

43,

18 MONTHS
OF
PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY
IN
THE PUNJAB.

*A review of the administration of the Punjab from
April 1, 1937, to September 30, 1938.*



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“I hope, the rest of India will not lag behind at this critical juncture”—
Sir Sikander Hyat-Khan --See page 30.

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THE BACKGROUND.

The student of the working of Provincial Autonomy in the Punjab will do well to bear in mind a few interesting features of the social and economic life of the Province, which form the background to the picture. Among these may be mentioned :

- (1) the Punjab's conspicuous progress in agricultural organisation ;
- (2) the position of the peasant-proprietor in the economic and social structure of the Province ;
- (3) his martial traditions which have earned for this Province the proud title of the Sword-arm of India ;
- (4) the extent to which the agriculturist of the Punjab is indebted to the money-lender ;
- (5) the happy co-operation between the land-owner and the tenant in this Province, not only on the agricultural farm, but also at the polling station ; and
- (6) the finely balanced position of the majority and the minorities among the religious communities of the Province in the Provincial Legislature.

A few remarks on these important features of the picture and their relation to one another will be of assistance to the reader.

The five rivers which have given the Punjab its name, have also given it one of the finest systems of canals in the world. At present about ten of the thirty million acres or so of cultivated area in this Province are irrigated by canals. About five million acres more are irrigated by wells and in other ways. This gives the Punjab better security than any other Province of India has against drought and famine. Other services too, which Government Departments render to agriculture are, on the whole, much better organised in this Province than in any other. These factors, coupled with the distinctive physique, perseverance and industry of the Punjab peasant, have made this Province agriculturally the most productive and prosperous in India. The gross value of the total agricultural produce of the Punjab is computed to be nearly one-fifth of the figure for the whole of British India. Indeed, agriculture in the canal colonies of this Province has been described by competent observers as the most prosperous in the whole of Asia including Japan.

The human factor is of special importance in the agricultural organisation of the Province. The bulk of the $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions or so of land-owners in the Punjab are small peasants who cultivate their lands with their own hands and, therefore, form a class of peculiarly willing and self-reliant workers. They set the pace of agricultural operations and the standard of industry set by them is followed by the army of tenants and non-proprietor labourers who are attached to agriculture. From this point of view the peasant-proprietors may be regarded as the nucleus of the much larger agricultural community which accounts for about three-fourths of the total population of the Province.

Supported by his co-workers, the peasant-proprietor fights with remarkable industry and pertinacity against the limitations of his small, often very small, holding in order to obtain from it enough to maintain his steadily rising standard of living. With the growth of population the pressure on land is steadily increasing. It is only partly relieved by the temporary migration of the more adventurous from their villages. A considerable number of them change their ploughshares for swords and join the army, or go abroad and seek employment where a courageous policeman's work is to be done or feats of physical strength and perseverance have to be performed. Following a certain period of absence, the emigrant usually returns home, beats his sword once again into a ploughshare and resumes work on his fields, to which he has perhaps made a few additions by that time. This stultifies the argument of those who sometimes contend that the son of a peasant family should cease to be regarded as an agriculturist when he has joined the army or some other service.

This brings us to another distinctive feature of this Province. Because of the martial traditions which the Punjab peasant has inherited from a long line of ancestors, he has been able to distinguish himself on the battlefields of the West as well as the East and has secured for himself a dominant position in the personnel of the Indian Army. The peasantry of this Province contributes to the present Indian Army about 60 per cent of its total strength. This, not only gives the Punjab special political importance among the Provinces of India, but also ensures for its peasant families a much-needed supplementary income of about Rs. $4\frac{1}{2}$ crores a year in the form of salaries and pensions—the amount being almost equal to the total land-revenue of the Province.

It is to be noted that the peasant-proprietor in the Punjab is very often a tenant as well as a receiver of rent. Owners of small holdings frequently give one another parts of their

scattered properties for cultivation on rent. The small cultivating proprietor often extends his field of operation by taking a few acres from a bigger land-owner on lease. Even the smallest land-owner sometimes lets out his holding on rent, finding it more convenient or profitable to cultivate some other holding as a tenant. Similarly, he has to let out his land on lease when he finds service in the army or other employment elsewhere. It is an interesting fact that of about 17½ lakhs of land-owners paying Rs. 5 or less as land-revenue no less than 624,835, that is more than one-third, give out their lands on *batai* (rent in kind). In other words, as receivers of rent more than six lakhs of the smallest landholders stand in the same position and have the same interests as some of the owners of the biggest estates. These hard facts blur the distinction which certain economic theorists in the Punjab try to draw between the land-owners and the tenants as if they were mutually exclusive classes or between the "non-working land magnate" and the "cultivating proprietor of a small holding".

These facts also account for another peculiarity of the Punjab—the social and political solidarity of agriculturists, from the few big landlords that there are to the numerous peasant-proprietors and the equally numerous tenants and agricultural labourers, many of whom belong to the so-called scheduled castes. It is significant that in this province the term "zamindar" is vaguely applied to all these classes, no doubt because of the extent to which they overlap one another. Being himself very often a tenant as well as a receiver of rent, the peasant-proprietor has been able to view with equal sympathy the interests of the rent-receiver and the labourer and has set up satisfactory standards of business-dealings and, what is still more important, of social relations between the landlord and the tenant. Where ties of blood existed, they have not been weakened by any feeling of isolation of economic interests. Where they did not exist, other bonds of sympathy and fellowship have been created by the battle of life, which the proprietor and the non-proprietor, the Rajput and the Chamar, the Jat and the Ahir, have all been compelled by circumstances to fight together, day and night, on the small agricultural holdings of the Province.

It is interesting to remember in this connection that, when the present constitution of India was in the making, the big landlords in this Province stoutly opposed the ideal of having an Upper Chamber for their special representation in the Provincial Legislature. They refused to believe that they had any special interests to safeguard, apart from the

in these slogans found expression in a vigorous and sustained policy of repelling attacks on the Alienation of Land Act, safeguarding its effectiveness, proposing other measures of relief and protection for agriculturist debtors, diverting an increasing amount of State expenditure from the towns to the villages, remedying the under-representation of various classes and groups in public services and demanding other benefits for the rural population.

The statutory agriculturists, the debtors, the members of the backward classes and the inhabitants of backward areas, to whom the different parts of the Party's programme were intended to appeal, included members of all religious communities; but unfortunately the money-lending classes which mostly belonged to urban areas and happened to be educationally advanced and over-represented in public services were mainly Hindu. The criticism was, therefore, often levelled against the Unionist programme that it was communal and anti-Hindu. It is interesting to recall this criticism because it has continued to be levelled against certain measures of the Unionist Government as constituted under the new régime ushered in by the Government of India Act of 1935.

Facing criticisms of this kind as best it could and with a varying amount of support at its back, the National Unionist Party in the old Legislative Council pushed many of its important proposals to a successful end. As instances of important measures, for which this party claimed credit, the following may be mentioned :—

- (1) an amendment of the Land Revenue Act, which, among other things, reduced the maximum share of the State from one-half to one-quarter of the "net assets" of a landholder;
- (2) the Regulation of Accounts Act which laid down that the money-lender should keep accounts in a prescribed form and send six-monthly copies of these accounts to his debtors;
- (3) the Punjab Relief of Indebtedness Act which, generally speaking, abolished the penalty of civil imprisonment for defaulting debtors, facilitated the procedure of insolvency, prescribed maximum rates of interest, and made a provision for the scaling down of debts through the agency of Debt Conciliation Boards, besides providing certain other facilities for agriculturist debtors; and
- (4) the Punjab Debtors Protection Act which protected from attachment in execution of civil decrees the

ancestral property of agriculturist debtors, their standing crops and a sufficient portion of their lands, whether ancestral or self-acquired, for the maintenance of their families.

These were pioneer measures in the modern economic history of India. They also form an interesting background to the policy of the Unionist Ministry under the Government of India Act of 1935.

The work of the National Unionist Party in the old Punjab Legislative Council had the effect of creating a line of economic division, which cut across the lines of religious cleavage, but could not wholly obliterate them. Owing to various, some of them deep-rooted, causes, the tendency persisted among the members of the old Legislative Council to form parties on the basis of religious distinctions. The new economic tendency, however, very often led agriculturist members belonging to different religious groups to vote with the Unionist Party on economic issues.

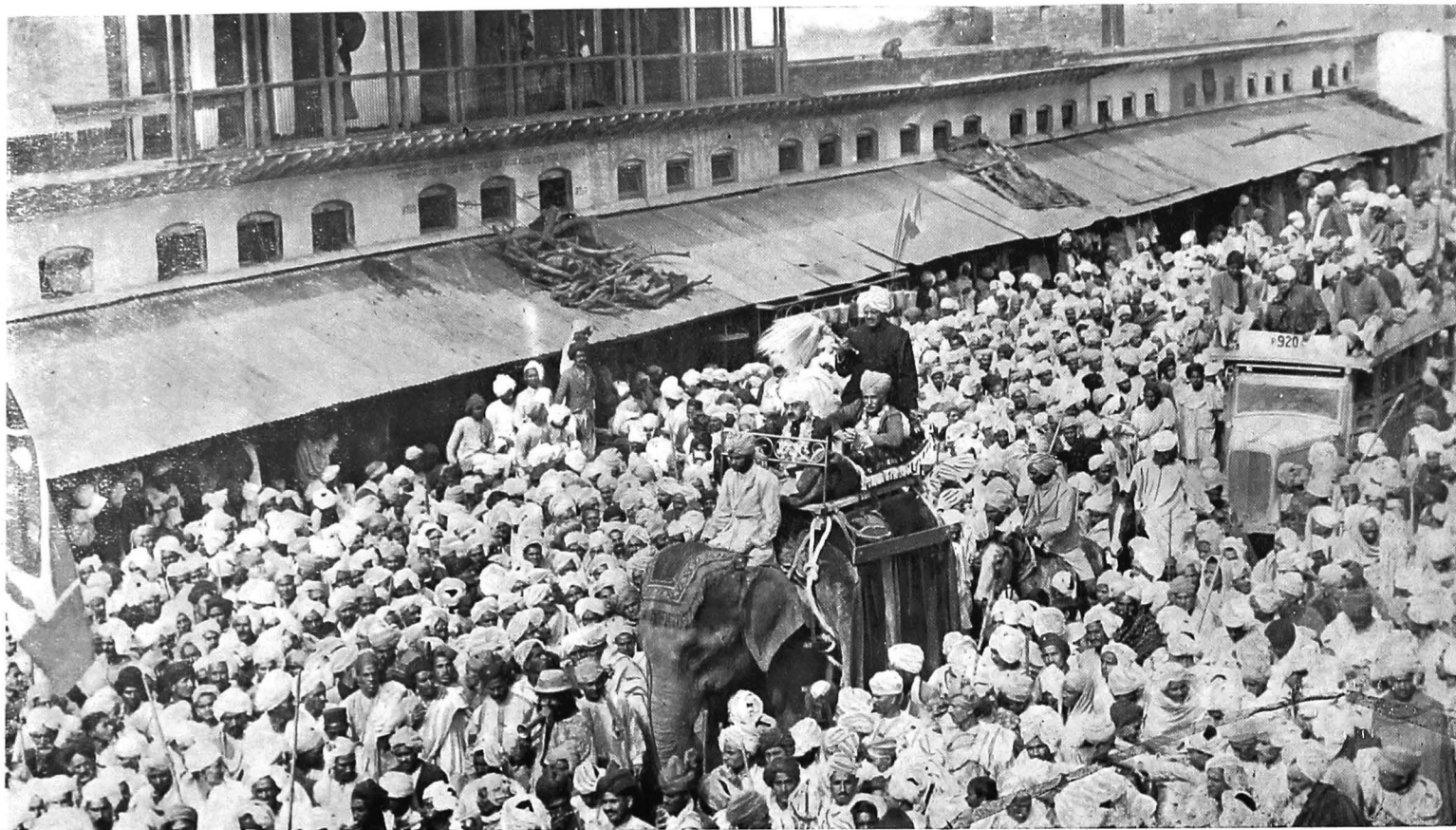
Mention may be made of two important controversies, which gave a fillip to the religious and militated against the economic tendency—the controversies arising from (1) what is known as the British Government's Communal Award, and (2) the Shahidganj affair. During these bitter and long drawn-out controversies the cry of "minorities in danger" was often raised. The authors of this cry in their excitement were, however, overlooking the all too obvious fact that, from the point of view of the relative position of various religious communities in a Provincial Legislature, the minorities had much less to fear in the Punjab than almost anywhere else in India. In a total house of 175 members, which was provided for the Punjab by the Government of India Act of 1935, not more than 86 seats were reserved for the majority community (the Muslims) and not more than a maximum number of five seats, representing mixed constituencies, were expected to be won by members of this community. The strength of the religious majority and the minorities (about 90 Muslims and 85 non-Muslims) was, therefore, more evenly balanced in the Punjab Legislative Assembly than in any other legislature in India. This represents another peculiarity of the Punjab where no Government can hope to remain in office for any length of time with the support of the members of the majority community alone. It is possible in most other provinces for a majority community to provide from among its own members a large enough following for a Ministry. This is not possible in the Punjab.

THE NEW ERA BEGINS.

The Punjab was the first Province to produce a majority party able and willing to shoulder the responsibility of Government under Provincial Autonomy. Eight parties, besides a few independent members, fought their way into the Legislative Assembly. The largest of these was the old National Unionist Party which had been reorganised under the name of the Punjab Unionist Party on the eve of the election. It emerged from the election contest with a membership of 101 in a House of 175. The next largest party, the Congress, captured about 20 seats in the House. These were the only two parties which had addressed their appeals to voters of different religious communities, the remaining six having practically confined their attention to one community or another. Thus the Khalsa National Party and the Akali Party contested Sikh constituencies, the former capturing about one-half and the latter about one-third of them. The National Progressive Party of non-agriculturist Hindus captured about 15 Hindu constituencies, but later lost a few of them to the Congress in by-elections. The Muslim League, the Majlis-i-Ahrar and the Majlis-i-Itihad-i-Millat confined their electioneering to a few Muslim constituencies and emerged from the contest with a membership of two or three each.

Thus, amidst a medley of small parties and groups, the Unionist Party commanded an absolute majority in the Legislature. Its communal composition compared as follows with the communal composition of the total House :—

In the Unionist Party.	In the whole House.
Hindus (including members of scheduled castes) 16	48
Muslims 81	90
Sikhs	33
Indian Christians 2	2
Anglo-Indian 1	1
European 1	1



The Premier and the Minister of Development being welcomed in Sonapat during their tour through Ambala Division—See page 35.

As it emerged from the election the Unionist Party had no Sikh among its members; but circumstances soon remedied this shortcoming.

At this stage in six other provinces the Congress majorities were yet undecided whether to work or wreck the Provincial part of the constitution and in all other Provinces an active search was being made for the man likely to command a working majority in the Legislature. The position in the Punjab was happily free from such doubts and the Leader of the Unionist Party, the Hon'ble Major Sardar Sir Sikander Hyat-Khan, was summoned as a matter of course to advise the Governor on the choice of the Ministers. An important landmark in the history of the growth of democracy in India was thus set up in the Punjab when an Indian for the first time exercised on behalf of the electorate the right of advising the Governor in this respect.

In choosing his colleagues the Unionist Leader initiated an interesting political and constitutional experiment. For a Cabinet of six Ministers he chose, besides himself, three Ministers from his own Party and two from outside its ranks. One of these two, the Hon'ble Sardar Sir Sundar Singh Majithia, was drawn from the Khalsa National Party, of which he was the leader. The other, the Hon'ble Mr. Manohar Lal, came from the National Progressive Party which he had joined after having been elected on an independent ticket. The two non-Unionist Ministers were not asked to adopt the Unionist label. It was enough that they accepted the Unionist programme of "special help for the weak and the backward" as illustrated by the Unionist Party's work in the old Legislative Council.

Was it a Coalition or a Unionist Ministry that Sir Sikander Hyat-Khan formed? The question has been a subject of occasional controversy. Apparently it did not conform to the familiar type of either a Coalition or a single party Government. Nor is a discussion of the proper nomenclature to be applied to the Punjab Ministry of much practical importance. The main point, however, is that the two non-Unionist Ministers were included in the Cabinet not as the nominees of any Parties but because the Unionist Leader found in them suitable colleagues to have with him in the interests of his programme. Their choice as Ministers involved no pact or bargain with the Parties from which they were drawn. If these Parties had been asked to nominate two Ministers as their representatives in the Cabinet, the personnel of the Ministry might have been somewhat different from what it is.

At the same time the choice of two Ministers from outside the Unionist Party was no doubt intended to give special representation in the Cabinet to the Sikh and the non-agriculturist Hindu minorities. As a gesture of good-will to these minorities, it won appreciation and secured for the new Government the general support of the parties from which the two Ministers were drawn. Most members of the Khalsa National Party belong to agriculturist classes. Their support for the details of the Ministry's programme has, therefore, been as thorough and consistent as their general good-will towards the representative character of the Cabinet. In the case of members of the National Progressive Party, however, the old conflict between the agriculturist debtor and the money-lender asserted itself in 1938, in connection with certain parts of the Ministry's economic programme and most of the members of this Party consequently voted against some of the Ministry's proposals. It is, however, interesting that on such occasions, while the Ministry was unable to count on the support of some of its non-agriculturist friends among the National Progressive and the Khalsa National Parties there was a marked tendency among the agriculturist members of an otherwise consistently hostile Opposition to support the Ministry's proposals. The line of economic cleavage tended to cut across parties and political alliances.

After the reaction of different groups of members to the Unionist Ministry's actual economic policy had been tested, the position at the end of the first 18 months of Provincial Autonomy appeared to be that about 120 members in a total House of 175 had been consistent in accepting the Ministry's whip. These 120 members included about two-fifths of the total number of Hindu members and more than one-half of the Sikh members besides the bulk of the Muslim members and all the Indian Christian, Anglo-Indian and European members in the House. From this point of view the Ministry could well claim to enjoy the confidence of religious minorities in this Province to a greater extent than any other Provincial Ministry did.

During this period, the Congress Opposition was able to absorb the Akali Party. This and the gain of a few seats in by-elections at the expense of the National Progressive Party raised the strength of the Congress Party to 35. Between the 120 Ministerialists and the Congress Opposition there appeared to be about 20 members unwilling to accept the whip of either party.

A PROMISE AND ITS FULFILMENT.

On the day of assuming office (April 7, 1937) the Premier of the Punjab, the Hon'ble Sir Sikander Hyat-Khan, made on behalf of his Cabinet, an important public statement,* indicating in broad outline his political policy and programme. This statement has proved such a befitting introduction to the later activity of the Ministry that a few extracts from it may be quoted here with advantage.

Explaining the Cabinet's attitude towards the new constitution Sir Sikander said:—

"The Punjab Cabinet is under no delusion as to the nature and extent of the limitations and restrictions which the new Government of India Act imposes on autonomy even in the provincial sphere. Nevertheless, in pursuance of the clearly expressed wish of the electorate, it has undertaken the task of running the administration and securing the utmost good out of the new constitution.

"We admit that the machinery, which we have been called upon to work, is delicate and complex, but we do not see the wisdom of condemning it without a fair trial. Nor do we believe in flinging in a spanner deliberately to clog or wreck it. It would neither be fair to the Province nor to our constituents to resort to such tactics. At the same time, we wish to make it quite clear that we will not have the slightest hesitation in revising our attitude towards the new constitution if, in spite of our best efforts, it proves to be unworkable."

Referring to the Ministry's programme of work, he said:—

"It is not practicable in the course of a brief statement to enunciate the principles which we desire to follow, or to discuss the policy which we desire to pursue, or to enumerate the details of the programme which we desire to put through during the next five years. We will take the earliest opportunity of announcing our considered plans when we have had time to mature them. Meanwhile, there are certain matters of outstanding importance upon which some light may, with advantage, be thrown at the very outset.

"Lightening the burden of the peasantry, tackling the problem of unemployment, development and expansion of nation-building activities, uplifting backward classes, including our brethren of the scheduled

*The text of this statement is given at the end of the book as Appendix B.

castes, and creating a more favourable atmosphere for the promotion of communal amity and goodwill are questions which have been a subject of universal comment not only in the Punjab, but throughout India. While other questions of both major and minor importance are also bound to engage the attention of the Cabinet, the problems just alluded to are such that they may justly claim precedence over others.....Nobody is more conscious of the difficulties of the peasantry than the Punjab Cabinet. But relief to the peasantry necessarily involves a corresponding shrinkage in provincial receipts, while development of nation-building activities and relief of unemployment necessarily involve an expansion of expenditure.

- “ The clear import of this dual process is that in order to afford the requisite relief to the peasantry and to provide for the removal or even mitigation of unemployment and the intensification of nation-building activities it would be necessary to explore fresh avenues and examine the existing sources of revenue with a view to augmenting our income to the extent which would enable us to take appreciable action in these very desirable directions without adding to the burden of the poorer classes.
- “ It may be contended that the cost of the administration should be reduced very substantially in order to find a part of the funds necessary for the above purposes. While the Cabinet desires to assure the public that every reasonable attempt will be made to effect all reasonable economy in order to cheapen the administration consistently with efficiency, it should be borne in mind that extensive retrenchment was effected in almost all departments when the depression set in and that the votable portion of the budget is not very large.
- “ The yield of all practicable fresh retrenchments and economies will, in any case, be disappointingly low and entirely inadequate for the purposes which claim and deserve the sympathy of all of us.
- “ However, with courage and determination to move forward, the Cabinet has made up its mind to appoint two committees—one to advise and report on the best means of coping with the problem of unemployment and the other to suggest practicable de-

vices of effecting economy and retrenchment as well as to explore fresh sources of revenue without affecting the poorer classes, with a view to enabling the new Government to enter upon a programme of providing suitable relief to the peasantry and intensifying nation-building activities."

It will be interesting to take a bird's-eye-view of the steps that have so far been taken to solve each one of the problems mentioned above, reserving a slightly more detailed explanation of some of these steps for later chapters.

The problem of affording relief to the peasantry presented itself in an acute form to the new Cabinet as soon as it assumed office. A severe hailstorm had visited several districts of the province on the eve of the introduction of Provincial Autonomy, putting the Cabinet's professed sympathy for agriculturists to an early test. Within an hour of taking the oath of office the Cabinet decided to take the bold step of ordering a special remission of land-revenue, water-rates, rent and malikana to the extent of about Rs. 34 lakhs. Besides this, Taccavi loans were advanced to the extent of about Rs. 12½ lakhs and another Rs. 1,15,000 were distributed among the sufferers out of the Provincial Famine Relief Fund. The Revenue Minister, the Hon'ble Sardar Sir Sundar Singh Majithia, himself undertook an extensive tour in the areas concerned in order to supervise the organisation of the measures of relief. Similar measures were repeated when another hailstorm—this time fortunately much less severe—damaged the Kharif crop of 1937 in certain districts. This time the remissions of Government dues amounted to Rs. 10,22,000. Towards the close of the period under review the failure of monsoon in the hot weather of 1938 produced a severe famine in the Hissar District and the adjoining areas of Rohtak, Gurgaon and Karnal Districts. Measures for the relief of the famine-stricken peasants were adopted on an unprecedented scale and by the middle of November, 1938, the Government had remitted land-revenue, water-rates and Taccavi dues to the extent of about Rs. 25 lakhs and sanctioned further expenditure of some Rs. 25 lakhs on measures of relief.

Apart from such temporary and local aspects of the problem, there was the question of relieving distress caused by the low level of the prices of agricultural produce. The system of a sliding scale of assessment of land-revenue had already been introduced in certain districts during the period when Sir Sikander Hyat-Khan was Revenue Member under the old regime. Under this system the Government demand increases or

decreases automatically with a rise or fall of prices as compared with an assumed standard. The new Ministry adhered to the policy of extending this system to the whole province as reassessment of land-revenue became due in various districts. In the meantime in the case of certain districts where this system had not yet been introduced, the new Government allowed special remissions of revenue on account of low prices or bad crops. Such remissions amounted during the first year of Provincial Autonomy to about Rs. 95,000 and to a further Rs. 4,58,000 in respect of Rabi, 1938.

There was, however, another and more fundamental aspect of the problem. The small peasant's tiny holding, the cultivation of which sometimes was not economically profitable, had to pay land-revenue on the same basis and often at the same rate per acre as large estates with the same natural advantages or disadvantages and no land-owner, however, small his holding, was exempt from the Government demand as a citizen earning less than a certain minimum income was exempt from income-tax. This aspect of the problem had been hitherto a subject of occasional, academic discussion, but any serious attempt at bringing the assessment of land revenue into line with the principles of income-tax was generally regarded as outside the range of practical finance.

The new Ministry took the bold step of appointing an expert committee to consider this question and report how and to what extent the principles of income-tax could be applied to land-revenue and, failing this, how else the ultimate objective of giving permanent relief to the small land-holder could be achieved. Following a detailed inquiry, this Committee has submitted to the Government its report which at the time of writing is under consideration. In the meantime the Premier has announced that his Government is determined in any case to give relief to small land-holders.

Permanent reductions, apart from special remissions, have also been made during the past year in water-rates for certain crops. For instance, rates for barley and oats were brought down to those for wheat, a change involving a permanent annual remission of about Rs. 1'25 lakhs. Several crops were added to the list of "fodder crops" which pay a comparatively low water-rate.

As pointed out, however, by the Premier in his statement of April 1, 1937, relief to the peasantry from its burden of taxation necessarily meant a corresponding shrinkage of provincial receipts, while the expansion of nation-building activities and the economic and social uplift of the masses necessarily involved an increase in expenditure. If the dual

plan of relief to the peasantry, and increased expenditure on the moral and material uplift of the general population, particularly its backward portion, were to be carried out on an adequate scale, it was essential that fresh and suitable sources of revenue should be tapped and suitable economies effected in the existing budget. The scope for economies was unfortunately limited, because of the retrenchment of about Rs. 1½ crores already carried out in the budget of the Punjab only a few years ago. Even so, the new Cabinet took early steps to appoint a Committee to examine the scope for further retrenchment and suggest fresh sources of revenue. This Committee has not yet finished its labours.

The Cabinet did not, however, postpone its constructive programme till the Retrenchment and Fresh Resources Inquiry Committee should enable it to make drastic changes in the budget. An ambitious and comprehensive programme of economic and social uplift of the masses was taken in hand immediately after the introduction of Provincial Autonomy and money was found for new items of recurring and non-recurring expenditure from existing budgetary resources.

Only one scheme was financed with borrowed money. This was the construction of the Haveli Canal Project, on which work was sanctioned in April, 1937. This Project is expected to provide perennial irrigation for an area of about 500,000 acres, besides non-perennial irrigation for another 450,000 acres. Much of this area already receives irrigation from inundation canals, but a weir controlled supply will add greatly to its security and result in largely increased production. When completed, the project is expected to yield a net revenue of about Rs. 43 lakhs per annum. Past experience had shown that canals were not an unmixed blessing, as land in their immediate vicinity tended to become water-logged. In order to eliminate this danger it was decided for the first time in the history of the province that about 45 miles of the main canal included in the Haveli Project should be lined with reinforced concrete and brick masonry. Another feature of the construction of this Project has been the speed and economy with which work has been carried out on it. It is now expected to be completed in less than one-half of the originally estimated period and at a cost about Rs. 2½ crores less than the original estimate. This amount includes direct as well as indirect savings.

The work on this Project has provided employment for about 40,000 people, and has thus made a substantial contribution to the solution of the problem of unemployment. Plans are in train for extending the blessings of irrigation to more

areas, including the parched lands of the Hissar and Gurgaon Districts in the south-east and other areas in the north. Work is expected to start before long on at least one big scheme, the Thal Project, which is designed to take water from the Indus for the irrigation of a large area between that river and the Jhelum. Such schemes can of course have only a limited and temporary effect on unemployment. In the hope of finding a permanent solution of the problem, the Ministers soon after taking office appointed a Committee of Inquiry which has examined the question from every angle and has now nearly completed its work. Its report will shortly be considered by Government.

Despite large remissions of land-revenue, water-rates Taccavi loans, etc., and without resorting to fresh taxation or borrowing, the new Government was able to frame its very first budget so as to increase expenditure on beneficent Departments (excluding the Irrigation Department) by Rs. 25 lakhs. This meant an all round expansion of the activities of various Departments engaged in a fight against poverty, ignorance and disease. In certain Departments, notably the Education Department, a good deal was done to lay down new lines of development. A more detailed review of Departmental work will be found in a subsequent chapter. In the budget for 1938-39 the expenditure on these Departments was further increased by Rs. 16 lakhs. The total amount of "Beneficent Expenditure" now stood at about Rs. 3.28 crores in a total budget of Rs. 11.37 crores. Drawing attention to these figures, the Finance Minister said with justifiable pride in the course of his budget speech:—

"Recently much comparative examination has been attempted of the expenditure in various provinces on nation-building departments, and the result has been that of all the Provinces in India the Punjab devotes the largest percentage of its total expenditure to beneficent Departments, except Madras, but even Madras has much smaller annual expenditure per head of the population. Bombay's percentage of expenditure compares unfavourably with us, but as the population of the Presidency is comparatively smaller, and its total resources much greater than ours, Bombay is able to show a slightly higher *per capita* expenditure.

Sir, judged by comparable statistical tests, the Punjab to-day easily leads in the matter of nation-building activity. We may justly feel, therefore, that with economy so enforced as to secure the highest results with the present pitch of expenditure, and the new

intensive drive that is now proposed to be undertaken to give fresh impetus to existing work, a rich and valuable harvest of genuine development is sure to be achieved.....

“We touch to-day a higher provision for the nation-building services than ever before in the financial history of this Province. The previous record of 1929-30 is now far surpassed. In 1921-22 this expenditure stood at Rs. 170 crores,—to-day it stands at nearly twice the figure.....”

Another notable feature of this budget was the provision of a sum of Rs. 55 lakhs for a special Development Fund. This fund which is to be raised to Rs. 75 lakhs in due course is intended to finance a six-year programme of intensive rural development. By the end of the period under review the necessary details of this programme had been worked out and actual work was expected to make considerable progress during the cold weather of 1938-39.

Under this programme the various Beneficent Departments will increase the speed of their activities in a selected tehsil in each district. Work in this tehsil will continue approximately for three years. In 1939-40 another tehsil will be included in the programme for a similar period. It will be extended to a third tehsil in 1940-41. Thus during the current year intensive development work will be done in one tehsil in each district. In 1939-40 work will proceed simultaneously in two tehsils and in 1940-41 in three tehsils. In 1941-42 the tehsils which have had their turn of three years will be excluded from this programme and in their place new tehsils will be included. In this way the entire province will have been treated in six years at a cost of about Rs. 72 lakhs. Grants from the Special Development Fund will be devoted to the following objects :—Improvement of rural water-supply, agricultural improvement, consolidation of holding through the Co-operative Department and through the Revenue Department, the expansion of co-operative activities, industries, veterinary activities, education, and medical and public health facilities and “general purposes”.

The Punjab was the first province where a definite shape was given to the idea of co-ordinating the efforts of various departments for the purpose of popularising in rural areas simple and practical schemes of better farming and better, cleaner and happier living. The experiment of entrusting the task of co-ordination to a special officer was started in 1934, when Mr. F. L. Brayne, a well-known apostle of the movement of rural reconstruction, was given charge of this work. The

technique of rural reconstruction, developed by him, has helped the departments concerned in presenting their message to the people in a more effective and practical form and has been one of the sources of inspiration for similar movements outside the Punjab.

In this bird's-eye-view of the manner in which the Ministry fulfilled its promise of April 1, 1937, notice must be taken of certain other important features of the general policy of the provincial administration during the past 18 months, such as

- (1) the Ministry's efforts to promote inter-communal co-operation and good-will;
- (2) the special measures adopted for the benefit of members of scheduled castes;
- (3) the vigour with which the programme of affording relief to agriculturist debtors has been pursued;
- (4) the campaign against corruption in public services; and last, but not least,
- (5) the Ministry's anxiety to safeguard the position of the Punjab in the Indian Army.

Brief notes on these aspects of the Ministry's work will be found in a subsequent chapter which bears the title: "Liberty, Fraternity and—Special Help for the Weak".



Sir Sundar Singh Majithia, Revenue Minister, presenting the hosts to Her Excellency Lady Linlithgow in Shalimar Gardens, Lahore—See page 21.

THE VICEREGAL DURBAR.

An important event during the first year of Provincial Autonomy in the Punjab was a Durbar held by His Excellency, the Viceroy in the capital of the Province on October 23, 1937. The Historic Hall of Forty Pillars in the Old Fort of Lahore provided the venue for this ceremony. Several years ago a former Viceroy, holding a Durbar in this very hall, had referred to a new dynasty—the Dynasty of the People—which was to replace the old dynasties of Kings and Emperors in India. It was perhaps in the fitness of things that the Punjab which had so readily produced the new “Dynasty of People” to administer its provincial affairs, should have been the first to receive the honour of being congratulated upon it by the representative of the King Emperor in a ceremonial Durbar.

About 1,500 prominent citizens, elected representatives of the province and officers of the Government attended the Durbar to give expression to their loyalty to the King-Emperor through His Majesty's principal representative in India. Addressing the assemblage, His Excellency recalled the splendid response of the Punjab to the call of the Empire during the Great War when “400,000 recruits left this province, no fewer than 37,000 of them destined never to return.” Referring to other aspects of the Punjab's position among the provinces of India he said:—

“It is not to be wondered at that a Province geographically situated as the Punjab is, peopled by a sturdy and virile population, animated by martial traditions such as those to which I have referred, should be able to point to the distinguished record of progress in so many fields, of which it can boast to-day. On the material side your record, in matters of such vital importance as rural reconstruction, the co-operative movement, the consolidation of holdings, the introduction and development of improved methods of agriculture and of animal husbandry, is one of which any Province might be proud, and one, indeed, of which it is not unfair to say that in many respects the Punjab has given a lead to India. I recognise that, while great progress has been made, the very existence of that progress stimulates those who have benefited by it to seek to advance still further, and to obtain a still greater return from the natural

advantages of the Province. It is a healthy sign, and an encouraging omen for the future, that that should be the case, and I am confident that you can look for all possible assistance in the development of your resources from a Ministry, broad-based in composition, and enjoying substantial support in a legislature elected on a new and eminently democratic franchise.

“Gentlemen, in things material the Punjab enjoys a heritage of incalculable value—a heritage of which it has made the most. I am glad to think that in the field of constitutional and political progress, the record of the Province should equally be one of such marked distinction. The Punjab took the fullest advantage of the constitution granted under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, and in the 16 years which have elapsed since the introduction of those reforms it can point to a long and successful record of close association between the Government and the people, and to the wide resultant expansion of beneficent activities. The former Legislative Council showed, throughout the period of its existence, that marked sense of responsibility and that readiness to face the facts of a situation, which one would expect from the representatives of a Province so well known for its commonsense and its shrewdness. To-day, for the first time, responsibility for your affairs rests in the hands of a popularly elected Ministry having behind it a majority in a Legislature which has been elected on a wide franchise. Nothing has been more striking than the ease with which the transfer was made in the Punjab, in April of this year, from the dyarchic Government of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms to provincial autonomy.

“In all Provinces great powers and great opportunities have, under the new Constitution, passed to popularly elected Ministers. The manner in which those powers and those opportunities are everywhere being put to use is an augury of good for the future. In the Punjab, in particular, nothing, if I may say so, could be more encouraging than the manner in which those powers have been exercised by your present Ministry. I have



Shalimar Gardens, Lahore, provided a picturesque setting for the party given by the landed gentry of the Punjab to Their Excellencies the Viceroy and Lady Linlithgow—See page 21.

Academy at Dehra Dun. We are glad to notice that the Punjab Government has recently sanctioned five scholarships annually for the purpose. We respectfully and strongly urge that the Government of India should augment these scholarships by additional stipends and also create a sufficient number of fresh scholarships exclusively for the sons of Indian Officers and soldiers.

“ Lastly, the policy which now guides the recruitment of Commissioned Officers does not take sufficient note of the need of attracting to the Army scions of families with long and proud traditions of military service.”

Referring to questions of economic interest they said :—

“ The freight policy of the Railway administration, of which the Punjab has had so many occasions to complain, requires a new orientation, having regard, in particular, to the needs of the agriculturist and the industrial development of the province. We appreciate and gratefully acknowledge the healthy and growing change, during recent years, in the attitude of the North-Western Railway authorities in assessing and dealing with the difficulties of the agriculturist and commercial classes, but the guiding policy at the Centre requires to be imbued with a much greater spirit of sympathy in such matters.

“ Again we would urge that agricultural interests which so far have been given little or no representation on the Tariff Board should be adequately represented thereon.”

In conclusion they said :—

“ Your Excellency, before we conclude we may be allowed to add that the international horizon is thick with clouds of war. Although all sensible people would naturally wish to avoid war, yet if one becomes inevitable, the Punjab which is rightly known as the Sword-arm of India, may be relied upon confidently to discharge its traditional and proud function in a creditable manner. If, unfortunately, hostilities break out, in spite of the ceaseless and laudable efforts of His Majesty's Government to prevent them, we can confidently assure Your Excellency that the martial classes of this

province will, once again, provide incontestible proof of their keenness and enthusiasm to fight for their King and their country."

His Excellency the Viceroy, replying to the address of his hosts, said:—

"In your remarks you have given prominence to the Indianisation of the Army and the future policy of Government in this regard, and it is appropriate that before passing to other matters I should deal with one which is of special significance and importance in the Punjab. The military record of the Punjab is one of exceptional distinction, and I am well aware of the splendid tradition of military service which is the heritage of so many families all over the province.

"It is not unnatural in these circumstances that you, Gentlemen, representing as you do the landed gentry of the Punjab, should be closely and immediately interested in this problem. I have listened with close and sympathetic attention to your remarks regarding it and I will not fail to bear in mind what you say.

"I recognise the force of your observations on the effect of the policy of Indianisation on the Viceroy's Commissioned Officers. But you will, I think, agree with me that the reduction in the number of the Viceroy's Commissioned Officers has not gone very far, and will share my view, too, that the fact that half the Officers' Commissions are reserved for the enlisted classes is a consideration which must be borne in mind in considering this matter, as must also the creation of the Warrant Officer's rank.

"I appreciate your feeling on the system of short service. But the system of short service is a system to which, on the best advice available to me, I see no alternative if those reserves are to be provided without which a modern Army cannot for long keep the field.

"Turning to matters of agricultural importance, which you have raised in your address, I fully recognise and appreciate your interest in the freight policy of the Railway administration. On this let me at once say that my Government are fully mindful

of the importance of railway freight rates in the development, whether agricultural or industrial, of the country.

- “ Railway administrations have accordingly been instructed to establish contact with the local Marketing Officers with a view to facilitating the movement of agricultural produce to deficiency areas.
- “ You represent that agricultural interests have hitherto found little representation on the Tariff Board. I realise that the action taken by Government on recommendations made by the Tariff Board affects the welfare of the agricultural classes in a manner which is no less important, and often hardly less direct, than its effect on industry; and I should like to encourage you, whenever the circumstances of an industry are under examination, to make your representations to the Board and so to see that the fullest weight is given to the agricultural aspect of the question.
- “ But you will remember that the Indian Fiscal Commission, as a result of whose recommendations the Tariff Board was established, laid great stress on the fact that the Board should not be constituted in any way so as to represent the interests which appeal to it for judgment.
- “ Within the limitations which this condition imposes, and which I think you will recognise to be based on sound reasoning, I have considerable sympathy with your request and I shall take it upon myself to see that, when future appointments to the Board are under consideration, the field of selection shall include not only those who have an understanding of economic problems and an acquaintance with business affairs, but those who have wide knowledge of agricultural conditions and a deep interest in the welfare of the rural population.
- “ Let me congratulate you on the realistic and understanding spirit with which you approach the question of the relation between the landowner and the tenant, and on the progressive attitude which you have adopted in this matter. It is of vital importance to the establishment and the maintenance of friendly relations between landlord and tenant, with all the beneficial results which flow from that



The Premier presenting the hosts to H. E. the Viceroy
in Shalimar Gardens, Lahore—See page 21.

relationship when it is well adjusted and a happy one, that justice and sympathy should inform the attitude of the landowner. And it is a source of real satisfaction to me to find so ready and so warm a recognition of this fact on the part of gentlemen who represent so considerable a stake in the country.

welcome, too, the reference which you have made to the fact that it is the policy of your present Ministry to promote this spirit, and I note your public spirited readiness to bear your fair share of any additional burdens which the general good of the agricultural classes may demand.

listened with close interest to the tribute which you have paid to the work of the present Punjab Ministry, a tribute, I am sure from all that I have seen of its activities, which could not have been better earned.

welcome too, and I thank you for, the cordial assurance which you have given me that the Punjab will acquit itself as worthily under the new Constitution as it has in the past; and I recognise to the full the immense importance to a Ministry of the confidence, the co-operation, and the assistance of the landed interests in a Province."

Yet another important function held in connection with His Excellency's visit to Lahore was a banquet at which His Excellency was the guest of the Ministers of the Punjab Government. This was on the evening of October 25, 1937. The after-dinner speeches on this occasion again contained interesting references to the economic and social problems of the Punjab and the efforts that were being made to solve them.

Proposing His Excellency's health, the Hon'ble Sir Sikander Hyat-Khan referred to the keen interest which the Viceroy had been taking in the development of agriculture and the welfare of agriculturists in India. Explaining the position in the Punjab he said :—

"We in the Punjab as a people pride ourselves on our strong commonsense with a deep appreciation of the realities of life around us. We concern ourselves with work that lies immediately before us, and in the pursuit of our daily task we do not allow ourselves to be diverted by any inconsequ...

allurements—for we believe that in other paths there can only be frustration of purpose. A long line of distinguished administrators in the Province worked steadfastly in the building up of fine standards of administration, characterised by efficiency and soundness that are the envy of other parts of India, and the genius of the people here contributed materially in this essential task. Our faith in the necessity of a stable Government is instinctive and unshakeable. But we yield to no province in India in our desire to march ahead on the road to political or other advance. And, to this end, we venture to think that our administration has helped in the past, and is striving with particular energy now with the present reforms.

“ May I in this connection be permitted to point out that in all the many activities that are grouped under the general description of ‘ rural uplift ’ or good work in the countryside, the Punjab has steadily built up a leading position, and the present government is straining every nerve to push forward the programme of those activities. Our interest in developing agriculture, our solicitude in improving the breed of cattle, our efforts in securing consolidation of holdings, our keenness in strengthening co-operative credit are well-known throughout India. With all these, without which no happy peasantry can be built up, most anxious attention is paid to the provision of educational facilities, medical aid, and healthy water to our rural areas. No surer service can be rendered to the people. And, now, questions of balanced economy are under particular study, and the problems of development generally are being examined closely. The province started late on the course of industrial development, but we are paying the most careful attention to this essential requirement of full economic life, we trust that important beginnings that have been now made in many directions may bear abundant fruit. Our resources in electric energy are already proving of great gain in our new efforts. All this is an abundant task for any government situated as we are. Our minds are set on the work that can be achieved and the good that can be contrived—not embarrassed by idle reflection on what is not and perhaps might have been.

"I may refer with pardonable pride to the fact that here in the Punjab our expenditure on beneficent or nation-building activities compares favourably with any province in India, and calculated per head of the population, we lead by a long way most of the provinces. And yet, though thanks to our administrative efficiency, we make every rupee go as far as it possibly can, our immediate needs are pressing, and we are handicapped for want of adequate resources in carrying forward our plans of betterment. An extensive and rigorous scheme of reduction in salaries for new entrants has been put into force—this may eventually afford some relief, and the question of 'retrenchment' is being examined again though, only a few years ago, a radical cutting down was carried out to the very margin of safety. But any help from these efforts must be exiguous in the extreme, and may be more than absorbed in the clamant demands for relief in the burden of State taxation.

"The Punjab Government is examining every possible aspect of State finance but cannot help feeling that we cannot give to our people more in the way of beneficent provisions, that we are, but for our slender resources, otherwise so well-equipped to do. It is for this reason that I venture to mention even on this festive occasion, that in the recent arrangements between the Central Government and the Provinces, the Punjab received the most ungenerous treatment. I am aware that sympathy was expressed for our 'natural disappointment that this province alone of provinces in India should receive no immediate assistance' and I am grateful for the compliment paid to our 'high tradition of efficient administration', but while kind words of sympathy and appreciation are welcome, they are no satisfaction to a people hungering for education, for better health, for stronger economic life. I trust that now that Your Excellency has seen our province from near and felt closely our needs and our desires and judged our financial limitations and our capacity to plan and execute schemes of welfare, this province will receive all the generous consideration which we deserve."

His Excellency observed in the course of his reply :—

“The Viceroy can have no favourite amongst the provinces of this country. I am here to serve them all and in equal degree to cherish, to the best of my opportunity, the welfare of every one of them. But it would be indeed strange if I who am at heart a man of the countryside, and of the farm, were not to feel myself at home in the Punjab and happy amongst these strong sons of hers who till her fields and her herds. And when I go, as dearly I like to go, to visit some village, and am received by the familiar rank of upright figures bearing upon their breasts the medals and decorations won in many a theatre of war, I think of days—now long past—in which, in the mud and chill of a Flanders winter, I first saw famous units of the Indian Army, and learned to admire the soldierly fortitude with which, under conditions and in a climate so unfamiliar to them, they answered the call of duty and most worthily maintained the splendid traditions of which they were the heirs and the guardians.

“You have been good enough to make reference in terms most kind to my great interest in all that affects the welfare of the rural population. I cannot overstate my sense of the urgent importance of enhancing by every means in our power the outturn of the land. That we can increase that outturn I do not doubt. In face of an increasing population, we must increase it. I do not propose this evening to deliver a technical address on farming. I must, however, speaking in this great cattle-raising province, reaffirm my complete conviction that in a systematic and sustained endeavour to better, by appropriate breeding policies, the quality of our cattle, and to provide for those improved cattle an adequate food supply, lie the means by which we may most surely and most expeditiously increase both the wealth and the health of our people.

“There is no man or woman in this province but stands to benefit from the progress of agriculture and of animal husbandry. I am confident that the Government of the Punjab will strain every nerve to promote and to consolidate that progress. To be



H. E. Sir Henry Craik was entertained at a dinner by the Punjab Ministers in Simla, when the Premier made an important speech—See page 29.

charged with the duties of Government over a great province such as this is an honour such as any man, I care not how eminent he be, might covet. It is also a heavy burden and a very great responsibility. I have every confidence that the present Government of the Punjab, under the able and zealous leadership of Sir Sikander Hyat-Khan, will strive constantly to advance the highest interests of the Punjab.

“ Sir Sikander, you have mentioned the natural and laudable desire of yourself and your colleagues to embark upon wider and, therefore, more costly schemes of a beneficent kind than those which are at present within the scope of your available revenues, and in this context you have referred to the disappointment that has been widely felt in the Punjab at the recommendations of Sir Otto Niemeyer. Upon that I will say no more than that, looking at this matter as I am bound to do from the angle of India as a whole, and while I sincerely regret your disappointment, it is my firm opinion that the award of Sir Otto Niemeyer was a just award. Sir Sikander has more than hinted that the Punjab prefers cash to kind words, and if I may say so as a Scotsman, I share that sentiment. Nevertheless, I am going to say to you that I think that it may easily happen that you will find that the distribution of income-tax under Sir Otto Niemeyer's award may begin much earlier than you anticipate. ”

It is interesting to note that eleven months after these functions, that is, on the evening of September 26, 1938, when a world war appeared to be imminent, the Premier of the Punjab repeated on behalf of the martial classes of this Province the assurance conveyed by them to His Excellency the Viceroy in the Shalimar Garden of Lahore. Proposing the health of His Excellency Sir Henry Craik, Governor of the Punjab, in the course of an after-dinner speech in Simla, Sir Sikander Hyat-Khan said :—

“ The peace of the world hangs in the balance. In the next few days the fateful decision will have been taken. If, unfortunately, the worst comes and we are perforce dragged into another war, let me assure Your Excellency, and through you His Majesty's Government, that the Punjab, true to its

traditions, would not be found wanting. I am confident that the martial classes of the Punjab to a man would rally under the banner of their King-Emperor if he needs their services. I should like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the people of the Punjab, of extending to Great Britain once again the hand of loyal co-operation and friendship.

“ It is the same hand which was trustingly grasped during the last war, when we were yet in our political apprenticeship, but the grasp on the present occasion is that of a Punjab which has now attained its political majority—the strong and warm hand clasp of a true and grateful friend—a hand which is voluntarily offered because the Punjab believes in the British connection for the sake of our motherland ; and, I may add, though in no boastful spirit, a hand which knows how to wield the sword. I hope the rest of India will not lag behind at this critical juncture. ”

“LIBERTY, FRATERNITY AND—SPECIAL HELP FOR THE WEAK.”

The Provincial Governments in India possess certain statutory powers of restricting the liberty of individuals without putting them on legal trial. The question has often been asked: Are such powers compatible with the civil liberty of people? Before the introduction of Provincial Autonomy this question used to be answered differently by the Unionist Party and by the Congress. The Congress reply was an emphatic negative. The Unionist view was that in certain circumstances the use of such powers by the executive might be not only compatible with, but positively necessary for, the preservation of the civil liberty of society as a whole. Thus, at one stage the Unionist Party in the old Punjab Legislative Council supported the passage of the Criminal Law Amendment Act which armed the executive with such powers. This was immediately after a series of terrorist crimes in the Punjab, including an attack on the life of the then Governor. At a subsequent stage, however, the Unionist party opposed—though unsuccessfully—the re-enactment of this law for a further period on the plea that the actual circumstances of the province at the time indicated no necessity for the retention of such powers in the hands of the executive.

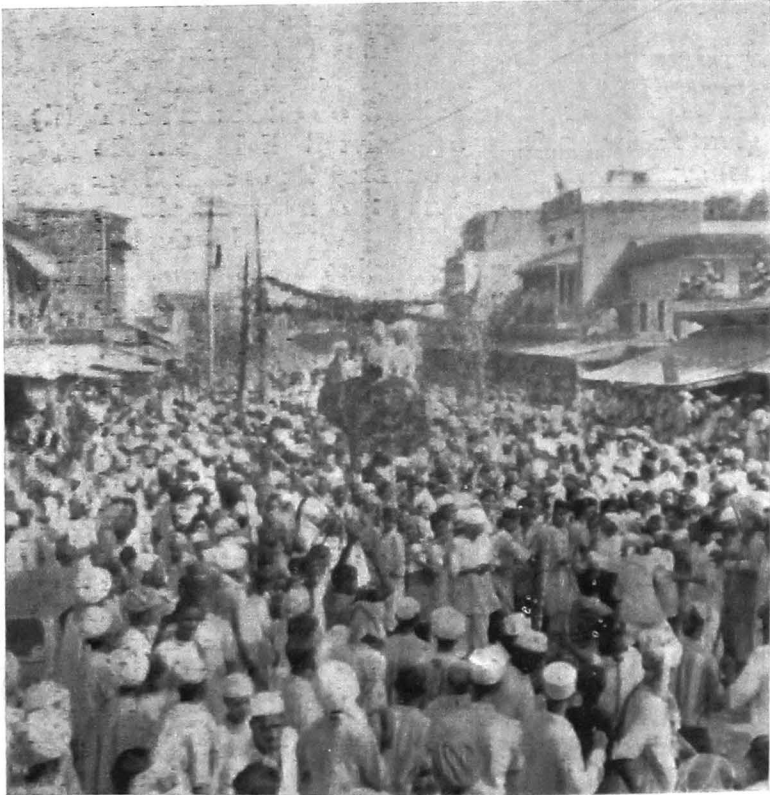
Since the introduction of Provincial Autonomy opinion in Ministerial circles in the Congress-governed provinces appears to have veered round to the Unionist point of view which regards such powers from the angle of practical necessity rather than abstract ideals. No Provincial Government has yet considered it safe to give up the powers which it inherited from its predecessors. In the Punjab the new Government, soon after taking office, found itself confronted with an outburst of subversive activity. Emphasis has been laid in previous chapters on the easy readiness with which the Punjab on the whole adapted itself to the requirements of the new constitution. The process was not, however, wholly free from ugly incidents. Forces of communal fanaticism and of violence were openly or secretly set in motion by some of those who, for one reason or another, wanted to embarrass the new Government. The result was a series of eight communal riots—most of them traceable to political no less than to communal motives—in various parts of the province during the first four months of the Unionist Government's regime. These riots resulted in seven deaths.

In the circumstances the Government was naturally unable to divest itself of the special powers which the law gave it for the purpose of controlling the forces of disorder. They were, however, used most sparingly. During the first 18 months of Provincial Autonomy action was taken against 18 persons under the Punjab Criminal Law Amendment Act. In several of these

cases the Government merely ordered certain outsiders, who were considered to be creating or planning trouble in the Punjab, to leave the Province. In a few other cases the movements of the persons concerned were temporarily restricted to particular areas.

At the same time existing restrictions were cancelled in all those cases in which this could be done without danger to the peace of the province. On April 1, 1937, when the new Government took office, 36 persons were subject to various restrictions imposed on them by executive orders. Eight of these were in jail under Regulation 3 of 1818. The remaining 28 were subject to less stringent restrictions under the Criminal Law Amendment Act. The new Government carried out a careful examination of all these cases and has from time to time subsequently reviewed the situation with the result that restrictions were removed or relaxed as opportunity offered. Five of the eight prisoners under Regulation 3 of 1818 were released, one after another. No fresh cases of imprisonment under this law occurred during the present Government's regime. Similarly, practically all of those who had been restricted under the Criminal Law Amendment Act were freed, though it was found necessary, as already mentioned, to take action against a few others under this law.

The policy of removing or relaxing restrictions was further extended to various groups of prisoners who were serving sentences imposed on them by courts of law. The cases of these prisoners were individually and carefully examined. The Government did not concede the demand that all so-called political prisoners, including those convicted of violent crimes, deserved to be released forthwith because their crimes had proceeded from "patriotic" motives. Nor, on the other hand, did it refuse to show clemency to a prisoner when it could be deservedly shown without endangering the peace and tranquility of the Province. Each case was decided on its merits. About three months after assuming office the Government made a beginning with the Martial Law prisoners who were serving life sentences in connection with the political disturbances of 1919. All 12 of them were released. Later 22 other prisoners who had been convicted in connection with the Babar Akali disturbances or other terrorist crimes were released before the expiry of their terms of imprisonment. The claims of "non-political" prisoners who could find no champion in the Press or on the platform were not overlooked. A liberal plan was adopted of releasing old, infirm or ailing prisoners before the expiry of their sentences and by October 1, 1938, about 360 of them had been released. The figure rose to 442 by December 15.



A scene during the visit of the Premier of the Punjab to Rewari (Gurgaon) in the course of his frequent tours—See page 33.

These measures, of course, affected only a limited number of individuals. The general public was more interested in another matter to which the Ministry soon devoted their attention, the corruption and petty tyrannies of subordinate officials. A sustained effort has been made to safeguard the rights of the people against this danger. The Premier, Sir Sikander Hyat-Khan, and other Ministers have taken keen personal interest in this work. In the course of their frequent tours in the countryside they have tried to impress on members of the public and on local officials all that is implied in calling State employees "servants" of the public. In addressing the Amritsar Police on August 10 last, the Premier said:—

"I also wanted to impress upon you the fact that the constitution in the provinces has undergone a radical change. The old system has been replaced by a Government of the people. In your dealings with the public you have to keep this constantly in mind. In the changed circumstances, all officers of the Government have to regard themselves as the servants of the public. If badmashes denounce you, it is a certificate of good work for you; but if good and peaceful citizens find fault with your behaviour, one will be justified in suspecting that there is something wrong with your work."

Apart from propaganda on these lines the Government issued at an early stage a circular to the effect that any complaint of corruption made by five disinterested persons against an official would be carefully investigated and, if found to be correct, would lead to proper punishment for the offender. During the first year of Provincial Autonomy punishment, mostly in the form of dismissal from service—in some cases accompanied by prosecution in the law courts—was awarded to 55 Government servants. In March, 1938, the Government also accepted the principle of the demand embodied in the following resolution which was moved by a non-official member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly, but was withdrawn after discussion in view of the sympathetic assurance given by the Government:—

"This Assembly recommends to the Government that all Government employees who have completed 25 years of service and whose retention in public service is undesirable on the ground of inefficiency or doubtful honesty should be retired compulsorily without any avoidable delay."

Later, a conference of departmental heads was held at which proposals for removing corruption from public services were discussed.

Addressing a big meeting of peasants in Lyallpur on September 4, 1938, the Premier, Sir Sikander Hyat-Khan, announced that the following new proposals were being considered by his Government with a view to stamping out corruption from the public services:—

- (i) The setting up of a separate anti-corruption section in the Secretariat under a special officer to investigate cases of corruption. This section is to serve as a central agency to which District officers and Departmental Heads may be able to refer cases of suspicion for investigation.
- (ii) The formulation of a rule similar to Article 465-A of the Civil Service Regulations which may be applicable to all grades of Government servants and enable Government to retire officers whose honesty is doubtful.
- (iii) The question of reducing or withholding the pension of a Government servant whose reputation has been unsatisfactory.
- (iv) The constitution periodically of *ad hoc* peripatetic boards which may tour the various districts of the province and make enquiries regarding the reputation of Government servants in order to report those whose reputation is unsatisfactory.

A specially interesting part of this campaign of safeguarding, in actual practice, the civil liberties of the people in the Punjab consisted of orders issued by the Government, declaring *begar* (exacting compulsory labour) an unlawful act on the part of officials and warning them against this practice. The protection given to the poorest residents of villages by this order was specially needed by members of the scheduled castes.

But the new Government has devoted attention not only to questions of civil liberty, but also to the important problem of national liberty. National defence is a subject not yet transferred to popular control, but the progress which the country has made on the road towards political freedom has encouraged public men in formulating their policies to make provisions for the time when India will be called upon to shoulder the responsibility of defending herself. The Punjab has good reason to expect to provide the bulk of the man-power of the Indian Army of the future, just as it provides about 60 per cent of the personnel of the Indian Army of the present. A narrow provincialism and, perhaps still more, a narrow communalism is apt to view this position with jealousy and suspicion and would fain deny the Punjab its rightful share in the

defence of the country. The Unionist Ministry which has the distinction in India of being led by a soldier in the person of the Hon'ble Major Sir Sikander Hyat-Khan has shown itself alive to this danger. The subject has also been constantly pressed on his attention by the martial classes of the province. As mentioned above, the Premier and other Ministers have toured the countryside extensively during the past 18 months. The Premier, in particular, has received numerous addresses of welcome during these tours and one of the most frequent demands contained in these addresses has been for increased opportunities of military careers for the youth of the province. This demand emanates from the agriculturist classes of all religious communities and in every Division of the province.

Shortly after assuming office the Ministry founded 45 scholarships, costing Rs. 33,000 a year, to help the sons of martial families in this Province to receive higher military education in the Indian Military Academy and the Prince of Wales Royal Indian Military College of Dehra Dun. Addressing the members of the Lyallpur District Soldiers Board on September 3, 1938, the Premier announced that, if circumstances permitted, he would like to increase expenditure on this scheme and that he had also been corresponding with the Government of India with a view to securing similar concessions from that Government for the sons of martial families in the Punjab.

Further, the Government took steps to check the campaign of propaganda which certain people were found to be carrying on in the villages of the Punjab against recruitment in the Army. The movement resulted in the Indian Army Recruitment Bill which was passed by the Central Legislature in September last, and had the support of the Punjab Government.

Historically associated with the ideal of Liberty is that of Fraternity. In this country the ideal of Fraternity in the sense of inter-communal good-will and harmony, has a special claim on the attention of statesmen, which has been fully and frequently recognised by the Punjab Government. In the public statement which the Premier made on behalf of his Cabinet on April 1, 1937, a strong appeal was made to the Press and the public at large to help the Government in dispelling communal ill-will. It has already been noticed that the response to this appeal was not as universal as it might have been. Factional quarrels in certain political camps, rivalries between certain communal organisations and the ambitions of unscrupulous bidders for popular leadership were among the factors which militated directly or indirectly against the

success of the appeal and produced a disastrous effect on the communal situation. Undaunted by these obstacles the Ministry continued to strive in the cause of inter-communal goodwill and harmony. A sustained effort was made to inspire confidence among religious minorities and produce among them a sense of goodwill towards the majority community. The composition of the Ministry was itself a gesture of goodwill. It was followed up by an important statement which the Premier made when the Congress sought an assurance from the Governors that they would not make use of the special powers conferred on them by the Government of India Act of 1935. Sir Sikander Hyat-Khan declared that the demand for such an assurance was particularly unfair to minority communities in various provinces and that the Ministries should rather themselves conduct their administration so as to allow no occasion to arise for a Governor to intervene in the interests of an aggrieved minority.

Two other important instances of similar gestures on the part of the Premier to the minorities may be mentioned. One was the part which he played in securing a happy end of the controversy which arose in the Punjab over the Government of India's scheme of constructing a big abattoir near Lahore. The other was his firm opposition to a legislative proposal initiated by a Muslim member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly for the purpose of restoring the disputed site of the demolished mosque of Shahidganj to Muslims. In the course of an important statement which he made on the subject in the Legislative Assembly on March 16, 1938, the Premier said:—"The Mussalmans of the Punjab owe a special responsibility not only to the minorities in the Punjab, but also to their own co-religionists who constitute minorities in other provinces. No far-sighted or patriotic Mussalman can in these circumstances permit his community in the Punjab to take any unreasonable step against the minorities which, if similarly applied by non-Muslim majorities in other provinces against the minorities there, would jeopardize the fundamental rights and position of the Muslims there." Concluding this statement he said, "The issues before us are grave and call for the most anxious and careful consideration from all concerned. A just and satisfactory solution of the problem, honourable to all concerned, is not impossible and I would earnestly appeal to all patriotic persons, including the representatives of the Press, to help us to bring it about by creating the proper atmosphere in the province."

A more direct approach to the problem of inter-communal unity was attempted by the Premier in July, 1937, when he

convened a "Unity Conference" of the leaders of different religious communities. The sub-committees of this conference examined various questions which have occasioned inter-communal strife in the past and made valuable recommendations for their solution. Owing, however, to adverse developments in the politico-communal situation the decision of these difficult problems has had to await a more favourable atmosphere.

Another step which the Government took to discourage inter-communal controversies was the adoption of a general policy of refusing to answer on the floor of the Legislative Assembly questions raising communal issues.

It must be admitted that these efforts in the cause of communal harmony have not yet been crowned with any large measure of success. It was unfortunately believed in certain quarters that a sharp cleavage between different communities on religious issues could most effectively embarrass the present Government. The only consoling feature of the review is that, following the series of communal riots during the first three or four months of the Unionist regime, the situation has remained more peaceful, even though it has not been entirely free from ugly communal incidents.

Under the heading of "Special Help for the Weak" may be grouped a series of important measures adopted by the new Government in the interests of (1) agriculturist debtors and (2) members of the scheduled castes.

Among measures intended to help agriculturist debtors may be mentioned the following :—

(1) *Constitution of Debt Conciliation Boards.*—The Punjab Relief of Indebtedness Act passed by the old Punjab Legislative Council contained provisions for the scaling down of debts through the agency of Debt Conciliation Boards. Five such Boards had already been constituted as an experimental measure before the present Ministry assumed office. During the first year of Provincial Autonomy their number was doubled and during the current year steps have been taken to raise the number to 29. Every district, with the exception of Simla, now has a Debt Conciliation Board, and the Jhang district has two.

(2) *Notification under section 61 of the Civil Procedure Code.*—The powers vested in the local Government by section 61 of the Civil Procedure Code were exercised for the first time by the present Ministry, and a notification was issued exempting the whole of the fodder crop of an agriculturist debtor and a certain proportion of the yield of his grain crops from attachment in execution of civil decrees.

(3) *The Punjab Alienation of Land Amendment Act.*—This law, sponsored by the new Government and passed by the Legislature, prevents a mortgagee or lessee of agricultural land from committing any act which might destroy or permanently injure the value of the land for purposes of agriculture, except when the owner agrees to the commission of such an act and this is attested by a Revenue Officer. It further provides that, when there are more orders than one from a court directing the temporary alienation of land of an agriculturist, the total period of alienation under these orders shall not exceed a maximum period of 20 years.

(4) *The Debtors' Protection Amendment Bill.*—It was found that the benefits conferred by the previously passed Debtors' Protection Act on agriculturist debtors were lost to them when a law court placed an Official Receiver in charge of their lands. The Punjab Debtors' Protection Amendment Bill was, therefore, passed, to make it clear that no money decree should be executed by the appointment of a Receiver of an agriculturist's land or its produce. The Bill had not received the assent of His Excellency the Governor by October 1, 1938.

(5) *The Punjab Alienation of Land Second Amendment Bill.*—As already explained the Alienation of Land Act, which has been in force in the Punjab since 1901, prevents a member of an agriculturist tribe from alienating his land permanently in favour of a person who is not a member of such a tribe. A common form of evasion was for non-agriculturist purchasers to use the names of their agriculturist friends for the purpose of acquiring the lands of other agriculturists. In such transactions the land was nominally transferred by one agriculturist to another; but the buyer whose name appeared in the official records was only a dummy, under whose cover a non-agriculturist enjoyed the actual possession of the land and its income. Inquiries were made about the extent to which transactions of this kind, known as *benami* transfers of land, had taken place and it was calculated that properties worth several crores of rupees had passed in this way from agriculturists to non-agriculturists. The Ministry, therefore, sponsored a law which declared all *benami* transfers of agricultural land to be null and void and entitled the original owners or their heirs and successors to recover their lands, in some cases, after paying compensation to the buyer and in other cases without paying it. This Bill, having been passed by the Legislative Assembly, was awaiting the assent of His Excellency the Governor-General at the close of the period under review.

(6) *The Punjab Restitution of Mortgaged Lands Act.*—This law is intended to help those whose lands, having been mort-

gaged a long time ago, have yielded more than adequate profit to the mortgagees. It provides that if a mortgage was effected before June 8, 1901, and still subsists, the mortgagor or his heir or assignee may apply for the extinction of the mortgage and the restoration of the land to him. The mortgage is to be extinguished without any compensation to the mortgagee, if the value of the benefits already enjoyed by the mortgagee has equalled or exceeded twice the amount of mortgage. If the value of the benefits enjoyed by the mortgagee be, however, still less than twice the amount of the original sum, the extinction of the mortgage will be conditional on the payment of certain compensations to the mortgagee by the mortgagor. This law has already received the assent of His Excellency the Governor. It is expected to provide facilities for 306,738 mortgagors to redeem 756,131 acres of mortgaged land.

(7) *The Punjab Registration of Money-lenders' Act.*—This Act is intended to check dishonest and fraudulent practices on the part of money lenders. It provides that a money-lender will not be helped by law courts to recover his loans unless he is registered and holds a licence to carry on a money-lender's trade. His licence may be suspended for such periods as the Collector may decide, if he is found by a law court to have committed certain offences. During the period of the suspension of his licence the money-lender will be unable to sue successfully for the recovery of his loans, except such loans as may be "certified" by a Commissioner. This Act is applicable to all money-lenders, including those agriculturists who have taken to money-lending as a principal or subsidiary business. It has received the assent of His Excellency the Governor.

(8) *The Punjab Alienation of Land Third Amendment Act.*—This Act is intended to protect agriculturist debtors from agriculturist money-lenders. It lays down that, when an agriculturist has advanced a loan to another agriculturist, the debtor shall not alienate his land in favour of the creditor until the debt has been repaid and three years have elapsed after the repayment. If, however, the debtor and the creditor try to evade this restriction through what may be called a *benami* transfer of land to a third party, the Deputy Commissioner has been empowered to cancel the transaction and restore the land to the alienor as in the case of *benami* transfers of land under the Punjab Alienation of Land Second Amendment Bill. This law has also received the assent of His Excellency the Governor.

(9) *The Punjab Agricultural Produce Marketing Bill.*—This measure is intended to protect the growers of agricultural

has also been sanctioned. It is proposed to irrigate 10,000 acres per annum from 31 electrically driven tube-wells.

Among other schemes of improvement sanctioned by the Ministry was that of improving the buildings and machinery of the Central Workshops at Amritsar at a cost of Rs. 3½ lakhs. This was done at the suggestion of an expert committee and is expected to result in appreciably cheapening the costs of manufacture in the workshops.

In order to provide irrigation facilities for the south-eastern districts of the province the Bhakra Dam scheme, which people had come to regard some time ago as a forlorn hope, has been re-examined and its details have been revised. The Dam is to be constructed in the territory of Bilaspur State and it is hoped that the Bilaspur Durbar, which was not agreeable to the original scheme, will accept the revised one. Negotiations with the Durbar are to be opened as soon as possible. The Ministry also took steps to explore the possibility of increasing the supply of water in the Western Jumna Canal for the benefit of this part of the province, which suffers from a low water-level and scanty rainfall. As an alternative, the possibilities of irrigation by tube-wells and of increasing the capacity of the Western Jumna Canal by lining it are also being examined.

The Ministry has taken keen interest in two other important inquiries with which the Irrigation Department is concerned. One of them relates to the problem of water-logging owing to a rise of the level of sub-soil water in areas lying in the immediate vicinity of canals. The other relates to the reverse phenomenon of a steady decline of the level of sub-soil water in Hoshiarpur and Jullundur Districts. In order to ascertain the causes of the latter phenomenon a special sub-division has been opened in Jullundur and arrangements have been made for the collection of all relevant data. A contoured survey of the area is being carried out through the agency of the Government of India's Survey Department. If, as a result of these inquiries a satisfactory solution of the problem is discovered, the Bist Doab may be saved from the serious menace which now confronts its agriculture.

In regard to the problem of water-logging, an officer on special duty has been making investigations into the relevant data about certain canals and considering possible remedies. In addition to other methods of tackling the problem, the scheme of lining all existing canals is being considered. Previously it was considered impracticable to line existing canals in the short closures available, but it has been pointed out that while existing canals cannot be lined, new lined canals can be constructed alongside. Such lined canals will have a consider-

able effect in retarding the rise of the sub-soil water-table, and in addition the water so saved will bring considerable additional areas under irrigation. This is, however, a scheme involving colossal expenditure and careful inquiry is being made into its financial aspect.

✓*The Forest Committee.*—The forests of the Punjab are another valuable economic asset of the province. The problem of preserving this natural wealth needed looking into. The new Ministry, therefore, appointed a committee under the presidentship of Mr. C. C. Garbett, Financial Commissioner, to study the problem and suggest suitable methods of tackling it. The committee which was appointed in September, 1937, toured some 1,500 miles and heard the representatives of some 3,000 villages. This was done in open air meetings which were attended by villagers in large numbers, usually exceeding 1,000. The committee submitted to the Government a comprehensive report. Most of its recommendations have been accepted and are calculated to usher in a new era of co-operation between the people and the forest authorities in preserving the valuable heritage of the Punjab in the form of its forests.

The Government is also energetically pursuing measures to check erosion which in certain parts of the province has caused extensive damage to agricultural lands near hills and, if allowed to proceed further, may endanger even the irrigation supplies upon which the province so greatly depends.

Three officers were appointed in districts where the problem of erosion was most acute and as a result of the success which attended their efforts, the problem of how best to secure still greater co-ordination and control is being studied. Work has been started in Jhelum and Gujrat. In Gurgaon, Ambala and Hoshiarpur it was already in progress and has been extended.

Thanks to Mr. Hamilton's repeated efforts, a large number of voluntary closures have been made in Hoshiarpur District and their beneficent results have already become apparent. Villages whose hillsides were barren now produce *bhabbar* grass and resin to their great profit and it is realised that a properly cared for village forest well repays co-operative effort.

Agriculture.—The need of expanding the activities of the Department of Agriculture has not been overlooked. The actual total expenditure of the Department amounted in 1936-37 to Rs. 31,60,136. The budget provision for 1937-38 was raised to Rs. 36,24,400. It was further raised by about Rs. 4 lakhs for the current financial year. This enabled the Department to extend the scope of its work in various directions, particular-

commodities, who bring their produce for sale in the markets, from various malpractices on the part of shopkeepers and brokers. It was referred to a Select Committee in July, 1938, but had not passed beyond the Select Committee stage by the end of the period under review.

Among measures intended to promote the uplift of members of the scheduled castes mention has already been made of a circular issued by the Ministry, warning subordinate officials against the practice of taking *begar*. By means of another circular the Ministry declared all publicly owned wells throughout the province to be open to all members of the public. This was specially intended to secure to members of the scheduled castes an important right of citizenship which they had been denied by custom.

The Ministry further adopted a general policy of nominating at least one member of the scheduled castes to every local body, provided that the numerical strength of the community within the area of the local body concerned justified its claim to representation. To several Municipal Committees and District Boards, where new elections have taken place during the past 18 months, members of the scheduled castes have already been nominated as members. Instructions have also been issued to various Departments that special efforts should be made to increase the proportion of members of the scheduled castes in public services. Unfortunately these efforts are handicapped by the dearth of qualified men among these castes. The situation will, however, improve with the spread of education among them. In order to help this process special educational facilities have been offered to them. Children belonging to these castes are freely admitted to all public schools. Even private schools, which receive grants-in-aid from the Education Department, can refuse them admission only at the risk of forfeiting their grants. Primary education is given free and Secondary education at half the usual rates of fees to students of the scheduled castes. Further, about 60 scholarships are reserved for them at various stages of education and in different institutions. Two of these are tenable in the Central Training College, Lahore, and six more in Arts Colleges. Local Bodies have also been asked to provide scholarships for them in the Middle classes. In Industrial schools too various stipends, which are reserved for the poor, go to the scheduled castes.

A SURVEY OF DEPARTMENTAL WORK.

Irrigation Facilities.—The development of the economic resources of the Punjab, so as to maintain its leading position among the provinces of India, has been a special concern of the new Ministry. Among these resources irrigation facilities occupy a prominent place. As has been already mentioned, a notable step taken by the Ministry towards improving these facilities has been the construction of the Haveli Canal Project. Work on this Project was sanctioned in April, 1937, and has made rapid progress so that a small beginning with actual irrigation is expected to be made in the course of the next year. When fully developed, the Project will provide perennial irrigation for about 500,000 acres and non-perennial irrigation for another 450,000 acres or so.

The construction of another important scheme, known as the Thal Project, is soon to be taken in hand. The details of design, cost and revenue have been worked out. This new Project will command a gross area of 1,416,700 acres and annually irrigate about 831,000 acres. The scheme is expected to cost Rs. 5½ crores, but the expenditure will increase by Rs. 2½ crores, if the main canal and all the branches are lined. In that case the area to be irrigated will also increase by 200,000 acres.

In addition to these, schemes of improvements in the existing canal systems have been in progress and the possibilities of extending the blessings of irrigation to new areas, particularly the south-eastern districts of the province, are being explored. Thus a pile line has been driven on the downstream side of the pucca floor of Islam Weir to enable the water-level on the upstream side to be raised to feed the Mailsi Canal with its allotted discharge in periods when river supplies are low. This pile line will prevent the blowing of sand from under the weir foundations and will generally strengthen the weir. The work, which was estimated to cost Rs. 3,05,960 was practically completed in April, 1938.

A sum of Rs. 1,75,000 was sanctioned by the Ministry in 1937-38 as the first instalment of a total expenditure of Rs. 5,74,000 to be incurred on the remodelling of the Tajewala Headworks of the Eastern and Western Jumna Canals. These Headworks are now capable of passing a flood of 3½ lakhs cusecs. In 1924 there was, however, a record flood of about 5 lakhs cusecs and as the Headworks could not pass it, the flood embankments breached and considerable damage was done to the countryside and to the Headworks. The remodelled Headworks will be capable of passing a 5 lakhs cusecs flood in the future. The Karol Tube-Well Irrigation scheme near Lahore

has also been sanctioned. It is proposed to irrigate 10,000 acres per annum from 31 electrically driven tube-wells.

Among other schemes of improvement sanctioned by the Ministry was that of improving the buildings and machinery of the Central Workshops at Amritsar at a cost of Rs. 3½ lakhs. This was done at the suggestion of an expert committee and is expected to result in appreciably cheapening the costs of manufacture in the workshops.

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ly in the field of research and propaganda through demonstration. Many of the research activities that engaged the attention of the Department during the year gave concrete results, which embraced various aspects of the improvement of crops and their protection from disease. The Department is now in a position to place in the hands of the cultivator better types of wheat and cotton, greatly improved varieties of sugarcane, high yielding and superior quality rices, various new improved fodders, oilseeds, millets and other crops and varieties of fruit.

One of the most important functions performed by the Department is the distribution and sale of pure seed of various crops. This is being done at present on a scale which would have been considered impossible a few years ago. There are now close on 1,000 agencies, which are selling the Department's seed. For the 1937 cotton crop 95,000 maunds of improved seed passed through the hands of the Department and no less than 278,000 maunds of improved wheat seed was purchased for distribution for the Rabi crop of 1938. In order to cope with the increasing demand for improved seed 7,700 acres of Government lands in canal colonies are being devoted to seed farms.

In order to convey the results of the researches carried out in the laboratories of the Department to the peasants and demonstrate to them the value of improved methods of agriculture and improved varieties of seed the district staff has been strengthened. A definite plan of providing one Agricultural Assistant and two Mukaddams for each tahsil of the province was adopted soon after the new Ministry took office and provision was made in the 1938-39 budget for one half of the additional staff necessary to complete this plan.

Steps were taken to encourage fruit growing and fruit preservation, which are expected to afford a very important source of subsidiary income to farmers. Close on Rs. 17,400 were spent during 1937-38 on the provision of nursery fruit plants for sale at cheap rates. In all 34,000 plants were sold to the public at about half the rates obtaining in the previous year. It is expected that about twice as many will be sold during the current year. In addition to these, 24,500 *ber* trees were top-worked and it is hoped that as a result the quality of the fruit will improve. A canning plant has been installed and is reported to be working satisfactorily.

The programme of well-boring made considerable progress. During the period of 18 months when the concession of temporary abolition of overhead charges remained in force 449 wells were bored. In the 18 months previous to that the number of

bore for agricultural purposes was 251. The concession has thus resulted in an increase of 198 wells.

A sum of Rs. 1 lakh has been provided by the Ministry for the encouragement of well sinking in non-perennial areas of the Nili Bar Colony, where the system of Taccavi is unpopular and agricultural credit is at a low ebb. The scheme has been carefully thought out and is being tried as an experimental measure in the Colony Chaks. No interest will be charged on the advances and recoveries will be made half-yearly in small instalments through lambardars. If a well goes out of use, the recovery of instalments will be suspended and the balance of the loan remitted.

With a view to encouraging educated persons, usually graduates, to adopt agriculture as their career, the Ministry gave them 79 grants of 50 acres each during 1937-38 in the Lower Bari Doab, the Nili Bar Colony and elsewhere. This experiment is being made in order to create a class of farmers who may set an example of improved agriculture and "better living" for others.

Co-operation.—In the Department of Co-operative Societies one new post of Assistant Registrar with headquarters at Ludhiana was provided in 1937-38 in order to cope with the expansion of the movement in that area. Previously one Assistant Registrar had been supervising the movement in the three districts of Ludhiana, Ambala and Simla. In addition a temporary post of Deputy Registrar was sanctioned to supervise intensive work for the improvement of co-operative institutions in the south-east Punjab. Cattle breeding by means of Co-operative Cattle Breeding Societies was encouraged by the provision of two posts of Cattle Breeding Inspectors selected from officials of the Veterinary Department, for the organisation and extension of the activities of such societies.

Further, provision was made in the 1938-39 budget for an Assistant Registrar in Montgomery District. Previously one Assistant Registrar supervised work in Multan and Montgomery. Three new posts of Inspectors were created in places where the movement had expanded beyond the capacity of supervision of the existing staff.

In order to encourage co-operative activity among women, a second post of Inspectress has been provided. The scope of the activities of women's societies includes all kinds of domestic occupation, hygiene and welfare.

The industrial side of the movement has also received encouragement by the restoration of three posts of Industrial Sub-Inspectors, which had previously been brought under reduction.

owing to financial stringency. A special grant of about Rs. 20,000 was made in order to finance particular schemes in the Gurgaon District for increasing the income and improving the economic condition of zamindar co-operators.

In addition to these provisions, a sum of Rs. 1 lakh has been allotted to the Department in connection with the Punjab Government's Special Development Programme. Of this amount Rs. 50,000 is to be spent on consolidation of holdings and Rs. 50,000 on other activities. The amount provided for consolidation of holdings will be spent partly on the improvement of supervision of the existing societies and partly on the provision of staff to carry on this fundamental and extremely beneficial activity on a more extensive scale than in the past. The remaining Rs. 50,000 is to be spent on certain specific schemes such as the encouragement of the payment of co-operative dues in grain, sheep breeding, bee-keeping, establishment of First Aid centres and special assistance to the development of women's societies for domestic industries, hygiene and welfare.

In connection with the All-India Industrial Exhibition held in the winter of 1937-38 special expenditure of Rs. 2,500 was sanctioned partly for the equipment of a Hall of Co-operation and partly to assist Co-operative Industrial Societies to exhibit their products. Both the Hall of Co-operation and the Industrial Societies' Stall were among the most popular features of the Exhibition.

Consolidation of Holdings through Revenue Department.—The consolidation of holdings is being carried out in the Punjab not only through the Co-operative Department, but also through the Revenue Department. Work was begun through the latter Department at the end of the financial year 1935-36 in the three districts of Rohtak, Sialkot and Gujrat, with one Consolidation Officer of the rank of Tahsildar, 2 Kanungos, 5 patwaris and 4 peons in each district. The success achieved by the end of the financial year 1936-37 was not marked. More effort was, therefore, devoted to this important work during the period under review. By the end of the year 1937-38 the consolidation staff in the three districts consisted of 3 Consolidation Officers, 10 Kanungos, 43 patwaris and 16 peons. During this year a sum of Rs. 36,555 was spent as compared with Rs. 4,257 in 1935-36 and Rs. 27,398 in 1936-37. The Ministry has extended these operations to the Jhelum district with effect from the 1st of April, 1938, and the total cost of the current year is estimated at Rs. 79,430.

The provisions of the Punjab Consolidation of Holdings Act, 1936, have now been extended to the four districts of Rohtak, Sialkot, Gujrat and Jhelum, and rules promulgated to facilitate



The Financial Commissioner (Development) announced concessions to sub-tenants in Nili Bar—See page 18.

the working of the Act. In order to bring to the notice of the zamindars the benefit of the consolidation of holdings, a manifesto was printed and widely circulated in rural areas previously untouched either by the Co-operative or the Revenue agency. The possibility of extending these operations to other districts is being considered.

Animal Husbandry.—The service rendered by the provincial Veterinary Department to the live-stock of the Punjab is one of the proudest features of the administration of the province. The activities of this Department have witnessed rapid expansion during recent years. In 1928-29 there were 258 veterinary hospitals in the province. By 1937-38 the number rose to 304 and, in addition to these, more than 1,200 outlying dispensaries came into being where none existed a decade earlier. The province now has about three veterinary hospitals and eleven outlying dispensaries per tehsil.

The new Ministry took good care, not only to maintain but to increase the rate of expansion. During the first year of its term of office (1937-38) the Ministry spent about Rs. 15 lakhs on the Veterinary Department as against Rs. 13,57,000 spent during the preceding year. In the budget for 1938-39 provision was made for Rs. 17,57,000, which meant an increase of Rs. 4 lakhs during two years. The increased allotment of money was mainly absorbed by grants-in-aid to District Boards to enable them to construct veterinary hospitals, the provision of staff for new hospitals, the strengthening of the Superintending staff and special schemes for the improvement of certain breeds of animals.

Special concessions to tenants.—In the Nili Bar Colony, the Punjab Government owns a large area of land—approximately 300,000 acres—which is on lease pending its eventual disposal by sale. This pending period has been longer than usual partly because of the slump in values and partly because, until the Haveli Project begins to work, the bidding public cannot have a full and fair experience of the adequacy of the water supply. This delay has encouraged the creation of a class of middle men, individuals or firms, which deal in these temporary leases and the concentration in the area of a large number of farm labourers and sub-tenants who till the soil as servants of the lessees.

In 1938 competition for the leases became abnormally acute partly because of the increased number of competing lessees and partly because of the prospects of the Haveli Project. As a result, tenders rose to such figures that the lessees could not pay the rent unless they charged higher rents from the sub-tenants than the latter could reasonably be expected to pay during the current period of low prices. The sub-tenants combined to

resist the lessees' demands and trouble was threatened. These facts were immediately reported by the Commissioner, Multan, to the Government and within a few hours of receiving his report the difficulty was considered by the Council of Ministers, who decided to impose certain limitations on the rent to be taken from the sub-tenants of Government lands and to compensate lessees generously.

The terms of this decision were announced by the Financial Commissioner, Development, in the heart of the colony area to a meeting of over 8,000 peasants on the third day after the first news had reached Government. They were well received. The approximate cost to Government of these revised orders during the seven harvests from *Rabi*, 1938, to *Rabi*, 1941, is estimated to be Rs. 13,50,000.* This cost appears considerable; but the grievances were genuine and any monetary loss has been well compensated by the satisfactory relations between lessees and their tenants which have resulted from the prompt action of Government.

In other directions also Government has eased the difficulties of the tenants of Government in the canal colonies. In the Nili Bar Colony, the privilege of exemption from personal residence was previously allowed to such military grantees as were suffering from age or infirmity or to those who were performing public work in their home districts. Now it has been extended to all tenants of Government and exemption has further been permitted to those who are undergoing education.

Industries.—Among the steps taken during the period under review towards the industrial development of the Province was the sanctioning of a proposal for a complete industrial survey of the Province, to be conducted district by district and industry by industry and to be spread over a number of years. A staff of Investigators in addition to a Head Survey Officer and a Superintendent of Industries was appointed for the purpose. Another step was the establishment of the Industrial Research Laboratory on a permanent basis. This laboratory had been functioning since 1931 as an experimental measure. During the period under review it examined a vast range of problems connected with the industrial utilisation of the raw materials of the Province and its work led to the establishment of a number of small scale industries. It was further decided to establish an Industrial Research Fund to help Government, semi-Government and private laboratories.

* In view of a subsequent fall in the prices of agricultural commodities, further concessions on the same lines were announced in November at a cost of about 3½ lakhs to Government during *Kharif*, 1938, and *Rabi*, 1939.



The announcement about concessions to sub-tenants was well received—See page 48.

The budget provision for financial assistance to industries under the Punjab State Aid to Industries Act was increased. The assistance under this Act takes the form of loans, grant of subsidies, grant of machinery on hire-purchase system or the guaranteeing of a minimum return. The budget provision for this purpose was raised from Rs. 1,00,000 in 1936-37 to Rs. 4,00,000 for 1938-39.

Assistance in marketing was previously given to manufacturers in the province through the agency of (1) an Arts and Crafts Depot and (2) the cotton handloom marketing organisation at Amritsar. During the period under review the Punjab Government have examined the working of the Arts and Crafts Depot and are now considering a scheme of reorganisation which will enable more effective assistance being given in the marketing of the products of cottage workers. Through the agency of the handloom marketing organisation at Amritsar several hundreds of new designs have been distributed and thousands of weavers have been helped to secure orders and sell their goods. Another organisation has just been set up to help the small and cottage producers of woollen goods in the matter of designs, finishing and marketing. A finishing and designing depot is being established at Panipat and a finishing plant at Kulu for giving a better finish to the indigenous woollen products of the valley. The Punjab Government have also approved of the appointment of a Marketing Officer in the Department of Industries to help in marketing the products of other classes of craft workers not covered by the above mentioned agencies.

Marked progress was made in the development of the Sericulture industry. Nearly 1,000 ozs. of silk-worm seed were distributed during 1937-38 among 580 rearers in 205 villages. The Department hopes to distribute about 1,500 ozs. during the current year. An important feature of the year was the establishment of a Grainage at Palampur, where disease free seed was produced for the first time in the Punjab to meet a part of the local needs. It is proposed to maintain this progress and eventually to make the Punjab self-contained in the matter of the supply of seed.

The increase in the number of peripatetic parties which undertake practical demonstration of new industrial methods was another feature of the period under review. At the end of the year 1936-37 there were four peripatetic parties for men working in the Punjab. They were mainly concerned with demonstrations in weaving. There was, besides, one party for the industrial training of women in such crafts as Tailoring, Embroidery, Knitting, Silma Tilla and Toy Making. Two

new demonstration parties were started during 1937-38 and the following additional parties have been sanctioned for 1938-39:—

- (1) One party for demonstration in dyeing ;
- (2) one party for demonstration in wool spinning and weaving for Kangra district ;
- (3) a wool teasing, carding and finishing station at Kulu ;
- (4) one demonstration party to help the village blacksmith ;
- (5) one demonstration party for glue makers ;
- (6) one demonstration party for women in rural areas ;
- (7) one party for demonstration in silk cocoons reeling ;
- (8) one party for demonstrations in tanning ;
- (9) one party for demonstration of new methods for the vegetable and essential oil industries ;
- (10) one demonstration party for developing ban and rope making industries, etc., in rural areas.

Increased attention and money were also devoted to the reorganisation of about three dozen Government industrial schools and institutes scattered over the Province.

Another notable achievement of the Department of Industries during the period under review was the All-India Exhibition of Arts and Industries which was held in Lahore. This was the first exhibition of its kind in India, both in magnitude and educational value. It was designed to take stock of the natural resources and the economic and industrial development in various parts of the country and to foster trade and industry by bringing the consumers and manufacturers into direct contact.

The Punjab Roads.—The roads in the Punjab have long been known as the best in India. The present Ministry has, however, not rested on the achievements of previous Governments in this respect. An 8-year Road Programme has been taken in hand at an estimated cost of about Rs. 125 lakhs. The programme will include —

- (a) the construction of 500 miles of new metalled roads ;
- (b) the provincialising of 800 miles of District Board metalled roads ;



The local Labour Party presented an address to the Premier at the gate of the Zamindara Conference, Lyallpur---See page 33.

- (c) the widening of the existing metalled roads where necessary;
- (d) the improvement of 10,000 miles of unmetalled roads as unmetalled roads; and
- (e) the improvement of village roads.

The present metalled mileage in the Punjab is about 3,000 miles, the bulk of which have been tarred. When this programme has been completed, the position in the Province will be —

- (a) tarred mileage over 4,000 miles;
- (b) unmetalled mileage 10,000 miles in motorable condition;
- (c) village roads 5,000—10,000 miles.

The chief source of funds for road development is the Punjab's share in the Central Road Fund. Owing to the large increase in metalled mileage as well as the vast improvement that has taken place in the condition of the Punjab roads during recent years, the share of this Province in the Central Fund, which is calculated on the basis of the consumption of petrol in the Province, has risen from Rs. 7 lakhs to nearly Rs. 13 lakhs per annum within a short space of 3 years. Rapid as this increase has been, it is still inadequate for the needs of the Province. Every effort is, therefore, being made to increase the rate of growth of the Punjab's share in the Central Road Fund by increasing the metalled mileage and widening the metalled widths in this province as rapidly as possible. With this object in view successful experiments have been carried out—hitherto on a comparatively small scale—which inspire a hope that it will be possible to reduce the cost of new construction and widening by at least 30 per cent. If these expectations are fulfilled, the Punjab's share in the Central Road Fund may be expected to rise to well over Rs. 20 lakhs before long and the Province will then be in a position to embark on road development on a very much larger scale than is possible at present.

The present maintenance bill for provincial roads, including a grant-in-aid of Rs. 3 lakhs to District Boards for the maintenance of their roads, amounts to Rs. 48 lakhs in round figures. When the 8-year Road Programme has been completed, it is expected that the cost of maintenance will remain about the same in spite of the large increase in metalled mileage as well as that of unmetalled mileage in motorable condition. This apparently illogical result is due to the very extensive tarring that has been done to metalled roads in the Punjab as well as to improved and more economic methods of maintenance.

The completion of the Punjab Road Programme will help not only the motorist but also the zamindar, because the object in view is not only to improve the main lines of communications but to link up villages with markets and railways to facilitate the transport of agricultural produce.

Hydro-Electric Resources.—The Uhl River Hydro-Electric scheme which was brought into operation some six years ago has been increasing its output of electric energy from year to year. It is expected that the scheme will prove productive in the year 1945-46 or thereabout. During the period under review special efforts have been made to cheapen the rate of the supply of electric energy, particularly in the interests of agriculture.

With a view to making the best possible use of Hydro-Electric resources the Ministry took the important step of ordering a load survey of the Province. This is intended to obtain information about the load already available or expected to be available in the near future for conversion into electric power. The survey will include an examination of the possibility of building subsidiary dams for the Uhl River scheme and developing canal falls in such a manner that the necessary closures of the canals may not deprive the Province of the energy to be supplied by them. The cost of erecting and operating a steam plant as a subsidiary source of electric energy is also to be examined. With the results of this survey before it, the Government hopes to be able to formulate a definite and comprehensive programme for the development of different areas.

In the meantime an officer has been put on special duty to examine the possibilities of tube-well pumping. Projects have been prepared for the construction of special rural lines for the supply of electric energy for tube-wells where water is sweet and the scheme of pumping is expected to be financially successful.

Education.—The Education Department has, during the period under review, devoted serious attention to the question of mass literacy. In order to remove the defects in the old Primary Education Act and to secure effective compulsion at the primary stage, the Ministry introduced a new Bill in the Legislative Assembly. The new Compulsory Education Bill seeks (a) to raise the years of schooling from four to five or even to six; (b) to raise the age-limit of the child liable to compulsion from 6—11 to 6—12 years; (c) to extend, when necessary, the compulsion clause to girls as well as boys; (d) to authorise the local Government instead of local bodies to extend and apply the Act to any area; (e) to empower the local Government to levy, if necessary, an education cess to

meet increased expenditure ; and (f) to set up a separate agency to enforce compulsion effectively.

With a view to strengthening the foundation of the educational system the Ministry decided to extend the primary course from four to five years. The total additional annual expenditure to be incurred by local bodies in each district, if the primary course is extended by one year, is estimated to be Rs. 5,50,000 recurring on account of the additional staff in board schools and increase in grant to aided schools, and Rs. 2,00,000 non-recurring on account of extensions of buildings, house-rents and equipment. It is believed that no local body in the Province will be able to bear any further expenditure and that the total additional cost of extending the primary course will have to be borne by Government.

Various questions arising in connection with the conversion of the four-year primary course into a five-year one with consequent reduction in the middle course from four years to three were considered and Government decided to appoint a strong committee of officials and non-officials to go into this question in all its aspects and to make recommendations with regard to changes in the curricula and syllabuses for both the primary and middle courses. The recommendations of the committee have been received and are being considered.

Efforts have also been made to reduce the high percentage of wastage which takes place between classes I and IV in primary schools. An urgent circular letter was addressed to all Divisional Inspectors, asking them to aim at a reduction in wastage by at least 5 per cent every year so that within five years the literacy percentage in the Province should rise to 65. It was urged that one of the Deputy Inspectors in each Division should devote his whole time and attention exclusively to the problems of vernacular education and his main endeavour should be to initiate, guide and supervise activities in the field of vernacular education which should make for improved percentage of literacy and the minimising of waste. The District and Assistant District Inspectors were told that one of the main tests of their efficiency would be the reduction of wastage and stagnation in the districts or areas entrusted to their charge. As a result of concerted measures taken by the Divisional and District Inspectors, distinct improvement is visible and encouraging reports have been received from the Inspectors.

In February, 1937, an adult literacy conference consisting of departmental and non-departmental officers was held at Moga where the technique of Dr. Laubach's new method of "each one teach one" was discussed. In May, 1937, another conference was held and it was decided *inter alia* that the

experiment of teaching adults on the lines and technique of Dr. Laubach's method should be conducted by the Mission School, Moga, under the guidance of Dr. and Mrs. Harper and a small committee. The Punjab Education Department awarded grants aggregating Rs. 1,050 on two occasions to help this work. Since then the experiment has been making good progress.

Experimental work was also done in several stations, for example at Jullundur, Kharar, Sangla, Sialkot and Kasur and very hopeful results have been reported from all these places. The three Government Normal Schools at Gakhar, Karnal and Lalamusa also did useful work in connection with the Adult Literacy Campaign. Gakhar took up a whole village called Kot Nura for this purpose; Karnal concentrated its efforts on the under-trial prisoners in the local sub-jail, and Lalamusa carried on the work in the railway colony.

A marked feature of the new Ministry's educational policy has been the extension of facilities for the education of girls. A training class at Gakhar for the training of the wives of the teachers under training in the local normal school for men was opened in November, 1937. Junior Vernacular classes were attached to the Government High School for Girls, Gujrat, and Middle School for Girls, Fazilka. Government also decided to add degree classes to the Stratford Intermediate College for Women, Amritsar, during the year 1938-39.

Additional staff was provided during the year 1937-38 for the education of girls. It was still further strengthened in 1938-39 when provision was made for the opening of 9 Government vernacular middle schools for girls and a Government High School for Girls at Ferozepore.

Provision has also been made in the budget estimates of 1938-39 for the construction of schools and boarding houses in various districts at a total cost of about Rs. 2½ lakhs. About the same amount was provided for the extension of buildings for boys' schools or colleges.

On the side of boys' education the problem of proper training for vernacular teachers was also considered and on the advice of a committee of experts, consisting of officials and non-officials, it was decided that the Junior Vernacular course might be extended to two years and should be followed by the Senior Vernacular course for one year after an interval of not less than three years.

The problem of the health of students has not been neglected. In urban areas two different schemes of medical inspection of school children have been in operation. One is suitable for larger areas with groups of schools which can combine and form a students' health committee, engage a whole-time doctor,

open a dispensary and conduct the medical inspection and treatment of the scholars of the associated schools. The other is suitable for smaller areas with single schools which can arrange with a local practitioner for his part-time services. The adoption of these schemes has shown encouraging results in an improvement of the health of school children.

In rural areas the medical inspection of students is in the charge of the medical officers working in local or neighbouring dispensaries. The intensive work started in six districts (Gurgaon, Jullundur, Sialkot, Shahpur, and Multan) has been continued with vigour. In the case of girls the scheme of medical inspection is in force in twelve schools.

An interesting scheme of free supply of milk to poor school children has been encouraged and several municipal committees (notably in the Multan Division) have made provision in their budgets for supplying milk to school children. An interesting experiment was tried at Maurusipur in Lyallpur district where there is a District Board High School. Government placed at the disposal of the school six acres of waste land to enable the school authorities to grow fodder for four buffaloes to be kept in the school. This set of buffaloes will be replaced every six months and will be provided free by philanthropic people. A regular supply of fresh and pure milk to indigent school children will thus be ensured.

The Punjab Boy Scouts Association continued to carry out the work for which it is now so well-known, particularly on the social service side in connection with *melas*, fairs, village games and village social service days, and at the All-India Exhibition of Arts and Industries. Over fifty thousand scouts took part in the Safety-First campaign in co-operation with the Police and the Automobile Association of Northern India. Intensive work in training camps continued, and men and boys were trained in all aspects of scout activity and in physical training.

A sum of Rs. 10,000 was also sanctioned by Government to the Girl Guide Association for the purpose of constructing a building for a centre where teachers would be trained in running Girl Guide Companies and Blue Bird Flocks.

The following additional grants were sanctioned for payment to the Punjab University with effect from 1938-39 :—

Rs. 30,000 per annum towards the pay of a paid Vice-Chancellor.

Rs. 2,000 per annum for three years (1938-41) for publishing a Vedic word concordance and a complete etymological dictionary of the Vedic Language.

Fight against disease.—In the Medical Department the maintenance grants for rural dispensaries were substantially improved during the year, and steps were taken to push forward the scheme for the provincialisation of hospitals at district and tahsil headquarters, which had been more or less indefinitely postponed for reasons of finance.

The district headquarters hospital at Hoshiarpur and one tahsil Headquarters Hospital at Phalia, district Gujrat, were provincialised during 1937-38 and further provision was made for the provincialisation of four more hospitals during 1938-39. The provision of medical aid for women by doctors of their own sex was also extended by the appointment of lady doctors at the civil dispensaries of Pind Dadan Khan, Sonapat, and Shahabad and the Civil Hospital of Campbellpur and by the provincialisation of a hospital for women at Beri in Rohtak District.

Two highly efficient modern X-ray installations were sanctioned by the Ministry for the Mayo Hospital, Lahore, and the Civil Hospital, Amritsar, and the work of construction and installation was completed in Amritsar and nearly completed in Lahore.

The Ministry have taken an important decision on medical policy, which was expressed by the Premier in a speech at the annual dinner of the Punjab Branch of the British Medical Association in February, 1938, in the following words:—

“ I wish to declare that my Government is determined to extend efficient medical relief throughout the Province. Our programme is intensive as well as extensive. Our ideal is to see, in the shortest possible time, medical relief brought within easy reach of every village in the Punjab and to see every rural dispensary efficiently manned and equipped.”

The Medical Department is taking keen interest in the programme of intensive rural development which has been started in one tehsil in each district. In this connection arrangements have been made for doctors in charge of rural dispensaries to extend the scope of their work by paying regular visits to “key” villages in their neighbourhood.

A conference of Civil Surgeons was held in Lahore under the chairmanship of the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals, Punjab, in March, 1938, to consider a number of points, relating to the medical administration of the Province. Their recommendations are being considered.

The Ministry also decided to appoint a committee to inquire into the specially difficult problems of medical relief in Lahore, with which is connected the question of medical education in the Province. Another committee was appointed to inquire into the practice of indigenous systems of medicine in the Punjab and the need of control on them.

A scheme which was sanctioned in 1936 for the extension of the Punjab Mental Hospital, Lahore, has been actively pursued by the new Ministry and accommodation for 300 additional mental patients has now been completed.

In the Public Health Department the provision for sanitary grants was considerably increased. As against Rs. 77,421 during the previous year, about Rs. 5 lakhs were spent during 1937-38 and about Rs. 8 lakhs were provided under this head in the budget for 1938-39.

As a part of a scheme of departmental reorganisation the work of preparing and maintaining vital statistics was handed over by the Civil Surgeons to District Medical Officers of Health.

Changes were made in the routine method of vaccination by reducing the primary vaccination and revaccination insertions from 4 and 3 to 3 and 2 respectively. It is believed that this change has made vaccination more acceptable to the population generally, while maintaining an adequate degree of protection against small-pox. The object in view is to ensure an adequate degree of protection for as many of the population as possible rather than intensive protection for a small number. An intensive propaganda campaign led to the employment by local bodies of many more vaccinators than in former years.

Anti-malaria work was re-organised and put on a much sounder basis. An attempt is being made to establish and maintain in each district at least the nucleus of an anti-malaria organisation sufficient for the execution of useful routine work and capable of expansion to meet requirements, should malaria assume epidemic proportions. The establishment of liaison between District Board, Municipal, Military and Railway authorities and the formulation of joint anti-malaria schemes has been a special feature of this re-organisation. Facilities have been provided for the carrying out of entomological work.

Marked expansion in industrial hygiene work has followed the issue of revised factory rules incorporating detailed instructions regarding the health of workers and the sanitation of factories.

Sanitary improvements in 31 villages in the Gujrat district have been completed at a total cost of Rs. 26,486 including contribution by villagers and the District Board. The scheme of providing bore-hole latrines in the Shakargarh tehsil of the Gurdaspur district, for which a sum of Rs. 10,000 was set apart, has been completed. As many as 3,186 latrines have been set up. Experiments are being carried out with a view to ascertaining the effect of these latrines on the purity of sub-soil water.

A little over Rs. 3½ lakhs were sanctioned for water supply schemes in rural areas. Some of these have been completed, while others are in progress.

Excise Policy.—The excise policy of the Government can be briefly put as having for its aim the minimising of temptation for those who do not drink and discouraging excess on the part of those who do. All considerations of revenue are subordinated to this definite aim. In addition, at the Budget Session of the Punjab Legislative Assembly, Government accepted a resolution recommending the imposition of total prohibition in 5 districts of the Province. This problem is greatly complicated in the Punjab by the proximity of Indian States and by the extent to which illicit distillation is rife at present. The Government is, however, considering schemes of prohibition, but is at present confronted with financial difficulties caused by serious famine conditions in a part of the Province. Further, rigid control has been put on the consumption of liquor in unlicensed restaurants and hotels situated within the municipal limits of Lahore and Amritsar. This has, it is hoped, removed a scandal which affected not only respectable citizens but was reported to be causing great anxiety to the parents of young men studying in the local colleges.

The duty on *charas*—a most dangerous hemp drug—has been raised by one hundred per cent. from Rs. 20 to Rs. 40 per seer. This has resulted in a substantial reduction in the consumption of this harmful drug without, as far as can be ascertained at present, producing any increase in smuggling.

Jail Administration.—The problem of reforms in the administration of jails has attracted a good deal of attention in various parts of India during recent months. In the Punjab reforms on the lines which are now being considered elsewhere were carried out much earlier. In the Borstal treatment and the probational release of prisoners this province has already achieved a fair measure of success. In fact the adolescents in the Borstal Institute now enjoy very nearly the privileges of

the pupils of a first rate Government school and like them engage in healthy, recreative and cultural activities, which are regarded to-day as a necessary part of any modern system of education. The Punjab was the first local Government in India to inaugurate special A and B classes of prisoners and this measure was soon followed by the other Presidencies and Provinces.

In ordinary jails, prisoners are encouraged to receive primary education and training in First Aid. Careful attention is paid to the diet and health of the prisoners and they are given drill and physical training. As a result of this a very high percentage of prisoners leave the jails in improved health. The records of the year 1937 showed that 45.5 per cent. of the total number of prisoners in Punjab jails gained weight as against 9.7 per cent. who lost it. The rest neither lost nor gained. Radio sets have been supplied to a number of jails. This amenity is much appreciated and is being extended.

Since the new Ministry took office, the clerical establishments of all jails have been completed, 442* old and infirm prisoners released on compassionate grounds and extra jail holidays sanctioned on certain religious festivals. Jail industries have also been re-organised with a view to affording a wider variety of occupations suited to individual tastes and upbringing, so that after release the prisoners might be able to settle down as useful citizens. In this connection certain forms of hard labour are being replaced with labour of a healthier and more economic and educative character, like brick-laying, masonry, building operations, etc. There are several schemes for further reform under consideration. Among such may be mentioned the creation of a Star Jail for young adult first-offenders and a Jail Sanatorium for tubercular and other sick prisoners.

*This figure includes prisoners released up to the middle of December, 1938.

APPENDIX A.
GOVERNMENT OF THE PUNJAB.

Governor.

- HIS EXCELLENCY SIR HERBERT WILLIAM EMERSON,**
G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I., O.B.E., I.C.S., UP TO 6TH APRIL, 1938.
- HIS EXCELLENCY SIR HENRY DUFFIELD CRAIK, BART.,**
K.C.S.I., I.C.S., FROM 7TH APRIL, 1938.

Ministers.

- (1) The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Major Sardar Sir Sikander Hyat-Khan, K.B.E., Premier.
- (2) The Hon'ble Sardar Bahadur Dr. Sardar Sir Sunder Singh Majithia, Kt., C.I.E., D.O.L., Minister of Revenue.
- (3) The Hon'ble Rao Bahadur Chaudhri Sir Chhotu Ram, B.A., LL.B., Minister of Development.
- (4) The Hon'ble Mr. Manohar Lal, M.A., Bar.-at-Law, Minister of Finance.
- (5) The Hon'ble Honorary Major Nawabzada Malik Khizar Hyat Khan Tiwana, O.B.E., Minister of Public Works.
- (6) The Hon'ble Mian Abdul Haye, B.A., LL.B., Minister of Education.

Parliamentary Secretaries.

- (1) Khan Bahadur Mian Ahmad Yar Khan Daulatana, Chief Official Whip.
- (2) Mir Maqbool Mahmood.
- (3) Sardar Bahadur Ujjal Singh, M.A.
- (4) Mrs. J. A. Shah Niwaz, M.B.E.
- (5) Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan.
- (6) Chaudhri Tika Ram, B.A., LL.B.
- (7) Thakur Bipodaman Singh, B.A.
- (8) Sheikh Faiz Mohammad, B.A., LL.B., M.B.E.

Parliamentary Private Secretaries.

- (1) Syed Amjad Ali Shab, O.B.E.
- (2) Bhagat Hans Raj, B.A., LL.B.
- (3) Sardar Jagjit Singh Man.
- (4) Sir William Roberts, C.I.E.
- (5) Bai Bahadur Chaudhri Sham Lal.
- (6) Nawabzada Muhammad Faiyaz Ali Khan.
- (7) Khan Bahadur Mian Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani.
- (8) Sardar Gopal Singh.

APPENDIX B.

PUNJAB CABINET'S PROGRAMME.

On April, 1937, the Hon'ble Sir Sikander Hyat-Khan, Premier of the Punjab, issued on behalf of the Ministry the following statement to the Press :—

By the grace of God we in the Punjab are in a position to give a fair start to the new regime. The Punjab electorate, impelled by the sturdy commonsense and practical wisdom so characteristic of the people inhabiting the "Land of the Five Rivers" has returned to the Provincial Assembly a sufficiently large number of representatives, who have greater faith in the virtues of constructive achievement than in frittering away national energy in the barren field of non-cooperation.

It is comparatively easy to destroy, but it requires vision, courage and perseverance to build. We in this Province are committed to constructive effort. Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and Christians have, all alike, pronounced a clear verdict in favour of trying out the new constitution. It is our duty to obey their mandate and we will make every endeavour to plan and raise an edifice which will be worthy of the Punjab and do credit to our motherland.

The Punjab Cabinet is under no delusion as to the nature and extent of the limitations and restrictions which the new Government of India Act imposes on autonomy even in the provincial sphere. Nevertheless, in pursuance of the clearly expressed wish of the electorate, it has undertaken the task of running the administration and securing the utmost good out of the new constitution.

We admit that the machinery, which we have been called upon to work, is delicate and complex, but we do not see the wisdom of condemning it without a fair trial. Nor do we believe in flinging in a spanner deliberately to clog or wreck it. It would neither be fair to the Province nor to our constituents to resort to such tactics.

At the same time, we wish to make it quite clear that we will not have the slightest hesitation in revising our attitude towards the new constitution if, in spite of our best efforts, it proves to be unworkable.

Grave as is our responsibility, and serious as are our difficulties, we are fortunate in two things, namely, (a) we have in the Cabinet a team of workers resolutely determined to act in unison, and (b) we know that His Excellency the Governor is equally resolutely determined to help us to the fullest extent in unfolding the advantages of which the constitution is capable.

It is not practicable in the course of a brief statement to enunciate the principles which we desire to follow, or to discuss the policy which we desire to pursue, or to enumerate the details of the programme which we desire to put through during the next five years. We will take the earliest opportunity of announcing our

considered plans when we have had time to mature them. Meanwhile, there are certain matters of outstanding importance upon which some light may, with advantage, be thrown at the very outset.

Lightening the burden of the peasantry, tackling the problem of unemployment, development and expansion of nation-building activities, uplifting backward classes, including our brethren of the scheduled castes, and creating a more favourable atmosphere for the promotion of communal amity and goodwill are questions which have been a subject of universal comment not only in the Punjab, but throughout India. While other questions of both major and minor importance are also bound to engage the attention of the Cabinet, the problems just alluded to are such that they may justly claim precedence over others.

The question of fighting communal bitterness and tension, so humiliating to all patriotic Indians and so detrimental to the growth of a real spirit of nationalism, has no financial implications except in the sense that the outburst of communal frenzy sometimes adds heavily to the items on the wrong side of provincial accounts.

The Cabinet is resolved to deal with a firm hand with all those who, on one pretext or another, indulge in pouring vials of communal poison through the Press or from the platform into the minds of an unsuspecting and unsophisticated public. Side by side with this, steps will also be taken to promote feelings of mutual goodwill, trust and toleration in other ways.

We take this opportunity of giving a solemn assurance to our fellow citizens that each one of us is pledged—and will do his utmost—to watch vigilantly and to protect scrupulously the legitimate interests of all communities equally with those of his own.

We are constrained to warn an unsuspecting public against the insidious and unscrupulous attempts by interested persons, led by unsuccessful aspirants to various offices, to mislead them under the pretext of safeguarding the interests of their respective communities. It is time that all patriotic Punjabis took concerted action to expose these pseudo-leaders and to save the province from the consequences of their dubious tactics.

We earnestly appeal to the public and the Press and solicit their whole-hearted support in assisting us to rid the province of communal bickerings and mistrust.

The other questions involve grave fiscal considerations and far-reaching financial consequences. Nobody is more conscious of the difficulties of the peasantry than the Punjab Cabinet. But relief to the peasantry necessarily involves a corresponding

shrinkage in provincial receipts, while development of nation-building activities and relief of unemployment necessarily involve an expansion of expenditure.

The clear import of this dual process is that in order to afford the requisite relief to the peasantry and to provide for the removal or even-mitigation of unemployment and the intensification of nation-building activities it would be necessary to explore fresh avenues and examine the existing sources of revenue with a view to augmenting our income to the extent which would enable us to take appreciable action in these very desirable directions without adding to the burden of the poorer classes.

It may be contended that the cost of the administration should be reduced very substantially in order to find a part of the funds necessary for the above purposes. While the Cabinet desires to assure the public that every reasonable attempt will be made to effect all reasonable economy in order to cheapen the administration consistently with efficiency, it should be borne in mind that extensive retrenchment was effected in almost all departments when the depression set in and that the votable portion of the budget is not very large.

The yield of all practicable fresh retrenchments and economies will, in any case, be disappointingly low, and entirely inadequate for the purposes which claim and deserve the sympathy of all of us.

However, with courage and determination to move forward, the Cabinet has made up its mind to appoint two committees—one to advise and report on the best means of coping with the problem of unemployment, and the other to suggest practicable devices of effecting economy and retrenchment as well as to explore fresh sources of revenue without affecting the poorer classes, with a view to enabling the new Government to enter upon a programme of providing suitable relief to the peasantry and intensifying nation-building activities.

The task before the Cabinet is both difficult and delicate, but with heart within and God overhead we enter upon that task and in all humility and earnestness, pray to that Almighty God who is the dispenser of all good and the fountain of all light and knowledge to give us strength, courage, faith and wisdom to discharge our duties properly and to guide our footsteps on the right path of service to our fellowmen and for the glory of our motherland.

APPENDIX C.

Legislative measures passed by the Punjab Legislature, from April 1, 1937, to September 30, 1938.

Title.	Date when passed.	Objects.
Punjab Ministers' Salaries Act.	April 8, 1937	Determines the salaries of the Ministers.
Punjab Legislative Assembly Speaker's and Deputy Speaker's Salaries Act.	April 12, 1937	Determines the salaries of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of the Punjab Legislative Assembly.
Punjab Legislative Assembly (Removal of Disqualifications) Act.	July 15, 1937	Provides that the holders of certain offices, <i>e.g.</i> , Parliamentary and Private Parliamentary Secretaries, Zaildars, Sufaidposhes, etc., shall not be disqualified for election to the Punjab Legislative Assembly.
Punjab Legislative Assembly (Allowances of Members) Act.	July 15, 1937	Determines the allowances to be paid to the members of the Punjab Legislative Assembly.
Punjab Alienation of Land (Amendment) Act.	April 11, 1938	To prohibit agricultural land being put to destructive use by a mortgagee or lessee without the consent of the owner, and to remove ambiguity regarding the period for which temporary alienation of land belonging to a statutory agriculturist judgment-debtor can be ordered by a civil court.
Suits Valuation (Punjab Amendment) Act.	March 10, 1938	To amend the Suits Valuation Act, 1887, in so far as it deals with plaints or memorials of appeals in suits by reverisoners under the Punjab Customary Law for a declaration in respect of an alienation of ancestral land.

APPENDIX C—concluded.

Title.	Date when passed.	Objects.
Punjab Debtors' Protection (Amendment) Bill.	June 21, 1938	To prohibit execution of civil decrees by the appointment of a receiver to administer property which is protected from attachment or sale under the Colonisation of Government Lands (Punjab) Act, 1912.
Punjab Registration of Money lenders Act.	July 16, 1938	To establish effective control on the business of money-lending by compelling money-lenders to obtain licences.
Punjab Alienation of Land (Second Amendment) Bill.	July 16, 1938	To nullify certain sales and mortgages of land which were effected in contravention of the intention of the Punjab Alienation of Land Act of 1900.
Punjab Restitution of Mortgaged Lands Act.	July 21, 1938	To terminate old mortgages of land (effected before 1901 and still subsisting) on payment of a reasonable compensation where necessary by the mortgagor to the mortgagee.
Punjab Alienation of Land (Third Amendment) Act.	July 22, 1938	To place the agriculturist money-lenders for the purposes of the Punjab Alienation of Land Act, in the same position as non-agriculturist money-lenders and check them from permanently acquiring the land of their agriculturist debtors.