of earnest and patriotic work, and to leave abuse and destructive criticism for constructive statesmanship. It was a noble appeal that he made, and it should meet with a generous response. If India turns her eyes to the future and, so far as may be, forgets the past, a new era of hopefulness will have been ushered in, a new dawn will have broken.

Before I close this letter, I am reminded by the Aga Khan that a sinister movement is afoot in East Africa to convert the currency from the rupee to British currency. I need not remind your mercantile classes what this means and is designed to mean for the Indian residents of East Africa. The whole design of the promoters of this movement is to ruin Indian trading enterprise eliminate India's competition, and eventually, secure the evacuation of East Africa by its large

Indian population. The Indian Merchants' Chambers and other public bodies ought to send in their immediate protests, if they do not wish to be too late.

SELECTIONS.

MR. JOSHI AT THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE.

PROHIBITION OF CHILD LABOUR.

THE following is the text of the speech made by Mr. N. M. Joshi, representative of Labour in India at the International Labour Conference, at Washington, in supporting the motion to raise the age of employment of children in factories in India from 9 years to 12 years:—

On behalf of the workers in India I rise to support the amendment put before this Conference by Miss Bondfield. I can assure this Conference that it is not a very pleasant task that I have undertaken, namely, that of criticising the attitude of the Government delegates in this Conference of an international character like this. But I have to do my duty towards those people for whom I stand in this Conference. Sir, Mr. Warrington Smyth, from Africa, has placed before you a picture of India from which you are likely to imagine that India is an uncivilized or, at the most, a half-civilized country. But let me request this Conference to remember that India is being governed by the British Parliament for over 100 years, and in some provinces for over 150 years. The British Parliament, than which there is no more democratic governing institution in the world, is responsible for the government of India. And can you believe, if you are told that being under that Government for over 100 years, India could not have made any more progress than that which has been pictured to you by Mr. Warrington Smyth?

I am quite sure the representatives of my Government, as well as the representatives of the British Government here, will not accept the statements made by Mr. Warrington Smyth in defence of the Government of India. Then, I wish also to bring to your notice another fact, namely that factory legislation is not quite unknown in India. She does not stand on the same footing as China, Siam, or Persia in this respect. We have had for many years some factory legislation which is being improved from period to period. Therefore, when you consider the case of India, lay aside from your mind the impression that India is so backward as is depicted to you by Mr. Warrington Smyth and also remember that factory legislation is not new to that country.

At the outset I wish to describe to you what protection is afforded to children by our factory legislation. According to our Factory Act, children under 9 are not allowed to be employed, but children between 9 and 14 can be employed, for seven hours, and in some cases for six hours. My friend, Mr. Chatterjee, calls it light work. Let me remind this Conference that it is going to pass a convention of eight hours a day for adults, and you are asked to accept the statement that in India the climatic conditions are so different that children of 9 can work for six hours, and seven hours, and that should be considered light work.

Now, I shall request you to consider what the amendment is. The amendment is that the age should be raised from 9 to 12. We do not ask, for the present, to apply to India the general convention prohibiting employment of children under 14. We suggest a very moderate application of it. We ask you to allow the workers of India to reach the final goal stage by stage, and we propose to you the first stage as proposed in the amendment.

Then we do not ask you, as you ask in the general convention, to apply this age limit to almost all industries. We ask you to fix this age limit only for those industries which are worked with some mechanical power and in which not less than 10 persons are employed. We also ask you to apply this age limit to certain well-organized occupations, such as railways, mines, and docks, where supervision by Government inspectors is very easy.

Now let us see what are the arguments offered before this Conference in opposition to the amendment of Miss Bondfield.

The first and perhaps the most important argument is that in India there is no system of compulsory education and that children will go on the streets if you do not allow them to be employed. I admit there is great force in this argument, but let me tell you again that the picture laid before you by Mr. Warrington Smyth concerning this matter is not true in the least. Let me ask you if there was education anywhere in the world before it was in India? The idea of education is not new to India. Indians were educated, Indians wrote books on most difficult subjects, a thousand years perhaps before any other people began to write books and think of these subjects.

Therefore, the idea of education is not certainly so new to Indians as is depicted to you by my friend, Mr. Warrington Smyth. He said it will take time to educate public opinion in India; without doing that the Government cannot introduce a general system of education there. Let me again tell you that the Government of India is not very much influenced by public opinion in the country. It is to this present day an autocratic or a bureaucratic Government. If the Government means tomorrow to introduce certain legislation in the country, it can do so even if the whole public opinion of the country is opposed to it. Therefore, the argument that the Government waits to educate public opinion holds no water at all. But Indian public opinion as expressed by the educated Indians is not certainly against education. A bill for compulsory education in India was introduced in the legislative council of the country some 10 years ago by Mr. Gokhale and the opposition to it did not come from the educated people of the country, but the opposition came from the Government itself. I therefore think that the argument that public opinion must be educated before education is made compulsory need not carry any weight with you at all.

Mr. Chatterjee also said that it was difficult to persuade people to accept education. Let me tell this Conference that in the same India of which this Conference has spoken there are some parts, like Baroda, where compulsory education has been given for several years, and people in those provinces have not rebelled against their Governments. Therefore, we need not consider very much the objection that people in India will object to compulsory education being introduced.

Sir, there is no doubt that you cannot educate a vast country like India within one year. I admit that, and therefore I ask you, what is the use of waiting for one year when we know full well that you cannot introduce a general system of compulsory education in a vast country like India during such a short period? It will be of no use. If the Government of India could not educate the people during the past century or more, I am quite sure they will not be able to introduce a general system of education within one year. Therefore, I think we shall not gain anything by giving them one year's time. If we think that children of 9 and 10 and 11 should not go to factories and work there for six hours and seven hours, let us raise the age limit and leave it to the Government to find educational facilities for them.

I can give you an additional reason. If we are anxious that Indian children should be educated, then I may tell you that if you once raise the age limit for employment in factories the opposition from at least one section of the opponents of education, namely the capitalists, will melt away at once.

I now leave the argument about education. The second argument against the amendment is that India has got different climatic conditions. I admit we have got more of the sun than in western countries and some other climatic conditions. But are you going to believe that in India children of 9 years of age are as well developed as children of 14 years of age in western countries? Do you think that climate can make such great difference, that children of 9 can be as well developed in India as children of 14 in Europe? I need not say anything about this argument. Only I put it to you whether that is possible.

The Government's argument is that they had no notice. All of you must have received a copy of the supplementary report in which the views of the Government of India are given. That one fact will prove to you that the question was before the Government of India. They considered the question. They sent their views to this Conference, but when the question of raising the age is to be discussed in the Conference we are expected to forget that fact. We must close our eyes to that report. I admit there was not very long notice, but there was notice to the Government that the question of the employment of children was to be discussed by this Conference. This was known to the Government long ago, and if they were really serious about this question I am quite sure they would have come to certain conclusions. Decisions, even in India, even in a vast country like India, are taken by Government on very vital matters at shorter notice than was given them by this Conference.

Then there is the argument that the draft convention was not before them, but let this Conference remember that we are not considering the general draft convention. The Indian Government knew that the draft convention which was to be sent to them, or which was sent afterwards, was not to be applied to India. The Government of India knew perfectly well that India's case would be considered specially. Perhaps some of you may know that the clause for the special countries was put in the treaty at the suggestion of the Indian representatives at the Peace Conference, and therefore the Government of India knew that the general convention would not be applied to India. They certainly need not have waited for the general convention at all. Their duty was to consider what was best for India and to place those proposals before this Conference. I, therefore, hope that all of you will agree with me when I say that the argument that there was no notice really carries nothing in it. There was notice to the Government of India. They had considered the question. They had sent their views to you. They clearly said there that they were not prepared to do anything in the matter, and then you are asked again to wait. I do not know for what reason. My only guess is, if you will allow me to do so for a while, that they wanted to get a postponement for one year, and, if possible, to get further postponements. Moreover, the Government delegates are likely to accept certain definite proposals as regards the hours of work. Government had time to consider such an intricate question as the hours of work, but they had no notice to consider the simple question of raising the age of children's employment!

We are assured—and I must accept the assurance—that no economic considerations weigh with Government, and perhaps even with the employers in considering the age limit of children in India. Their motive in opposing the raising of the age limit is to safeguard the interests of children. If that is so, I may ask them why they object to the employment of children between 6 and 9? Do they not go in the streets for want of education?

I therefore request this Conference not to wait for one year more. We will not gain anything by waiting, because the education question will not be solved in one year. If you can save the children of 9 and 10 and 11 in India from work for one year, it would be a great benefit to them; and I therefore strongly hope that you will give your serious consideration to this question and will not postpone it for a year, because there will be no advantage in postponing it.

I will only speak one word more. We are told that if this Conference makes a definite suggestion for raising the age limit for children to a definite period, the Government of India may not accept the proposal; but I submit to this Conference that Great Britain has played a very important part in bringing this International Labour Organization into existence, and I am quite sure the Government of India, which is responsible to Great Britain, will not treat a convention passed by this Conference very lightly. As our proposal is very reasonable and modest, we can be sure that the Government of India will be inclined to accept it.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE LIBERAL CONFERENCE.

WE give below the text of some of the more important resolutions passed by the Liberal Conference at Calcutta in the Christmas week :—

PUNJAB AFFAIRS.

This Conference is of opinion that it is imperatively necessary (1) to make amends for the outraged feelings of the Indian nation, and that British honour and justice should be vindicated by taking steps to bring to justice any officials, high or low, civil or military, who may be found to have acted unreasonably and in excess of their power or to have authorised such acts, (2) that reparation should be made for all serious hardships caused by unwarranted acts of severity, and (3) that safeguards should be provided against the recurrence of such things in the future. This Conference authorises its All-India Committee (1) to take such action as may be necessary on the publication of the report of the Hunter Committee; (2) to consider the necessity of the following safeguards among others and taking such further action as may be necessary, (a) that the introduction, exercise and duration of martial law should be subject to the same constitutional limitations as in England, (b) that martial law should not be introduced unless it is impossible for the civil courts to sit and exercise their functions, (c) that the power of creating new offences for breach of regulations and providing penalties should not be delegated to military officers, (d) that if courts martial are allowed to sit when civil courts are sitting any person not subject to the Naval Discipline Act or to military law who is charged with the contravention of any regulation, should be allowed the option of a trial by the civil court, (e) that the remedy in the nature of Habeas Corpus should be made available in all parts of British India; (3) to further the object of the resolution by arranging for a deputation to England or otherwise.

ORGANISATION OF THE LIBERAL PARTY.

(1) The Liberal Party of India will work for the success of the constitutional reforms by following a policy of co-operation and of promoting good understanding among the different communities and interests in the country. It will aim at a higher standard of national efficiency by means of administrative reforms, a wider spread of education, improvement of public health, economic development and amelioration of the condition of the backward classes of population. The organisation of the Liberal Party shall be known as the National Liberal Federation of India and the future sessions of the All-India Moderate Conference shall be designated the annual sessions of the National Liberal Federation. The work of the Federation shall be carried on between one annual session and another by a Council consisting of not more than fifteen members from each province in addition to the office-bearers elected at the annual session.

THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL.

(1) That the Council be instructed to do all that is necessary and possible in connection with all action that has to be taken under the Government of India Act of 1919 and reports of the Panjab Enquiry Commission and the Indian Army Commission, as well as to bring about the repeal or a radical amendment of the Indian Press Act and also the repeal of the Rowlatt Act.

DEPUTATION TO ENGLAND.

(2) That the Council be further instructed to organise a Deputation to proceed to England to urge before the statesmen and publicists there the views of the Conference on the aforesaid subjects and do such other work as the Council may decide.

PROGRAMME OF CONSTRUCTIVE WORK.

This Conference is of opinion that it is desirable that various provincial organisations of the National Liberal Federation should consider the following subjects and frame suitable programmes of constructive work in connection therewith: (1) placing of the principles of land revenue settlements on a legislative basis, (2) a definite programme of development of irrigation, if necessary, by borrowed capital, (3) development of provincial railways and reform of present methods of rail-

way administration and of railway tariff so far as it affects each province, (4) an immediate expansion of free elementary education with the ultimate goal of introduction of compulsory education at an early date, (5) reforms connected with elementary, secondary and higher education, collegiate and technical, (6) development of agriculture and improvement of economic condition of agriculturists, (7) reform of the excise administration with a view to minimise gradually the consumption of liquor and with view to the ultimate introduction of total prohibition, (8) development and expansion of industries and organisation of better credit for the rural classes, (9) amelioration of the condition of the backward classes, the improvement of the present condition of labour and the housing of the poorer classes, (10) retrenchment of public expenditure and reform of the existing methods of administration with specific reference to the improvement of the district administration, (11) organisation of medical relief and sanitation.

THE CONGRESS AND THE REFORM ACT.

BUT it is in regard to its resolution on the Reform Act that the Congress, we are sorry to say, utterly discredited itself as the mouthpiece of responsible opinion in the country. And it did this at the instigation of Mr. Tilak and against the earnest appeals of Mr. Gandhi and the Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. The curious part of the matter is that Mr. Tilak had not many days ago expressed himself in regard to the reforms in a sense quite the contrary of the line he took in the Congress. He had cabled to the Secretary of State promising co-operation, when the King's Proclamation was published. Mr. Gandhi used very strong language in denouncing the tergiversation of Mr. Tilak. But Mr. Tilak has ever been, for all his great personal talents, a very slippery politician, and he cannot afford at this stage of his career to let Mr. C. R. Dass or Mr. Satyamurti outdo him as expounders of the creed of irreconcilable extremism. He is one of the men who are interested in widening and perpetuating the breach between Moderates and Radicals, as Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya is to heal the differences and to close the division. We are grieved that the Congress allowed itself to follow the guidance of Mr. Tilak and to turn a deaf ear to the pleadings of men vastly his superiors in wisdom and political insight. The resolution which it has passed does not reflect the opinion of any informed person in this country, and, as we said, Mr. Tilak himself had accepted the reforms. No honest thinker can deny that the Reform Act is vastly superior to the Reform Bill as it was introduced in Parliament. The King's Proclamation has emphasised and, in the opinion of competent judges, enlarged the hopes held out by the Act. A great opportunity has been lost of bringing the Congress once more into line with the considered judgment of the country. We had hoped that, after his utterances in England, Mr. Tilak would turn over a new leaf and utilise the new opportunities to build up instead of pulling down. That hope has been destroyed. But it is a mistake to assume that the Tilak policy is in the ascendant. On the contrary, there are unmistakable signs that the country is getting tired of his barren tactics, and the Congress resolution marks really the climax of his egotistic and unprincipled opportunism.—*The Indian Social Reformer.*

INDIANS IN BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—In the admirable article headed "Indians in British East Africa" that appeared in your issue dated December 25, 1919, from the pen of Mr. D. B. Desai, an error has crept in which I beg to point out. It is mentioned in the article that the chief credit for the construction of the Uganda Railway goes to Mr. A. M. Jivanji, who was the sole contractor for the venture. The line was no doubt built by Indian labour alone under British supervision. The work, however, was not entrusted to a contractor, but was carried out departmentally by labourers from the Punjab and skilled staff from all parts of India.—Yours, etc.,

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