

Indian Opinion

No. 23—Vol. XXIII.

Friday, June 5th, 1925.

Registered at the G. P. O. as a Newspaper
PRICE FOURPENCE

NOTES AND NEWS

THIS Highness the Maharajah of Kutch, who in 1921 represented India on the League of Nations, and Sir John Lane Harrington, formerly an officer in the Indian Army, are arranging an expedition to Africa, for the purpose of big game shooting and making scientific collections for the Royal Geographical Society and the Natural History Museum. The party, which will include Lady Harrington, will start from Khar-toum, and proceed first to Mongalla, return to the Sabat River, and explore the Ajuba River. Then it will ascend the Baro River as far as possible, after which the expedition will attempt to motor to Kassal via Rossires. The expedition will be equipped with a shallow draught and fast motor boat, and three caterpillar cars, complete with wireless installation. The actual journey in Central Africa will occupy about three months.

Speaking recently at the ceremony of the laying of the corner-stone of Y. M. C. A., Madura, the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri in the course of his speech is reported to have said:—"In England I have often been to the institution popularly known as Shakespeare Hut, but whose real name is Indian Students' Union and Hostel maintained by the Y. M. C. A. A good deal has been said by slanderous tongues about some thing or other attaching to the work for the students done by that institution. There is absolutely no foundation whatever for any criticism of the character that one hears now and I have always esteemed it a great privilege to be able to recommend this institution so useful, so indispensable and really so conducive for the modern spiritual welfare of the hundreds and thousands of our young men who find themselves adrift, nearly helpless, in London. I say I have always been proud and I have esteemed it a privilege to bear testimony to the absolutely unsectarian and cosmopolitan nature of the service rendered by that institution."

In view of the various cables coming through to the effect that Prohibition has failed, it may be interesting to note that the "Wets" were utterly routed at the recent American elections, and Prohibition stands to-day supported by the strongest "dry" Congress and Senate Legislatures ever elected. The final results show: The Senate, 73 "dry" members, 21 "wet" members, and 2 vacancies; the House of Representatives, 319 "dry" members, 111 "wet" members, and five uncertain. These, it must be admitted, are great "dry" gains in both the Senate and House of Representatives.

Dewan Bahadur Vijjaraghavachariar, India's Trade Exhibitioner, in the course of a speech in India is reported to have said:—

If India continues to exhibit the same attitude towards the British Empire as she did during the War, an attitude I noticed, often referred to with gratitude and pride by all Englishmen, irrespective

of Parties, I feel confident of an assured and honourable place for her in the Councils of the Empire.

Commenting on the above *New India* writes:—

Since there is no War going on India cannot "bleed herself white," quite in the sense that Lord Hardinge described in 1914. But she can provide markets for the Empire's goods, supply it with her raw materials, help it to develop remote territories with cheap labour until it is not wanted, and then bring it home again, maintain a huge Army at her own expense, and thus lighten its burden, find an outlet for its children in her own higher Services, and willingly submit to all the oppression and injustice and humiliation of a subject race. Then, we also have no doubt that references to India by Englishmen will again be tinged with pride and gratitude. But the pride and gratitude have not materialised into the Freedom India hoped for, hence, her attitude is that of keen resentment. She was recognised as equal on the battlefield in death, but not as equal in life in her own land.

Says the *Zanzibar Voice*—The Colonial Secretary has approved, it appears, of the recommendation made by the late Governor of Kenya as to the composition of the Municipal Council of Nairobi, the capital of the Colony. The Council is to consist of twelve members, of whom five are to be Europeans elected by the European community, four Indians elected by the Indian community and nominated by the Governor, one Goan elected by the Goanese community, one official and one European, co-opted by the other members. This arrangement has been accepted by the Indians, the protest against election by communal electorates being maintained in the provision that the Indian elected members will sit in the Council, not by virtue of the election, but by virtue of appointment by the Governor!

In a recent issue of the "N.C.W. of Great Britain" it was noted that an effort was being made to bring India into the I.C.W. and that a small committee, with the Marchioness of Aberdeen as its chairman, had been formed in London. Indian ladies passing through London are asked for their advice, about their various Provinces, and several of them have gone back to India anxious to work towards the formation of local or Presidency Councils. When a certain number of these have been formed, it may then be possible to establish a National Council for all India. There is already an established Council of Women in Bombay, ready to affiliate; Miss Cornelia Sorabji, Hon. Vice-President for the I.C.W. in India, from her headquarters in 28, Chowringhee, Calcutta, is in correspondence with several willing helpers in Calcutta and in the as yet untouched Provinces; and there seems a good prospect that a National Council for India may come into existence ere long. The Secretary of the London Provisional Committee is Mrs. Gray, 200, Palace Chambers, Bridge Street, Westminster.

Reuter's message understands that official intimation will shortly be published in India that certain powers which, under the Government of India Act, were given to the Bengal Legislative Council, will revert to the Governor of Bengal in Council. It is pointed out in well-informed circles in London that under the Dyarchy certain powers were delegated to Indian Ministers in the Legislative Council. The Swarajist Party, thinking probably they had not received sufficient concessions, refused to vote the salaries of the Ministers. A deadlock ensued, and as certain sections of the public business came to a standstill it became necessary to take action.

A Reuter's message from Pretoria reports that four Indians have been arrested on a charge under the Gold Law. It is alleged that they were found in possession of gold to the value of £250. When arrested three of the accused were about to board the Johannesburg train. On visiting the Asiatic bazaar the police found a goldsmith's plant.

WELCOME TO OUR ROYAL GUEST

WE extend a hearty welcome to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to this Province and especially to Durban. Much as Indians were anxious to participate in celebrating this unique and happy occasion together with the other sections of the burgesses of this Town they are not able to do so unanimously because they have unjustifiably been refused an honourable position as a self-respecting section of the burgesses by the Corporation. Anti-Asiatic feeling in this Town is very high and strange to say most of our City Fathers even are not void of that feeling. If they had any respect for His Royal Highness it was their duty to put aside all such feelings and to act harmoniously with every section of the burgesses irrespective of class, colour or creed, if not for anything else for the sake of expediency as we have already stated in a previous article. But, no, they have not been able to sacrifice that feeling and yet they profess to be the most loyal citizens of the British Empire and are most anxious to accord a right royal welcome to the Prince of Wales. It is sheer hypocrisy. It is true that we are responsible to a certain extent for the present state of affairs as we were not able to stand unitedly. There are a few irresponsible individuals in our community who, for reasons known to themselves have not hesitated to sacrifice the interests of the whole community to gain their own ends, and have gone against the Congress who has ever been fighting for the just rights of our brethren and have on their own and without any mandate from the community expressed their willingness to accept the humiliating terms offered by the Mayor. The Mayor has taken advantage of this division in our community and totally ignoring the voice of the Congress has taken into confidence these few irresponsible men who have never at any time represented the community and has forced on the community a programme which is considered by a large section to be humiliating. Nor self-respecting Indian nor any fair-minded European can

consider the demands made by the Congress in any way unjust. Our friends who have chosen to become the pets of the Corporation too in their innermost heart realise that the cause for which the Congress was fighting was right but the idea of their becoming the pets of the Corporation has apparently blinded them to their duty to their fellow-countrymen.

We wish to point out at this stage that we have the highest esteem for His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales but we hold our self-respect to be sacred above everything else. Our fight is with the Durban Corporation who has obstinately refused to accord that status to us and has thus prevented us from celebrating this occasion unanimously. As representing those who are against participating in the celebrations on the present terms we wish His Royal Highness will not misunderstand our delicate position. We wished there had been no jarring note in according a hearty welcome to His Royal Highness and we deeply regret that we have been the cause of it but we emphatically refuse to share any blame for it which solely lies on the Corporation and to some extent on the local English Press which did nothing towards alleviating the situation but on the contrary rendered it worse by taking up a most unfair and arbitrary attitude.

Notwithstanding our non-participation in the official celebrations in honour of His Royal Highness for the foregoing reasons we wish to convey our sincerest respects to him. May Heaven's choicest blessings be upon him and may his mission be crowned with success.

NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS UNOFFICIAL RECEPTION TO H. R. H. PRINCE OF WALES

SPORTING PRINCE GARLANDED PRETTY CEREMONY IN FIELD STREET

More or less in the nature of a surprise—save to the leaders of the Asiatic community in Durban—was the picturesque ceremony enacted in 110 Field Street at noon to-day.

Immediately opposite the house of the late Mr. Rustomjee—the grand old man of the Indian community, so recently deceased—the Prince's car was halted for a few moments, while the Mayor (Councillor T. M. Wadley) presented to our august guest, the Chairman of the Natal Indian Congress (Mr. Amod Bayat), and Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee hon. Secretary, with whom he exchanged cordial greetings.

A very large crowd of Europeans, as well as Asiatics had gathered to witness the typical Indian ceremony of garlanding the Prince, which was carried out amidst lusty cheering and every manifestation of loyalty and devotion on the part of the Indians present.

The Chief Priest of the local Mahomedan community, Hajee Fethamahomed, was in attendance, together with other notabilities, Indian ladies and gentlemen. Also some hundreds of Indian children, in gala attire, watched the proceedings with fascinated gaze, and added their quota to the outbursts of cheering.

In addition to being garlanded, the Prince was handed a turban and an orange colour shawl of rich material and sprinkling of Rose water to symbolise

his august rank as future Emperor of India. This he smilingly accepted and retained in his hands when the Royal motor car proceeded on its way amid a final salvo of applause.

The incident, completely unrehearsed though it was, passed off with great eclat, and will create a splendid feeling of pride and gratification throughout the local Indian community.

WHAT PRINCE THOUGHT OF INDIANS' WELCOME

ALBERT PARK FUNCTION

Durban's welcome to the Prince has been sincere and deep, and the Indian community, no whit behind the Europeans, gave His Royal Highness a magnificent reception on the Albert Park this morning.

From an early hour Indians had been pouring into the park, and by the time the Prince arrived it was computed that 15,000 of them were present, there being no less than 7,000 school-children lined up in front of the dais. The orchestra of the Natal Musicians' Society, an Indian organisation, led the music, and from a very early hour the park was gay with banners and vividly-coloured dresses. By noon the whole area of the Oval was covered with people, and from the dais as far as the eye could see was a surging mass of humanity, waiting expectantly for their Prince.

DRIVE ROUND THE PARK

Exactly at 12.30 the Royal cars were seen entering the park, and on the instant the whole concourse burst into a roar of cheering, such cheering as has not yet been surpassed in Durban. The Prince drove slowly twice round the park so that the people on the fringe of the crowd had an excellent view.

He reached the dais through a long line of some 100 ex-service men, who were drawn up in two ranks, and his appearance was the signal for the crowd, led by the band, to sing "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow." Mr. E. M. Paruk, the chairman of the Indian Reception Committee, welcomed His Royal Highness, who was accompanied by the Mayor, on the dais, and said: "May it please your Royal Highness, I welcome you in the name of the Indian community. I wish you long life, and pray that you may be one day our Emperor. We hope you will return safely and tell our King that we are his loyal subjects. May God bless you."

A LITTLE HINDUSTANI

The Prince, who was in mufti, smiled happily. "Thank you very much, for your kind welcome," he said, and turned to face the crowd, to be garlanded at the same moment, and presented with a bouquet of carnations. His Royal Highness, still smiling, handed the bouquet to someone else, and inquired anxiously whether he should address the crowd in English. "I know a little Hindustani," he said, but on Mr. Paruk assuring him that the people spoke English, he turned to them.

"I thank you all for your very kind welcome," he began, "and I wish you a prosperous future." The crowd roared, and the Prince smiled again. "Splendid," he remarked.

Another bouquet, this time from a tiny Indian girl, who was lifted up to the dais, and then the waiting children broke into "God Bless the Prince of Wales," singing it with wonderful enthusiasm. Three tremendous cheers followed, and then the Prince was presented to the members of the Reception Committee, shaking hands with each of them. On the dais, in addition to Mr. Paruk, were Messrs. H. L. Paul, C. M. Aaglia and A. Rai.

The Prince chatted for a few minutes with Mr. Paruk, asking whence the majority of the crowd hailed, and displaying a considerable knowledge of

India and its inhabitants, and then he left the dais to be driven away amid a continued roar from 15,000 throats. It was a great reception, and Durban's Indian community have every reason to be proud of the way in which they greeted their future Emperor.

M. K. GANDHI LIBRARY AND PARSEE RUSTOMJEE HALL

ILLUMINATED WITH COLOURED LIGHTS INDIAN DECORATIONS

It is evident that in spite the dissention that arose, probably largely through misunderstanding, amongst the members of the Indian community, they have risen to the occasion well.

Grey Street has been gaily decorated by owners of premises in the street and by general subscriptions. In Queen Street, the Bai Jerbhai Rustomjee Trust, has liberally decorated the M. K. Gandhi Library and Parsee Rustomjee Hall, coloured lights standing out in the words "Long live the future Emperor of India," the whole colour scheme being in green, red and white.

It is in similar colours that the individual decorations are carried out. Taken from the flag of India the motto "Heaven's Light our Guide," is freely used, and there is also emblazoned "Swaraj is our birthright."

THE COLOUR BAR

PROTEST OF JOINT COUNCIL

The Johannesburg Joint Council of Europeans and Natives has forwarded a memorandum to the Minister of Mines and Industries in which it opposes the Mines and Works (Colour Bar) Bill "by all the means in its power."

Among the reasons adduced for its attitude are the following:—

"The principle of a colour bar in industry is economically unsound and morally unjust, and is without precedent in any civilised country. The application of this new and dangerous principle is to be wholly in the discretion of the Government of the day (by very wide powers of regulation), whereas Parliament itself is in duty bound to control and to make itself responsible in detail for every application of a principle which may involve such serious social consequences. This dangerous measure is proposed at a time when there is no evidence whatever that the Hildick-Smith judgment has been followed by any considerable substitution of natives for Europeans on the gold mines.

"So far as the opening up of new places for Europeans is concerned, the numbers of natives employed, even in unskilled occupations, is comparatively small (on the gold mines, which are primarily concerned, only a matter of hundreds). To replace these by Europeans will do very little to relieve European unemployment, and that little at an absurdly disproportionate cost. It will adversely affect the relations of Europeans and Natives, and will create a sense of grievance. If every opportunity of development is denied to the natives, all sections of native opinion will inevitably be drawn together on anti-European and extremist lines. The Bill is bound to cause a fundamental disturbance of existing conditions, the extent of which cannot now be accurately estimated.

"The displacement of Europeans by Natives is effectively prevented by trade union vigilance and by the pressure of public opinion. But displaced Natives are powerless, and can only cherish a sense of injustice and resentment against their white rulers.

ASIATIC V. COLOURED

"The Bill, in differentiating between coloured

people on one hand and Asiatics on the other, threatens to provide new antagonisms in the already much divided South African body politic.

Impressions that will inevitably take their place in the minds of the Natives if the Bill becomes law are: (a) That European labour is unable to compete with native labour, however civilised, without unfair extraneous aid; (b) That the Bill is a conscious, though clumsy application of the Imperialist principle Divide et impera; (c) Newly formed native labour unions are frightening the Government to take protective measures.

The Colour Bar Bill stands with other measures such as the Minimum Wage Bill and the 1913 Land Act (still applied for the most part only so far as it imposes restrictions on Natives), as part of an undefined policy of segregation. There can be no justification for the one-sided application of such a policy by measures imposing serious restrictions upon Natives, without any compensating privileges, or any protection whatever for just native interests.

"TIED TO THE LAND"

The report alludes to the thoroughly unsatisfactory conditions prevailing on many farms before more natives, or natives now employed in industry, are forced into farm labour. The very low standard of native farm wages (agriculture being excluded from the operation both of the Colour Bar and of the Minimum Wage Bills), is proof that in spite of occasional local shortage, native farm labour is, on the whole, a wasted asset. Observation shows that the operation of the 90-day labour-tenant system immobilises large numbers of potential native labourers who are in effect "tied to the land," under-employed and under-trained, so much so that natives are justified in resenting a policy which aims at pushing them on to the European farms where they have no prospects of improving their standard of living.

No provision whatever has been made for natives already displaced in the pursuit of the Government's "civilised labour" policy—nor for the relief of natives suffering from severe economic pressure in congested native areas. The moment is singularly inopportune for legislation which much tend to aggravate the seriousness of this situation.

"Failing an equitable policy of segregation," says the report, "the only sound protection for legitimate white interests is to raise native standards. The present measure is calculated to depress the native standard and to aggravate the evil. This reduces the 'national dividend' and circumscribes a most important market for the products of South African agriculture and industries." Experience shows (e.g., in the Transkei, where virtual segregation is seen in practice) that the material or economic progress of the native population creates wants such as bridge-building or motor or agricultural machinery repair shops, which are, and can to-day, only be supplied by the initiative of Europeans and by an infiltration of Europeans into the segregation area. Legislation, like the Colour Bar Bill, will close avenues to natives and prevent them from learning to meet these needs for themselves in their own areas.

THE MINIMUM WAGE

While in European countries the principle of a minimum wage may have much to commend it, its application to South African conditions needs most careful scrutiny. When to a minimum wage Bill is added an undisguised Colour Bar Bill the injustice becomes obvious.

The Joint Council resolved.—

That immediate representations be made to the Prime Minister (a) conveying the Council's opposition to the measure, (b) drawing attention to the fact that native opinion has not been consulted on a measure profoundly affecting all native interests; (c) requesting that inasmuch as the Prime Minister

has himself stated that the announcement of his complete programme is postponed for at least a year, the restrictions on natives proposed in the Colour Bar Bill should not be considered before that programme is announced.

That the Council take steps to place its views before any Select Committee that may be appointed.

EVILS OF NATIVE PASS SYSTEM

JOINT COUNCIL'S FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

"The pass system is, no doubt, an easy means of controlling those who are subject to it, but it is nevertheless crude and repulsive. It should not be beyond human wit to organise our social system to give the native liberty in the land of his birth. Few Europeans realise the irritations and fierce resentments caused by the pass system. The threat to extend it to women inflames the native to resistance. We have had to respect these feelings. But even the proposals now submitted (especially Clause 2 (a), (b), are regarded with dislike and fear. This clause tries to control the influx into the towns and to meet the demand for more parental control. The native people deplore the ease with which native girls are able to escape home discipline and are enticed into the towns. But, while there is an almost unanimous desire for parental control, Clause 2 is not as unanimously supported, largely because of the fear that it will provide an easy means of introducing a form of pass."

"Our inquiries have confirmed our conviction that the reintroduction of the Night Pass Ordinance in respect of native women would fail to touch the evils which stirred the Minister of Justice and yourself to action, and would add another powerful irritant to those which already cause unrest among the native people."

The above are extracts from the covering letter to a memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister by the Joint Council of Europeans and Natives. The letter is signed by the Bishop of Johannesburg, H. S. Msimang, Rev. Ray E. Phillip, Mr. J. D. Rheinallt Jones and Mr. R. V. Selope Thema.

The memorandum which is the result of the Joint Council's deliberations after consultation with the native welfare societies, native chiefs and other organisations, urges upon the Prime Minister not to alter the present position until a native conference has been convened under the Native Affairs Act 1920, to consider the proposed scheme or any modifications.—*The Star* (Johannesburg.)

TURN INDIA INTO IRELAND

MR. NATESAN'S GRAVE WARNING

In the Council of State India recently Mr. Crerar moved for a consideration of the Bengal Ordinance Supplementary Bill and made it clear that it was intended to clear the obstacles which stood in the way of India advancing on the road of responsible Government.

Mr. Yamin Khan said the fact on which the Governor-General had proceeded to take the entire responsibility for the promulgation of the Ordinance and this bill, were not before the House and that in the circumstances he would leave the Bill to be passed or rejected by those members of Council who know the facts. He (Mr. Yamin Khan) would not take the responsibility.

Mr. Natesan asked Government not to turn India into another Ireland. By this Bill the Government was thinning the ranks of co-operators. He regretted he could not respond to the appeal of Mr. Crerar.

Sir D. P. Sarbadhikari then opposed the Bill.

Sardar Chiranjit Singh supported the Bill and asked the Council to trust the Viceroy.

Mr. Vedamurthi after a short speech walked out

of the Chamber as a protest against the passing of the Bill which he could not honestly support and the passing of which was a farce.

“OUR UNFORTUNATE SISTERS”

[BY MR. M. K. GANDHI IN “YOUNG INDIA”]

Of all the addresses I received in the South the most touching was one on behalf of the “Devadasis”—an euphemism for prostitutes. It was prepared and brought by people who belong to the clan from which these unfortunate sisters are drawn. I understand from the deputation that brought the address that reform from within was going on but that the rate of progress was still slow. The gentleman who led the deputation told me that the public in general was apathetic to the reform. The first shock I received was at Cocanada. And I did not mince matters when I spoke to the men of that place. The second was at Barisal where I met a large number of these unfortunate sisters. Whether they be known as “Devadasis” or by any other name, the problem is the same. It is a matter of bitter shame and sorrow, of deep humiliation, that a number of women have to sell their chastity for man's lust. Man the law-giver will have to pay a dreadful penalty for the degradation he has imposed upon the so-called weaker sex. When woman, freed from man's snares, rises to the full height and rebels against man's legislation and institutions designed by him, her rebellion, no doubt non-violent, will be none the less effective. Let the Indian man ponder over the fate of thousands of sisters who are destined to a life of shame for his unlawful and immoral indulgence. The pity of it is that the vast majority of the men who visit these pestilential haunts are married men and therefore commit a double sin. They sin against their wives to whom they have sworn allegiance and they sin against the sisters whose purity they are bound to guard with as much jealousy as that of their own blood sisters. It is an evil which cannot last for a single day, if we men of India realise our own dignity.

If many of the most respectable among us were not sleepers in the vice this kind of indulgence would be regarded as a greater crime than the stealing of a banana by a hungry man or the picking of a pocket by a hungry man or the picking of a pocket by a youngster who is in need of money. What is worse to more hurtful to society—to steal property or to steal the honour of a woman? Let me not be told that the public woman is party to the sale of her honour, but not the millionaire on the race-course whose pocket is picketed by a professional pickpocket. Who is worse—an urchin who picks a pocket or a scoundrel who drags his victim and then makes him sign away the whole of his property? Does not man by his subtle and unscrupulous ways first rob woman of her noblest instinct and then make her partner in the crime committed against her? Or are some women, like “Panchamas,” born to a life of degradation? I ask every young man married or unmarried to contemplate the implications of what I have written. I cannot write all I have learnt about this social disease, this moral leprosy. Let his imagination fill in the rest and then let him recoil with horror and shame from the sin if he has himself been guilty of it. And let every pure man, wherever he is, do what he can to purify his neighbourhood. I know that the second part is easier written than practised. It is a delicate matter. But for its very delicacy it demands the attention of all thoughtful men. Work among the unfortunate sisters must be left everywhere to experts. My suggestion has reference to work among the visitors to these houses of ill-fame.

EUROPEAN CHEATS SOUTH AFRICAN REPATRIATES

The following story has reached our ears with regard to a case of cheating in connection with the repatriates who arrived in Madras by *s.s. Umzumbi*. This vessel brought about 500 repatriates from Durban to Madras and an European by name Mr. Bona who was in the employ of the Indian Emigration Bureau, Durban, accompanied them to India, as assistant to Dr. Hobban on board the ship. It is alleged that this Bona informed the Protector of Emigration at Madras and the Clerk for the Agents that he held a letter of authority from the Protector of Emigrants, Durban, to the effect that he should receive the bonus amount of 5 Indians amounting to £50 and remit the sum to their village address by post. After more explanations, the Protector handed the cash to the repatriates and these repatriates gave the money to Bona in whom they had an implicit confidence as he was treating them fairly well on board the ship—of course with an ulterior motive. This sum Mr. Bona failed to remit as promised: but proceeded to Calcutta, for some purpose not known. Thanks to the timely action of the Agent and the Protector of Emigrants at Madras, the Agents in Calcutta recovered the full amount.

In spite of these facts staring him in the face, Mr. Bona pleads ignorance and contends that he had remitted the amount to the people to whom it was due. Emigration has been going on to and from India for the last half a century, but this kind of scandal did not exist at any time. We hope the authorities will not fail to take serious action against the party concerned. It would be advisable to appoint Indian Assistants of character and experience as hitherto existed and avoid similar recurrence of the mischief.—*Indians Abroad*.

TRADE UNIONS IN INDIA OFFER OF HELP FROM ENGLAND

Mr. George Lansbury, M.P. editor of *Lansbury's Labour Weekly* contributes the following article to the *Bombay Chronicle*.—

The peoples of India and Britain during the past hundred years have been closely connected by ties of commerce and government. There has, however, been no relationship between the masses of Britain and the masses of India; in fact, few Indians visit our shores and, relatively speaking, fewer still of the common people of Britain ever see India. In saying this I am, of course, excluding officials, and soldiers. Consequently, although the British working classes are now responsible for the proper treatment of the people of India they are for the most part quite ignorant as to the conditions of life under which the three hundred millions of human beings in that great country live. India is but a word to most Britons, as also is Britain to the Indian people.

IGNORANCE OF INDIA'S DEMANDS

Although this is true of the mass of our people, there is in this country and in our Parliament a growing number of men and women who, sincerely desirous of doing their duty by their Indian fellow citizens, spend a great deal of time trying to understand the social, political and industrial problem of life which in India call for solution. In this work of investigation, those of us who take a keen interest in Indian affairs are greatly helped by visitors from India, people like M. N. Roy and his wife, those brave disinterested Socialists who live lives of turmoil, danger and difficulty striving to serve their people. Lajpat Rai, Dr. Annie Besant, Professor George Arundale, Mr. Sastri and many others, in addition to public officials and high servants of the of the State, bring before us varying aspects of the

problems the British democracy is called upon to solve. Much as we learn from all these, there are few among us who are able to say with any degree of certainty that we know what the people of India want.

WESTERN EXPLOITATION

We understand clearly that in spite of all the efforts of our beloved friend Gandhi, Western commercialism with all its sordid horrors is surely fastening its grip on portions of the country and upon large groups of the people. We also know that so-called religious differences sometimes cause riots and bloodshed; and we know all that is vocal in India cries aloud for Swaraj, or Home Rule. Up till the other day nobody had said exactly what was meant by Home Rule. Now we have received in this country a set of proposals put forward by a conference held in India which goes to show that if the British Parliament is wise enough to give heed, the people of India may be sent forward, many steps forward, on the road to absolute self-government and peace.

CONVENTION BILL THE ONLY SCHEME KNOWN

We understand the need which exists for starting the new constitution by re-establishing the village commune. All true self-government starts with the individual and from him spreads to village, township and city but before these proposals can be intelligently discussed on this side, very much propaganda work must be done. There need be no doubt at all as to what the British people will do once they understand. We who are engaged in this work are but few in number; in addition we are handicapped because we are British and the shoe does not pinch us as it does our brothers in India. India must send lots of more missionaries to these shores and they should come determined to work and efficiently equipped for the work.

MUTUAL AID

I have no faith in those who say India can work out her own salvation unaided and alone. She needs us and we need her. It may be said Britain needs the wealth of India more than India needs the organising skill and domination of Britain. Domination is abhorrent to me. I want not a forced unity but a unity as among equals. The world gets smaller every day owing to the annihilation of space. If the resources of India are to be developed, we may be quite sure that this will eventually mean the entry of India into the world's markets as a competitor with nations of Western Europe. There will be no peace, no harmony, when this situation arises. Westerners cannot and will not allow their standard of life to be pulled down and wrecked simply to enable sets of grasping, greedy capitalists to wax fat at the expence of millions of people, whom they may grind down to the lowest level of subsistence in order to build up huge profits.

What, after this, have I, a Britisher friend of India, to say to my comrades and friends in all parts of the great Indian dominions? Simply this let us each agree that we are, despite the colour of our skins, brothers and sisters and as such let us strive to evolve or think out the sort of social industrial organisation which will enable us to overcome all economic difficulties and establish true co-operation between two great nations. To this end the British Trade Union Movement must help our Indian brothers in their task of organising trade unions. We know how hard and difficult a job this is, but we also know that as we have overcome these difficulties, so also will our brothers in India overcome them. But they need help, and must ask us to give it to them. The great British Trades Union Congress would willingly send out organisers to help if they are invited to do so.

A FRESH START

As to pure and simple politics; speaking for myself, I am in favour of and would give support to every effort made on behalf of true Home Rule for India. The Montague-Chelmsford reforms should be scrapped at once. Dyarchy has failed; further full and complete powers should be given the local legislatures. At the centre, Indian opinion should be called in and all the rights of the Viceroy to certify legislation over the heads of elected representatives should be abolished. The amount of money spent on the army should be reduced so that much more should be spent on education and other social services. India herself should raise her own defensive forces and organise them. The iniquitous salt tax which is a tax on food should be either abolished or considerably reduced. There is a lot more which could be done now, if only good will on both sides is allowed to have its way, but good will without deeds is useless: "Show me thy works" says the psalmist, "and I will show you your faith." Let us remember we live in deeds not words.

Nobody denies that we Britishers have done lots of evil in India, but as evil and good are always mixed we have done good also. No Indian will ever forget the great Lawrence and few of my age forget Ripon. To-day none of us desire India to separate from Britain, there are very few if any in the Labour Movement who would desire to hold India by sheer force of arms. We Socialists want India united to us in the bonds of common fellowship and humanity. We desire only that together we should strive to lead the world in the bonds of fraternity. There is no future for individuals or nations who build their lives and future on force and violence. Therefore, in writing this letter. I do so in the hope that India will have patience with our ignorance and faith in our good will; that she will send her gifted sons to this country to give us knowledge what she wants. When this is done, I am certain both great nations will march together, conquering evil and building up a union of brotherhood which will lead the world to peace.

NFW PRIME MINISTER OF TRAVANCORE

MAHARANI URGED TO RECONSIDER DECISION

The *Bombay Chronicle* states that a memorandum containing all the Indian press comments condemning the appointment of Lt. Col Watts as the Dewan of Travancore has been submitted to the Viceroy. The memorialists appeal to His excellency to advise H. H. the Maharani Regent to reconsider any decision she may have arrived at in this matter and to restore public confidence in the feeling of security and stability afforded by the British alliance.

A Reuter's message from London states that a Government Bill will probably be introduced in the House of Lords this session permitting the appointment of additional Under-Secretaries to the Colonial Office, one dealing with the Dominions, including Ireland, and the other to the Crown Colonies and the Mandated Territories. The title of the Colonial Office, which was objected to by so many of the Dominions, had not yet been settled. The new Under-Secretary will probably be a member of the House of Lords, and will undertake the duties of the Chairmanship of the Overseas Settlement Committee. A large number of important appointments will shortly be made by the Colonial Office, including the Governorships of Kenya, Nigeria, Hong Kong, the Barbadoes and the High Commissioner and Chief Secretary of Palestine. There is a growing opinion that Sir George Lloyd will succeed Lord Allenby in Egypt.