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Topics of the Week.

The Bombay Local Boards Bill.

THE Bombay Ministry's Local Boards Bill, which gives an option to any Muslim constituencies to place themselves on the general electoral roll, cannot be expected in fact, in view of the Muslim League's vehement opposition, to facilitate the elimination of separate electorates. Without doing any tangible good, therefore, it has placed the Ministry in an extremely tight spot. If it had proposed the abolition of communal electorates, it would at least have shown itself to be fighting for a great principle; now it has earned the hostility of the Muslims for no appreciable benefit.

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SEVERAL organs of the public press have expressed the view that the Ministry should have replaced separate by joint electorates and have charged the Ministry with timidity in taking the line of least resistance on a matter of vital importance. The *Tribune* is one of such papers. It says :

> There are certain things which no true nationalist: can ever give away and in regard to which he can admit no compromise. Joint representation, which is at once the symbol and the *sine qua non* of common nationality, is obviously and undeniably one of them. No national Government, far less a Congress Government, of which undiluted nationalism is the only possible foundation, can make the acceptance of joint or separate electorates a matter of choice or option, whether for a majority or a minority community, without forfeiting its title to existence.

The Bombay Ministry, the *Tribune* says, exhibited neither courage nor wisdom in leaving it to the Muslims to decide whether they should continue to have separate electorates or should enrol themselves in joint electorates instead of doing with separate electorates altogether. But, in the light of what has happened since, it is clear that if the Ministry had introduced joint electorates the Governor would certainly have used his special powers and interfered with the Ministry, and it is not improbable that the Ministry proposed this compromise measure with a full knowledge of the contingency which it would have to face.

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EVEN to this compromise measure the Muslim League members in the two chambers offered strenuous opposition and staged a walk-out from the legislature. The Ministry took alarm. It showed itself willing to whittle down the Bill in several ways. When the Muslims asked whether, after exercising the option in favour of joint electorates, a Muslim constituency could again exercise the option to go back to separate electorates, the Ministry did not put its foot down but expressed its readiness to consider the matter. Later, the Prime Minister gave an assurance that the Government would never introduce joint electorates without Muslim consent. The Ministry thus bound itself to act always in accordance with the wishes of the Muslims in this respect. It not only refrained from abolishing separate electorates on this occasion as a matter of expediency, but imposed upon itself the disability of ever doing so in future unless the agreement of the Muslim community was forthcoming.

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THE Ministry went further. It put additional difficulties in the way of the option clause being made effective. The Prime Minister stated in the Upper Chamber that "unless a very large number of Muslims in any constituency of their own motion required that a referendum of Muslims should be taken, Government would not take action under the clause, and rules would be framed to make this clear." The Ministry thus abandoned the initiative which it might have taken in ascertaining Muslim opinion by promising not to set the clause in motion unless the Muslims as a community expressed a spontaneous wish to that effect. One need not say how unnecessary and humiliating the promise was. But this requirement of a spontaneous expression of a desire on the part of the Muslims does not seem to be spontaneous on the part of the Ministry, for when the Muslim League leaders the following day waited on the Governor in deputation and requested him to use his special powers, the Governor said :

> In the event of a suggestion being made that the optional clause be brought into operation in any constituency, he, under his special responsibility to safeguard the legitimate interests of the minorities, would not sanction the setting up of machinery for that purpose unless he was entirely satisfied that the desire to exercise the option was genuinely spontaneous amongst qualified Muslim electors and was very widely held in that constituency.

The important difference between this statement and that of the Prime Minister is that while the Ministry would set the machinery of option in motion after it

is satisfied that there a previous spontaneous expression of opinion on the part of Muslims that the option should be exercised, the Governor would prevent the setting up of the machinery unless he was satisfied that the Ministry had properly satisfied itself about the spontaneity of Muslim opinion. Thus the initiative has been snatched by the Governor from the Ministry's hands into his own.

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NO wonder that there is a great deal of flutter in the ministerial dovecots. A number of inspired messages have gone forth. It is said that no differences have disclosed themselves between the Governor and the Ministry to require a consideration of the latter's position *vis a vis* the former, forgetting that any little deviation (of which the Governor is the final judge) from the course the Ministry has voluntarily (?) decided to follow in the matter would bring down upon the Ministry the use of the Governor's special powers. But if the Prime Minister's statement in the Council was really dictated by the Governor, as seems very likely, there is of course no new difference, for any previous difference had already been got over by the Ministry's submission to the Governor's view.

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ANOTHER inspired message, while deploring that the Governor should have laid down a condition at all for bringing the option into operation after the Ministry had accepted the condition, says :

> The Governor, the Assembly political circles believe, would have had every justification to step in, if the policy as explained by the Prime Minister was different from what was contemplated. The assurance given by the Governor, as matters stand, it is contended, was entirely uncalled for and only encourages distrust in the present Cabinet.

In this message it is argued that the Governor's interference would have been wholly justifiable, not only if the Ministry had provided for joint electorates in the Bill, but had proposed to set the machinary for taking a referendum into operation without first ascertaining whether Muslim opinion was spontaneously in favour of taking a referendum. It is amazing how newspapers which resent any appearance of the Governor's interference with non-Congresss Ministries are indulgent towards the Governors in Congress provinces, to make the way smooth for Congress Ministries. In fact, the Governor ought to leave the Ministry entirely free in this matter. As it is, the inference can be drawn that the Governor threatened interference in the event of an option being given to Muslims for joint electorates except with the utmost circumspection, and the Ministry succumbed to the threat. It is not surprising, therefore, that from some pro-Congress papers has come the call for the Kher Ministry to resign even though no great conflict between itself and the Governor has been allowed to come in to public view. Only if the differences have been hushed up, it has not been done with excessive skill.

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Report on Mysore Repression.

IT will be recalled that Mahatma Gandhi in effect expunged the A.I.C.C.'s resolution on Mysore repression by declaring it *ultra vires* and (not to put too fine a point on it) untruthful on the ground that no proper investigation had been made to sustain the conclusions embodied in it. After this one would have thought that the Mahatma would cause an inquiry to be made in order to test the correctness of the resolution that the A.I.C.C. had adopted. But Mahatmaji took no steps in the matter, and the Congress too ate the humble pie and went forward as if convinced that it had done grievous injustice to the Mysore Government in accusing it of relentless repression. But a careful and elaborate inquiry has now been made by Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya and Mr. Balvantray Mehta, and the results have been published in a pamphlet, " A Report on the Present Political Situation in Mysore." It is true that the inquiry was not conducted under the auspices of the Congress but under those of the All-India States' People's Conference, of which Dr. Pattabhi is President and Mr. Mehta General Secretary, but both Messrs. Pattabhi and Mehta are loyal and distinguished Congressmen whom not even Mahatma Gandhi will charge with doing violence to truth for the sake of giving an impetus to the cause which at the moment they have espoused.

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THE report proves conclusively that ruthless repression is going on at present and has been going on for some years in Mysore State, and, what is very much worse, the repressive policy is not being pursued in a blundering fashion out of panic, but with the definite object of preventing any vigorous agitation for constitutional reform. We must confess that we had not realised before the wickedness of the whole proceeding, and no one outside the State will realise it who has not perused this report. The commencement of repression dates back to the speech of the Diwan, Sir Mirza Ismail, in June, 1934, when he said in the Representative Assembly : "Let me tell the House that there is no idea of introducing further changes in the constitution or of altering the structure of Mysore Government. I cannot help expressing my surprise that this policy should have been advocated at a time when Parliamentary democracy is decaying everywhere." Whatever may have happened elsewhere, Parliamentary democracy, not being born yet, has had no chance of decaying in Mysore. Founded 54 years ago, the Legislative Council of the State consists of 53 members, of whom only 21 (or 40 per cent.) are elected, and these 21 are elected on a franchise conferred on one-sixtieth of the population. The Council wields no power, there being no element of responsibility. At this stage the Dewan, as the report says, "wanted to put a full stop to the march of progress on the lines of responsible government." The people determined not to worry too much about the possible decay of Parliamentary democracy in Mysore just yet, but to bring it into existence first. A deadlock thus arose between the people and the Government.

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THERE were several rival parties in the State, some on communal lines, but, in face of the Dewan's challenge, they all coalesced, presenting a united front to the Government. This growing solidarity alarmed the Government, who had determined to crush all agitation, and, on the eve of the amalgamation of the People's Federation, which was under the control of the Justice Party non-Brahmans, with the Congress, Government repression started in right earnest. The People's Federation formally resolved to merge itself in the Congress on 16th October, 1937, and on the 15th at midnight, Mr. Bhashyam, the prime mover in the Federation, was arrested on a charge of sedition. The Government had evidently hoped thereby to prevent the merger, but "the new development only resulted in stiffening up the resolve of the popular parties" to form a common party and put up a strong fight for constitutional freedom.

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THE represssive measures taken by the Mysore Government since then are too many to recount here. They are set out in a pamphlet called "Repression in

Mysore" published by the Mysore Congress Board. The Pattabhi-Mehta report not only endorses all the instances given there, but says that the list contained in the pamphlet "is really not exhaustive." "Orders served and restrictions placed on many silent workers in remote villages have not secured any publicity or attention." Messrs. Pattabhi and Mehta describe their own experience thus:

> Wherever we went, we heard of notices and orders under various sections of the Police Regulation or Criminal Procedure Code. We heard of workers being prosecuted under various counts—a proceeding which is bound to remove them from their chosen field of service. We saw palpable efforts on the part of the local officials to stifle constitutional agitation for popular rights. We ourselves were presented with two orders, one at Davangere and the other at Kankanhalli, which reflect faithfully the mind of the officialdom in Mysore. At four places the officials did not permit the discussion by us at public meetings of "Federation," "The Achievements of the Congress Ministers," "The Rights and Privileges of the States' People," "The Present Political Situation of Mysore," and "Responsible Government." We had to speak either on "Khaddar" or "Rural Economics" or "Village Reconstruction," or "The Value of the Vote" after duly obtaining licence from the Amildar Magistrate. We later learnt that the officials concerned herein acted beyond and contrary to the instructions from the Diwan. That makes the case worse. It shows that tyranny is always in inverse proportion to authority and if the officials could set at naught the Diwan's orders in respect of us how much more autocratic would they not be towards the workers of the State?

The Congress Board of Mysore calculates that "more than 100 prohibitory orders have been issued since the past one year, 31 orders under Sec. 144, Cr. P. C., 21 orders under Sec. 39, Mysore Police Regulation, and 7 under Sec. 45, Mysore Police Regulation. There have been more than 100 arrests.... It is estimated that between 300 and 400 persons must have been served with prohibitory orders of one kind or other." If this is not to be described as repression, the Congress even under the Gandhi regime of utter truthfulness has been doing nothing but trample truth under foot in complaining of repression in British India for over 15 years past.

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WHAT will the Mahatma now do in the presence of the Pattabhi-Mehta report, which proves to the hilt the statements made in the A.I.C.C. resolution? Will he retract his undeserved censure and let the resolution stay on record? His precipitate intervention has been capitalised by the Mysore Government to push on still further with its cruel persecution of public workers. The report says, without a word of comment which only adds to the tragedy of the situation, "The State had also spread thousands of leaflets in Kannada of Mahatma Gandhiji's comments on the Mysore resolution of the A.I.C.C. in order to direct popular attention to it." And will Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru have something to say about this indirect encouragement of repression on Mahatma Gandhi's part? We all know that he is at present helpless, but will his lips be unsealed after Subhash Babu takes his place? Are the efforts to prevent encroachments on civil liberty to be confined to British India and more particularly to the four non-Congress provinces in British India?

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ONE thing that comes out of the Pattabhi-Mehta report very clearly is the impossibility of maintaining the solidarity of the various sections of the people in Mysore on the Congress principle of non-interference in State affairs. As the report states, there were two main schools of thought in Mysore. "One school was represented by the Congress, devoted more or less to its constructive programme and development of its organisational work in the State and to the participation in a measure of the national struggle *outside the State*. The other school more or less concentrated itself on the work *inside the State* through separate independent organisations." The Congress abstained from State politics but participated in British Indian politics. The Prajamitra Mandali and the People's Party, both as separate organisations and as the People's Federation, which emerged from an amalgamation of both these parties, abstained from British Indian politics but participated in State politics. A combination of the Congress and the People's Federation naturally was very difficult when the objectives of the two parties were clearly contrary to each other. The People's Federation said to the Congress: "What's the good of our joining hands with you when you neglect the work that is yours but take part in affairs with which you have nothing to do? In any case, the British Indian Congressmen, who seek your help, have pledged themselves to give no help to you. In this situation is it not much better for us to leave British India alone and carry on an intensive fight for internal reform within our own borders?" The Congress party could get the People's Federation to agree to a fusion only after it had promised that the Congress would help the States to the extent of its ability. Mr. Chengalroya Reddy, who was then President of the People's Federation but is now the leading figure in the Congress party, said in August, 1937, "The Federation had stood out of the Congress because of the official Congress policy of non-interference in the internal administration of the States." If the policy of non-interference is again emphasised and carried further, as Mahatma Gandhi's article in *Harijan* seeks to do, there is a risk of the hard-won victory for unity in Mysore being again undone.

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Temple Entry in Bombay.

THE bill sponsored by the Bombay Government to help to remove the ban against the entry of Harijans into Hindu temples deserves support, notwithstanding that it is no more than a gesture. Unlike most of the Hindu temples in Travancore which are controlled by the State, most of the temples in Bombay—and this applies generally to the whole of British India—are private foundations. This difference has limited the action possible to a government in British India. In Travancore the State was regulating the custom of its own temples; in British India the State will be interfering with private trusts.

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WHETHER every private trust should for all time be immune from State interference is a question not wholly free from controversy. The present case is a good instance in point. Should a private trust formed in the days when untouchability was the accepted system remain inviolate even when untouchability comes to be condemned by Hindu society in general? Should ancient customs which have since been admitted to be anti-social and even inhuman be perpetuated for all time for fear of interfering with private trusts? In the transvaluation of ancient values in a dynamic society, private trusts alone cannot claim static immunity.

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THE Bombay Government has not, however, taken the drastic step of throwing open Hindu temples to Harijans by legislation. The Bill under consideration provides that if the single trustee or the majority of the trustees of any Hindu temple choose to open it to Harijans his or their action should not be questioned. Under the present law, the trustees are not free

to effect a change even if public opinion on the whole favours it. The Bill is merely an enabling measure, vesting discretion in the trustees. It is for the trustees to determine if the reform is due or not, and, if satisfied, to effect it.

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IT is difficult to forecast the practical effect of this measure. It is doubtful how far the bulk of Hindus who visit temples for worship are eager to extend the right to Harijans. The trustees themselves are on the whole very conservative, and are not likely in many instances to take the initiative. The Bill throws a heavy responsibility upon the trustees to decide for or againt temple-entry.

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FORTUNATELY, the Bill gives the inititative not only to the trustees, but also to any "person having interest" in the institutions, to any person who is a worshipper in any particular temple. There are always sure to be some earnest reformers among the worshippers who are likely to take the initiative and prod the trustees to enlightened action. But the final decision will be that of the trustees.

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Bhulabhai on Federation.

IN the course of his presidential address to the Ajmer-Merwara Provincial Political Conference, Mr. Bhulabhai Desai said on the subject of federation :

> One of the main objections to the federal scheme on the part of the Congress is the formation of a Central Government, in which the nominees of the Indian Ruling Chiefs, to the extent of one-third in the Lower House, will sit and associate themselves in the task of legislation and government. Such an alliance or combination is objectionable in principle, though it is said that the idea of federation in which the Indian States will be included, is accepted. Apart from the larger issues involved, the matter might stand on quite a different footing, if the representatives coming from Indian States in some form or other are elected by the inhabitants of the States on the basis of a wide franchise.
>
> As at present intended, they would be merely the nominees of the Rulling Chiefs, whatever be the form given to their nomination. Autocratic States, where the Rulers' will is law, through the nominees cannot possibly form part of a Central Government along with the representatives of the rest of the Indian people who are elected, though indirectly, by the constituencies with a very wide franchise. It is impossible to think in terms of a constitution where the nominees of autocrats and the representatives of the people who are struggling for freedom and having very wide and open franchise can ever sit together and organise themselves into one Central Government.

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ON the question of the rumour about transferring certain villages in this area to the Indian States, Mr. Bhulabhai observed :

> I have read with considerable amount of regret that an effort is being made to transfer some of the villages now in the Province of Ajmer-Merwara to the neighbouring Indian States. The villages have become a permanent part of the Province of Ajmer-Merwara, and to surrender them back again to the tender mercies of the neighbouring Indian States of which they might have formed a part before would be reversing the process of the evolution of the political rights of the Indian people.
>
> It is too late now to rely on the general words of the treaty between the neighbouring Indian States and the British Government for the purpose of transferring the villages under the rule of the inhabitants to an autocratic rule under which they were before.

We wonder what Mr. D. V. Gundappa will have to say about it ?

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White Highlands Order-in-Council.

IN accordance with the recommendation of the Kenya Land Commission presided over by Sir Morris Carter, the Imperial Government has decided to safeguard the boundaries of "the European Highlands" by Order-in-Council. This Order-in-Council, it is said, will set up a Board of European settlers on whose advice the Governor will be entitled to exercise his right of veto on transfer by a European of any land included in the White Highlands to an Indian. The first objection to the Order-in-Council is that, as a resolution of the East African Indian National Congress recently held in Nairobi puts it, it imposes on His Majesty's Indian settlers a statutory discrimination, which is iniquitous, unjust and uncalled for. And the second objection is that the discrimination which was practised by the Governor in the interests of the whites will henceforth be practised at the avowed request of the whites, throwing off all cloak of even a vestige of impartiality.

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THE discrimination is in force even at present, though as a matter of adminstrative practice and not as a matter of law. Even to the purely administrative practice Kenya Indians have never reconciled themselves, and, what is more, the Government of India has expressly reserved to itself the right, when temporarily submitting to the Colonial Office decision in 1923, of reopening the question when a suitable opportunity would offer. Now that statutory sanction is being given to a practice which has always been objected to by Government and people alike, it is time that the Government of India took up this question. If its protest is ever to become effective, this is an occasion when it should make an attempt in that direction, and the whole Indian community in Kenya is clamouring for it.

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THE whites have been alarmed by this clamour and by the possibility of the Government of India bestirring themselves in the matter. The latest indication of this is the outburst of Lord Francis Scott, who succeeded to the leadership of Lord Delamere after the death of the latter : "We will not tolerate interference from local Indians, the Government of India or anybody else on this particular question." If for nothing else, to curb the truculence of these insolent whites, the Government of India must interest itself in the matter and press the claims of Indian settlers as much as it is within its power to do. We are relieved to find, however, that the European-edited press in India has nothing but a stern reproof to administer to Lord Francis Scott and his ilk. On the agitation against the reservation policy itself, the *Statesman* observes : "The Indian colonists have a sound case for consideration and are justified in their determination to resist the proposed Order-in-Council which will close the Highlands to them for ever and to press for a complete review of all the circumstances of their disability." The disability is all the more unjustified for the reason that "whereas Indians are barred from these particular farming districts, Germans, Italians, Bulgarians and others (all whites, non-British as well as British) may go in and take up land for farming, residential or even speculative purposes."

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A SPECIMEN of the feelings of bitterness that have been aroused by the proposed Order-in-Council and by the white agitation in the mind of the Indian

settlers is to be found in the following passage from the *Kenya Daily Mail*:

> We know that all the efforts of India or Indians are going to be fruitless, that British Government are determined to sow the seeds of future troubles in the Empire and that no warning from us or anybody else is ever going to cut any ice. There is, however, one satisfaction to us and it is that by their own actions the Britishers are providing good weapons to India to hit back when she gets the power to do so. We have no doubt that these and other such racial discriminations, which Indians are at present obliged to suffer as a result of their membership of the so-called British Commonwealth of Nations, will prove to be good and efficient weapons to hit back and to hit back hard with the strength of will-power accumulated by long years of humiliations and insults as a race and nation.

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Cochin Reforms.

AT a luncheon party given in his honour in Madras on 22nd January, Sir Shanmukham Chetty, Dewan of Cochin, gave an exposition of the terms used in the Maharaja's announcement of the reforms which had caused some confusion in the public mind. The expression which puzzled the public in particular was that the Minister for Rural Development was to advise the Dewan in the administration of the departments entrusted to his care. We have no doubt that nothing less than responsible government in these departments is intended, and we have given to the Cochin Government its meed of praise for having initiated this reform before any other State in India.

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BUT the justification offered by the Dewan for using somewhat ambiguous phraseology does not appear to us to be well-conceived. Sir Shanmukham Chetty seems to think that, under the State's relations with the British Government, even a Minister who in fact is responsible to the legislature must outwardly be represented as subordinate to the Dewan. His exact words are: "The ruler is under obligation to the paramount power and that obligation is not confined to any particular field of administration, but to the whole field of administration." Therefore, in regard to no department is the State free to confer full responsibility on a Minister, and the State must be able to show to the paramount power in regard to every department that it has reserved to itself the right of taking action independently of the legislature if such action is required under the obligations which the ruler has incurred. The Minister will in practice be left uninterfered with, but if the paramount power calls for interference the constitution ought to provide for it.

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THIS defence does not carry conviction. It is obvious that if the ruler himself enjoys limited power he can transfer only this limited power to his popular Ministers. If the ruler himself has to act under restrictions, either on account of treaty or because of the exercise of paramountcy powers, these restrictions will necessarily apply to the Ministers, whether they be official or non-official. But we deny the right of the paramount power, as Sir Shanmukham's reasoning implies, to impose a veto upon the ruler's choice of the agency through which his obligations are to be carried out, just as we deny the right of the States to impose a veto upon the British Government's choice of the agency through which its obligations to the States are to be carried out. In both cases it is maintained that the obligations rule out a popular government, which contention cannot be sustained. It ought to be possible for the ruler of a State in one case and for the British Government in the other to commit the discharge of obligations to a popular as much as an official agency. The plea, therefore, that at least an appearance of a superior authority must be preserved even while conferring real responsibility does not hold water. If this plea were valid, it is obvious that full responsibility will never be possible, for there would then be no Dewan to whom a Minister could be made even nominally subject. We know that Sir Shanmukham Chetty in fact put forward this objection himself some time ago, but we showed then how fallacious it was.

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Adjournment Motions.

THE debate on the very first day of the Central Assembly on a motion of adjournment brings into bold relief the contrast in the methods followed by that Assembly and by the Bombay Assembly in dealing with such motions. The adjournment motion moved in the Delhi Assembly on Monday last related to mechanisation of the Indian Army. The object of the mover was to criticise the Government of India's policy in that respect and censure the Government for it. If, however, the President of that Assembly had followed the procedure which is followed by the Speaker of the Bombay Assembly, he would have promptly disallowed the motion on the ground that the matter was not urgent inasmuch as there was time enough to raise a discussion on the subject by giving notice of a resolution. The Speaker of the Bombay Assembly has ruled that, however urgent a matter may be in the ordinary sense, it is not urgent in the Parliamentary sense if a resolution can be moved on the subject. He takes no account of the fact that if members have to depend every time upon the ballot favouring them before they get an opportunity to criticise the Government, non-Government parties will have to labour under a serious disadvantage, their right of criticism being unduly abridged. If a Speaker does not interpret rules and standing orders in a liberal way, there is a grave danger of minority parties being reduced to impotence, as was pointed out by Mr. Jamnadas Mehta. For the Speaker in the ordinary course of things will belong to the majority party from which the Ministry is drawn, and if he, instead of giving facilities for criticism to the members of the minority parties, by his rulings restricts such facilities as much as he can within the rules he will be regarded as having failed in an impartial discharge of his duties.

LET ILL ALONE.

I.

IN view of the yet another attempt that is being made to solve the Hindu-Muslim problem, it is worthwhile to examine whether the situation as it exists today and the proposed method of approach offer any better prospects of success than previous attempts, or whether it is best to leave ill alone, lest worse befall.

The consent of three parties is necessary to bring about any change in the Communal Award: the British, the Muslims and the Hindus—provided the change proposed does not affect any other community

mentioned in the Award. There is no reason to suppose that the British Government has in the least changed its attitude. Having exploited and accentuated the religious differences between the two communities for its own imperial purposes; having, in the name of promoting democracy, divided the two communities into two water-tight compartments for political purposes; having given weightage and other privileges to Muslims; having further agreed that separate electorates and privileges would not be modified without the consent of the Muslims; having penalised the nationalists among the Muslims by prohibiting them from voting in common electorates; having left no constitutional avenue for nationalism to prevail over separatism; having, in the first instance, divided the two communities and having closed every possible avenue for agreement between them; and having further thwarted every effort, however desperate, of the two communities to reach an agreement, the British Government blandly said that if the two communities came to an agreement, it would endorse it! Notwithstanding all hypocritical pretensions to the contrary, the British Government is mainly responsible for the communal issue; it is largely its creation and the Communal Award is its imposition. It could solve the problem if it would, but it wouldn't.

Even if the contemplated effort should result in an agreement between the leaders of the two communities, the British Government must be satisfied about the credentials of the leaders to represent and bind the two communities. It accepted the representative character of the members of the Round Table Conference simply because it selected them. In fact, it gave a representative status to some of the delegates which they never had among the communities to which they belonged. The Poona Pact stands by itself. The representative character of the leaders who signed the Pact or the wisdom of the Pact was not questioned at the time due to the special and unique sanction behind it: the Mahatma's fast. It cannot be a precedent.

The central fact is that the final decision regarding any solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem rests with the British Government, and the British Government is certainly not keen on a solution of the problem. It will not even remain neutral, least of all benevolently neutral: it will thwart any and every effort at a settlement. It has both the will and the power to do so.

II.

Apart from the intervention of the British Government, what are the chances of an agreement between the Hindus and the Muslims? An agreement is possible only if the Muslims abandon their anti-national separatism and surrender their weightages and other communal privileges, or if the Hindus concede more communal privileges to the Muslims and pay a higher price than the British Government has paid or will pay. In order to secure the consent of the Muslim leaders to joint electorates, if the Hindus made more communal concessions to the Muslims, every one of them will be of an anti-democratic character and, once conceded, can never be recalled. Every privilege, once granted, stays.

The Hindus, particularly of Bengal, have already a serious, genuine and legitimate grievance against the Communal Award. If any further concessions are made to the Muslims, they will only further aggravate the grievances of the Hindus. On the part of the Hindu or the nationalistic leaders there is no disposition to make further undemocratic concessions to the Muslims in order to persuade the latter to accept joint electorates. One move towards democracy will be accompanied by several in the contrary direction.

Granting for the sake of argument that the Hindus and the nationalists consented to make further communal concessions to persuade the Muslims to accept common electorates, there is no certainty that the British Government will not forestall the agreement by anticipating the communal concessions without, however, securing common electorates. In the event, the communal concessions will remain but no common electorates.

III.

The other alternative to bring about Hindu-Muslim agreement is for the Muslims themselves to offer to abandon separate electorates and surrender in whole or part their special privileges already conceded by the British Government. There is no reason to believe that, at any rate among the leaders of the Muslim League, there is any disposition at present to abandon communalism for nationalism. The success of the Congress-Muslim candidate at the Bijnor election in the U. P. some months ago was interpreted by some optimistic nationalists that the bulk of the Muslim voters favoured the Congress and, by implication, joint electorates; that the Muslim League leaders had a diminishing following among the Muslim voters; and that, therefore, they would be in a more chastened mood and adopt a more nationalistic attitude. But the successes of the Muslim League candidates at three later elections in the U. P. has dispelled that anticipation.

The temper of the Muslim League leaders is more clearly brought out in the recent walk-out of the Muslim Leaguers in the Bombay Legislature. It will be recalled that, far from abolishing separate electorates for Muslims in district local boards as they might well have done, the Bombay Congress Government retained the separate electorates for Muslims, but provided that an opportunity should be afforded to the Muslims of a constituency to choose between separate and joint electorates. Even to this the Muslim Leaguers were opposed, and they carried their opposition so far as to stage a walk-out.

There is thus no visible change in the attitude of the British Government or the leaders of the Muslims or Hindus or the Congress to warrant the hope that an agreement may be reached. As before, the contemplated attempt to reach an agreement, particularly without the goodwill of the British Government,

will, we fear, leave the situation worse than it is. However regretable and humiliating it may be, there is something to be said for leaving the present deplorable situation alone for some time. It is only when the Muslims develop the national sentiment to greater proportions, and that too in spite of everything against such development, that there is some hope of an agreement being reached.

MYSORE AND FEDERATION.

MR. D. V. GUNDAPPA'S is certainly not a one-track mind. Till now he opposed vociferously the federal scheme in the new constitution, but now that he finds it inescapable he is not content to work it in a spirit of philosophical resignation which he commands in ample measure—if he were to do so he would come in conflict only with those never-say-die people who would not give up a struggle till they actually die or come out in flying colours—but insists upon finding good points in the scheme. And, in spite of its innumerable anomalies and illogicalities, the capital virtue that he has now discovered in this federal scheme is that it is a federal scheme, a scheme of some sort of federation which will bring Indian States into a constitutional relationship with British India. This merit of the scheme appears to him, while his mind is following the second track, to outweigh all the blemishes which he pointed out before, and he appeals to British India, which even he will, we think, admit has everything to lose by this association, to agree to federation and thus bring the States into the vortex of a larger political life, without recking what the terms of the federation are to be.

Let us take a hypothetical case to test Mr. Gundappa's faith in a federation even if it be full of imperfections. Suppose Mysore, not the present Mysore, but an imaginary Mysore, which is a popularly governed State, manages at present not merely all matters of local concern, but also all other matters which are of common interest to itself and a dozen neighbouring States which are autocractically governed. Let us call these States the Hyderabad Agency. If the Hyderabad Agency offers to federate with Mysore on condition that the Agency's internal sovereignty will remain intact, that it will give up to the federation only those subjects over which Mysore exercises control at present, that the rulers of the States in the Hyderabad Agency will be allowed to send their nominees to sit in the federal legislature, that the federation will be in the nature of a treaty, and that any change in it will require the consent not only of Mysore but of each of the dozen States in the Agency, what will be the reaction of such a proposal on Mr. Gundappa, supposing he belongs to Mysore? Will he be inclined to say in these circumstances: "It is true that these terms are totally disadvantageous to Mysore; it is also true (as he himself says in advocating acceptance of the present federal scheme) that 'autocratic and democratic States cannot make harmonious co-tenants under the same roof;' but nevertheless let us have this federation, for anything is better than living apart?" Or will he say: "Federation will really achieve nothing here; the uniformity of administration that is desired already exists, and I cannot consent for no gain whatever to have such democracy as my State enjoys to be neutralised by the autocracy of the adjoining States. Let these States reform themselves, and then my doors will be unlocked?" We are not sure that Mr. Gundappa will not have Mysore take the latter view.

And if the Hyderabad Agency were to say to him: "Don't take such a selfish view of the matter. Perhaps Mysore will not gain by the arrangement; it may even lose. But for the sake of raising our level, you should consent to come down a peg or two, even as caste-people agree to admit untouchable children into their schools, in order to uplift the latter," Mr. Gundappa would (we guess) reply: "I am prepared to make any sacrifice for the people of the Agency States, but none for the rulers; and the federation will be of advantage to the people only if the door of election is opened to them. The essential condition that I lay down, therefore, is such that the people themselves would like. How is it of any advantage to the Agency people that matters of national concern should be administered by Mysore people and the Agency rulers together than by the former alone? And if the Mysore people manage them, the pressure on the Agency State rulers for federating on democratic lines would be so great that they would be compelled in a short time to constitutionalise their own States and thus let their people participate in the federation. Thus for the present it is necessary, not only in the interest of Mysore but of the people of the Hyderabad Agency, that Mysore should refuse to federate with autocratic rulers. The progressive Mysore had better exercise a veto now rather than let the backward Agency States exercise a veto, singly and collectively, later, on all advance on democratic lines."

We have put the case both for British India and the States as we think Mr. Gundappa will see it. And is Mr. Gundappa himself so utterly devoted to the principle of federation that he would be unconcerned as to what sacrifices the carrying out of the principle might entail? It does not so appear from the speech which he made in the Mysore Legislative Council on his resolution on federation on 26th January. For, although he called for no end of concessions on the part of British India in order to make an all-India federation a reality, he was clear that, in so far as Mysore State's accession to federation was concerned, the retrocession of the civil and military station of Bangalore and the complete abolition of the subsidy which the State pays to the paramount power "are an unavoidable preliminary to our considering the subject of federation." So even Mr. Gundappa insists upon his irreducible minimum. These two things are necessary, in his opinion, not only for Mysore's acceding to federation, but even for her taking the question into her serious consideration.

And is either of these things of any considerable importance? Take the question of subsidy. It is but a matter of Rs. 24½ lakhs, when the State's revenue is Rs. 337 lakhs or 7 per cent. Financially, it is not a big proposition. Indeed, Sir Mirza Ismail said repeatedly at the Round Table Conference that it was not so much a financial loss that weighed with Mysore in putting forward the demand as the lower status that the paying of the subsidy connoted. It is with Mysore just a matter of izzat, a question of improving her rank. And Mr. Gundappa, with all his exuberant enthusiasm for federation, is not willing to say: "The subsidy of course ought to go; but we need not talk about it now; we may be sure that the federation, when it comes into existence, will do the right thing by us. We must not set an evil example to other States by erecting each one its petty grievances into formidable difficulties in the way of those to whom it has been given to see the great vision of a common government for the whole of India and to labour for its fruition. What is this trumpery thing of a subsidy by the side of FEDERATION?" No. Mr. Gundappa makes abolition of the subsidy a condition precedent to Mysore's entry into federation. He was fully justified in bemoaning the fact of each particular section and each separate interest, in its negotiations about federation, setting up its special claims as against the claims of the rest of India; only he forgot, when he was expansive on the virtues of federation, that he himself was about the worst culprit in taking an exceedingly parochial view of the matter.

The retrocession of the Bangalore station too is not free from difficulty. If the people of the station object to being transferred to the Mysore Government, will Mr. Gundappa, the democrat that he is, pay no heed to their objection? The Mysore Government may have a good legal case, but do not ethical considerations count here? It is a question of the retrocession of Berar to the Nizam on a small scale. The Government of Bombay in fact found it impossible to transfer to Bhor State the political jurisdiction over a few villages which they took from the State in exchange for certain villages submerged in the Lloyd Dam on account of the objections which the people raised. Would Mr. Gundappa have the British Government force the people in the Bangalore station back under Mysore? But we are not now discussing the merits of the question. Our immediate purpose is to show that Mr. Gundappa would have Mysore hang back from federation if a tiny little spot were not added to her domain. Urging British India to make every sacrifice to the Princes that they may demand, he however shrinks from a certain sacrifice, if it became necessary, on the part of Mysore.

If Mr. Gundappa cares so much for abolition of the subsidy and retrocession of Bangalore station that he would like Mysore State to stand out of federation if she did not get her pound of flesh, are British Indians wholly wrong in saying that British India should not agree to federation with States which will not adopt democratic practices at least in federal matters? Are the two matters that he mentions of greater moment to Mr. Gundappa than democracy? British Indians realise that Cochin and Travancore will send the bulk, and Mysore a proportion, of their representatives to the federal legislature by a process of election. Even with regard to these States, however, they would like to come to a definite arrangement on the matter rather than leave the whole thing to the discretion of the State Governments. And, with regard to other States given to autocracy, they would insist that a gentleman's agreement should be arrived at, that in the beginning a proportion of the representation should be elective, the process to be completed within a short period. Is this at all an unreasonable attitude?

Without any such understanding the Princes' nominees may even be officials. Is Mr. Gundappa indifferent to this? Even the Committee to be appointed by the Mysore Government for exploring problems in connection with federation ought, Mr. Gundappa thinks, to be "predominantly non-official." The Committee is to have no powers whatever, and where mere exploration is concerned one non-official is as good as ten. The relative proportions of officials and non-officials do not matter, but even here Mr. Gundappa is uncompromising. He does not say that officials have the interests of the States as much at heart as non-officials, and that therefore even a purely official committee will do. He is not content even to ask that a non-official may be included to represent the people's point of view if it should differ from the Government's. He wants the Committee to be predominantly non-official. If even in the case of a temporary and a purely advisory body his insistence upon an overwhelmingly large non-official majority is justified, is British Indians' insistence, in the case of a permanent legislature with full power of taking final decisions, upon the exclusion of officials and adoption of election wholly without justification? His complaint against British India's hostility to federation will be justified only if he thinks that a little addition to Mysore's dignity and territory are of greater consequence than British India's aspiration for democracy. We should be very much surprised if he thought so.

COMPULSORY GIFTS.

IN discussing the Vidya Mandir Scheme in the SERVANT OF INDIA of 20th January last, we presumed that the essence of the Scheme was that primary education should be financed by *voluntary gifts*, primarily of land. Its voluntary character was referred to more than once in the Schema. For instance, it was said that "it (Vidya Mandir) shall be established on a voluntary basis first, and, if proved

successful, it would become a statutory obligation on each village or group of villages to have a Vidya Mandir." In fact, the genesis of the Scheme was the presumption that Government could not raise by taxation the sum of money required for universal education and that, therefore, private charity should shoulder the responsibility. The Scheme proceeded on the basis that if voluntary resources were fully availed of, Vidya Mandirs would have sufficient endowments to run them. It was only when, as a result of famine or scarcity, voluntary endowments failed to support the institutions that Government assistance was to be invoked.

Compulsion was contemplated only when, as quoted above, the voluntary character of the Scheme proved successful. And we enquired what the occasion was for compulsion if voluntary action was successful. The concluding paragraph of the Scheme, however, seemed to contemplate a different course. That paragraph contained a fervent appeal for co-operation to make the Scheme a success and held out the hope that "nothing can then prevent the free and compulsory education of all boys and girls within a fixed period." But this appeal was immediately followed by a threat. "If the proprietors of mahals and estates really desire their own prosperity and the prosperity of their children and children's children, they should *generously come forward and make a voluntary offer of the required land before the law makes it obligatory for them to do so.*" (Italics ours).

This completely alters our earlier appreciation of the Scheme. Instead of compulsion being introduced only when the Scheme succeeds on a voluntary basis (which was somewhat mystic), it is to be used only if the voluntary basis fails. This is certainly more logical, if nonetheless more objectionable. It amounts to this: give it or I take it. A voluntary gift under this kind of threat is hardly voluntary. It is just an exaction, with the proviso that the victim may freely give what in any event will be taken from him. To call such a scheme voluntary is the limit of naivety.

It is not without precedent though. It will be recalled that the Joint Select Committee, presided over by Lord Linlithgow, discussed the method of securing British interests in India from adverse discrimination. After extolling the virtues of a voluntary convention between India and England based on goodwill, they nevertheless proposed to secure them by statutory enactment, but went on to suggest that if and when India wished to offer the same rights by convention, the statute should be suspended, but only so long as the convention lasted. If ever India should seek to denounce the convention and diminish British rights, the statute would again pop up and secure the rights. The Committee said:

> It may be said that the practical result will be exactly the same, and this is no doubt true; but the merit of the proposal, as we see it, is that it would enable the Indian Government and Legislature, if they so desire, to substitute a voluntary agreement for a statutory enactment, and would, therefore, give to the agreements for the reciprocal protection of British subjects in India and the United Kingdom respectively the conventional basis which in our judgment it is most desirable that they should have.

The Vidya Mandir Scheme seems to be on a par with this recommendation.

As we said on the last occasion, the problem of universal, free and compulsory education is not likely to be solved by voluntary gifts of land and by private charity. In so far as the Scheme contemplates compulsion, it further discourages voluntary action. And if the Scheme seriously contemplates compulsion, its sponsors would have done better to elaborate and publish the compulsory part of their Scheme. It is essential to know how they propose to secure, by compulsion, adequate land, grants. Will the burden of making gifts of land fall on people according to their capacity to spare them, or will the largest single landowner be asked to surrender some twenty-five acres of land, without compensation? Will it be a tax, though in land, but still based on taxation principles, or just exactions from certain selected individuals?

The sponsors of the Scheme were optimistic enough to state that the success of the Scheme would be amply demonstrated even at the end of the first year and that all the boys and girls of school-going age would receive free and compulsory education within a "fixed" period. They have not stated how they propose to test the success of the Scheme and what the 'fixed' period was. We fear, however, that private charity, however much it is stimulated by the Congress Ministers, will not solve the problem of universal education within any conceivable period. We fear, too, that much precious time and opportunity will be lost while the possibilities of private charity are being explored and exploited, only to end in disappointment. The Provincial Governments will do better to face up to the inescapable fact that universal primary education can be financed *only by taxation.* They will be better utilising their time and opportunities in exploring methods of taxation. Instead of appealing to private charity, the Ministers will do better to secure popular support to their taxation proposals. He is no friend of universal primary education who depends on private charity to finance it.

PRESS COMMENT ON THE LOTHIAN STATEMENT.

THERE is hardly an Indian newspaper but has made a severe and withal a courteous comment on Lord Lothian's statement on federation, and it is well to put it on record here. But before we do so, we would give a brief extract from the views expressed by Babu Subhash Chandra Bose, the President-elect of the Congress, in London, not on the statement, but on federation in general. The *Manchester Guardian* reports him as saying:

> We are opposed to federation; we will fight it tooth and nail. We are going to use every legislative means to oppose its introduction. Federation as it is now drawn up would be a setback. We think the Princes of the Native States would be a definitely reactionary force. In the last resort we would rather have the *status quo* than federation.

The Madras *Guardian*, the organ of Indian Christians, writes:

In such a mood of resentment, the aim of the Princes is to exact the full measure of sovereignty, which within the federation amounts to control of affairs in the legislature, the Federal Ministry and the administrative posts. The control would bring into affairs not only a narrow-minded guardianship of the rights of States but a bureaucratic temper bred in the States to invade the affairs of British India wherefrom it was exercised after many years of struggle. In none of the negotiations has there been evidence of concern for anything beyond their sovereignty. The concern for greater liberties for the citizens of States or of British India is conspicuously absent. Evidence is far greater that, no matter what the future of the federation and of India may be, the hereditary rights of Princes, including within them the sovereignty of the States, are demanded as inviolable. To talk of internal sovereignty of a State in a federal scheme is jugglery, but the Princes have been fed on the delusion that they need of their own volition surrender only such and so much of the rights as they are pleased to. It is in keeping with that delusion and for the safeguarding of those impossible rights that the States would expect their representatives in the federal legislature and Ministry to act—with what results may be imagined.

The foregoing contention would explain what Indian opinion means by the rigidity of the constitution, while Lord Lothian and his colleagues of Parliament think otherwise. The Instrument of Accession would lay down the very utmost that it is possible for the Princes to concede at any time to federal rights consistent with the doctrine of internal sovereignty. The Instrument does not depend upon the changeable rights and status of the people of the States. It is a *treaty* based upon the unchangeable rights of the Princes regardless of the vicissitudes of a growing democracy, the treaty further being made with a third party as guarantor of its inviolability. The treaty being made on the basis of maximum concession, it is a false hope to hold out that later amendments to the constitution conferring greater rights upon the people of India can be made with the consent of the Princes. The list of protected rights in the Act which cannot be altered without the consent of—not of the majority of Princes—but of all Princes, covers all the major subjects. Any single change would mean so much diminution of sovereignty as to make sovereignty meaningless. The Princes are keenly alive to this danger and have made no secret of their ideas in discussing the Instrument of Accession, which they would make a sacred writ against possible changes in the future. The alternative is for the British Government to coerce the States into consent for changes to avoid the greater danger of trouble from British India. The SERVANT OF INDIA of January 20 has, after a searching analysis of the statements made in Parliament and before the Joint Select Committee, concludes that the Princes are being left in the dubious position of being assured of inviolable sovereignty on the one hand and secret projects of coercion on the other, Under such conditions, British India cannot follow the facile hope of Lord Lothian.

As mere supplicants at present, the Princes have been able to secure restriction of the powers of paramountcy and of the Government of India. In the federation they will occupy a position of authority over the destinies of the country and will have able allies, for their conservative and reactionary temper, in groups of vested interests, Statesmanship conspicuously absent in their own territories will not blossom forth in the larger field. On the other hand, past traditions as hereditary rulers will be recalled and talk of constitutional monarchy will revive to conceal the longing for uncontrolled power. The powers of adaptation of the so-called progressive States are exaggerated.

Lord Lothian declares emphatically that the British statesmen and Parliament are too preoccupied to reopen the question of the federal scheme. That is clear even otherwise, for the Viceroy is busy persuading the Princes by means of additional concessions to enter the federation. Hence the course of future development is clear. Either the Federal Government will function through vested interests as in the days of Provincial Dyarchy or if the Congress is able to mobilise British India for a fight it will turn out to be more bitter than any political turmoil of the past. The naked fact is that statesmanship of the past Government of India and of the framers of the new Act has failed to solve the relationship between the States and British India. It will end only by a trial of strength.

The *Searchlight*, of Patna, observes :

> There has never been an objection to the ideal of a federal state for India. It has been repeatedly made clear that the opposition of the Indian people and of the Indian National Congress was not to a federation as such. The opposition has been to the kind of federation which the new constitution proposes to set up. If, as Lord Lothian stated, a League of Soverign States was no remedy for Europe's discord, a federation in which the representatives of irresponsible individuals, though they may be Princes, sitting side by side with the representatives of popular provincial Governments, could offer no solutiou for India's problems either. For the federation to be real and effective, its authority must extend in equal measure to all its component units and, above all, the authority of the people must be supreme in all of them. India may not have a federation which is on all fours with the existing federations in the world. It may find it more to its benefit to develop a type of Federal Government peculiar in itself. But the one essential element must be there and that is the equal surrender of power by the various units and the equal authority of the Federal Centre over them. Autocracy and democracy cannot flourish together. This is not an ordinary defect which may be remedied with experience of actual working. This strikes at the very root of the federal principle itself.

The *Indian Nation*, a spokesman of Bihar landlords, says:

> They (the Princes) do not want to put themselves under the control of the Federal Government, but they are anxious to secure the benefits procurable by the establishment of a common government for the provinces and the States. They do not accede to the principle of allowing their subjects the right to select the States' representatives to the federal legislature, but they want to keep those representatives under their personal grip by claiming the right to nominate them and thus reduce them to the position of being dependent upon their pleasure. They can, according to Sectionn 6 of the Government of India Act, exercise a *liberum veto* over any further constitutional advance by declaring that any amendment of the Act in the direction of extending the scope of responsibility in the federal sphere will militate against their internal sovereignty and against the provisions of their Instruments of Accession. They will be the real balancing and, therefore, the deciding factor in the federal Government; and the so-called responsible Ministry that Lord Lothian visualises will, in actual practice, find themselves responsible for the execution of policies which they may have only an insignificant part in formulating. The logical sequel to the acceptance of federation by British India will be to reduce her to the position of a hanger-on to the coat-tails of the States. The apprehension in the Congress circles is substantially justified that, if once we accept the federal scheme, the latter, instead of being worked by us as we desire, will work us out in the end.
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> He (Lord Lothian) obviously recognises British Indian opposition to federation, but still he exhorts the provinces to enter gleefully into a partnership—which will be indissoluble only, if at all, when the States want it—with the autocratic States.
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> Nevertheless a solution must be found for the situation which recongises the justice in that opposition and which does not hamper British Indian progress but which at the same time does not sabotage altogether the ideal of an

all-India federation. Such a solution is to be found in the suggestion that a federation of British Indian provinces only should at first be established. The door should be left open for the eventual entry of the Indian States into it as and when they choose, but only on their fulfilling the fundamental requisites of ensuring to their subjects the privilege of electing their representatives and of introducing the democratic principle in their administration. What is being suggested here is not indeed a new proposal, as it had already been canvassed at the sessions of the Round Table Conference and in the Joint Select Committee's deliberations. It has the principal merit of keeping in view the federal ideal while not burdening the provinces with a partner from the very beginning who does not come up to their level. The forcible inauguration of a federation such as that embodied in the Act is bound to be the most fruitful source of friction between the two sides instead of being a source of national unity and strength. If on the other hand the States really realise the utility of a federation to them, the manner in which a federation of the British Indian provinces functions will afford them the most powerful incentive to come in sooner than later into it. The impact of liberal ideas will be more forcefully felt in such circumstances, and reforms in the States which may take decades to fructify in the present circumstances will in that contingency fructify perhaps in as many years. When this change has come over the States, British Indian apprehensions, its opposition and its suspicions will also become mellowed and assuaged, and the path will be smoothened for an ideal partnership between the two parties and for plain sailing to federation. Altogether the suggestion adumbrated deserves the careful attention of and calm consideration at the hands of every section of our countrymen. It is particulary encouraging to note that the Hon. Mr. Rajagopalachariar has given notice of a resolution on federation to be moved in the Madras Assembly which, when analysed, will be found to embody more or less an identical view to that which we mentioned. And we are sure too that an arrangement like this will be acceptable to the Congress and to the Muslim League alike.

The *Tribune*, commenting upon Lord Lothian's observation that the States will in course of time popularise their administrations, writes :

> All this may be and, as we ourselves firmly believe, is perfectly true. But the sole question here is whether the proposed federation is likely to help forward or to hinder this otherwise inevitable transformation? Is it better for the purpose of this transformation that the States should have as their immediate neighbour a strong federal India confined for the present only to the provinces but with full provision for the accession to it of democratically governed States, or that they should themselves form part of a so-called all-India federation operating more as a check on than as a help to the growth of democracy?
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> As parts of such a federation the States will not only not brook any interference with their autonomy on its part but will inevitably claim effective protection from it in case there is a strong political upheaval among their own subjects. They could put forward no such claim in the other case and would be compelled by the force of circumstances and the nearness of a strong democratic government to concede the advantage of such government to their own people. This would be all the more so, because, as admitted by Lord Lothian himself, "paramountcy cannot be interpreted to mean that Great Britain has the duty of supporting the ruler in denying to his own subjects the very rights which have been established by the authority of the British Parliament throughout British India." Not having the support of either the Paramount Power or of the federation of India, what choice would be left to a ruler confronted by a strong though perfectly peaceful, freedom movement among his people except to establish constitutional government in the State? And the moment such a government was established in the State the way would be opened for its admission to the federation of India. We repeat that this would be infinitely better than that the provinces of India should by entering into a federal compact with the Princes give a new lease of life to princely autocracy and hinder the growth of democracy in their own territories.
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> One statement made by Lord Lothian in this connection is perfectly astounding. The Princes, he says, have no effective veto on the development of the constitution. We need not go beyond the very important statement made by Sir Samuel Hoare in the House of Commons on February 27, 1935, to see how far this is from being the case. "Can we make alterations in any part of the Bill," he says, "without impinging upon the Princes' Instrument of Accession? If we cannot make alterations, are we not setting up an excessively rigid state of affairs, particularly for British India? That is the dilemma." The only solution of this dilemma recommended by the Joint Committee and adopted in the Act is to put into the second schedule the provisions of the Act that affect exclusively British India and that can be amended without affecting the accession of the States. The list is undoubtedly formidable, as Sir Samuel said, but it does not contain the one thing needful. It does not include the mutual relation of India and Britain and leaves entirely unaffected the question of India's Dominion Status. Not only that. The schedule expressly excludes the reserve and special powers of the Governor-General. As a matter of fact the veto not only of the Princes as a body but of each individual Prince on the development of the constitution is as effective as it was in the power of Parliament to make it.

In regard to Lord Lothian's rather obvious game of winning Congress support for federation by persuading Congressmen that they would rule the roost, the *Tribune* observes that, on account of the method of proportional representation to be followed in the election of the representatives to the Federal Assembly by the provincial Assemblies, Congressmen are "not likely to capture more than 105 seats out of a total of 250 seats even in the British Indian part of the Federal Assembly." "In what way, then," it asks, "can they hope to secure the leading place in the Ministry, if all or most of the remaining members will combine among themselves, even if we leave out of account the princely *bloc*? And what will they do with their leading place in the Cabinet, even assuming that they will get it, if they are forced by the constitution to accept as colleagues men with whom they do not and cannot agree?"

Indian Affairs of Calcutta, noting that Lord Lothian is hopeful that as the movement for constitutional government in the Indian States is growing, the main objection to the federal constitution will disappear when it will reach fruition, says :

> If all this is inevitable, the Congress might well ask: Should it not be possible to recognise it explicitly and accord statutory sanction to the basic idea of a modern federation, viz., a common federal citizenship with its own inviolable rights? It is, indeed, asking too much of British India to believe that the personal authority of the Princes will not be cast on the side of reaction, whether it be led by the Viceroy or by a British Indian politician. There can be some chance of such power being cast, as Lord Lothian has put it, for good administration, only when the governance of the States is less personal and when it is suffused with the democratic spirit which only responsible government can create.

Lord Lothian is equally hopeful that, with the introduction of responsibility in the Central Government, transference of further power and responsibility will

be inevitable. But *Indian Affairs* on this point asks the pertinent question: "Does the change in the direction of complete popular control of public affairs flow from any property of our form of responsible government, or does it rest on the goodwill of the powers that be?" To this Lord Lothian's reply will probably be: If it rests upon the good will of Britishers it will be forthcoming. Assuming that this is his reply, our contemporary remarks:

> If this reading is correct, there should be a readiness on the part of the British Government, despite its preoccupations with international politics, to meet some of the more important objections and hasten the inauguration of the federation with the full co-operation of the Congress. If the weightage of the Indian States is a stumbling block, it ought to be possible, as a condition precedent to federation, to get each federating State to recognise, however informally, its obligation to popularise its government and to accord a share of its representation in the federal legislature to its own peoples. Likewise, an understanding could be arrived at in regard to the federal Government similar to what is now in force in the provinces between the Ministers and the Governors..... But the fluidity of the constitution, on which Lord Lothian lays so much stress would be purely fictitious, unless the discords in the constitution are eliminated, and British India, the Princes and the Viceroy are enabled to function as a composite unit of government.

Review.

INDIAN POLITICS.

INDIAN POLITICS SINCE THE MUTINY. By C. Y. CHINTAMANI. (Registrar, Andhra University, Waltair.) 1937. 23cm. 179p. Rs. 2.

FEW are more competent than Mr. Chintamani among British Indian politicians to tell the story of the political history of India during the last seventy years. He knew personally most of the leading figures who shaped the politics of India during the period under survey, and he had the inestimable advantage of enjoying the confidence of several of them; he was in the "inner circles". Added to it, he has a phenomenal mind that misses little and an even more phenomenal memory that forgets nothing.

And Mr. Chintamani has used to good purpose the invitation of the Andhra University to lecture on the development of Indian politics since the Mutiny. The lectures have since been published largely in the form they were delivered. So much has been crowded in the last seven decades of Indian history that it is almost inevitable that a review of the whole period in so short a space must necessarily be somewhat sketchy and uneven. And a narrative of the kind shares both the strength and weakness of the personal point of view. Mr. Chintamani has been himself a vigorous politician who asked for no quarter and gave none.

Among the most conspicuous omissions in the book are references to Mr. Chitamani himself and his paper, the *Leader* of Allahabad. When the *Leader* is mentioned at all, it is only to say that it was founded by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya.

While the lectures of this kind are useful in their way, the need is great for full-sized biographies and autobiographies of the leading publicists of India since the Mutiny. There are not many left who knew the earlier decades, and it is a duty they owe to themselves and to posterity that they should set down their experiences and reflections betimes.

P. K. R.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

THE MATHEMATICAL PROBLEM OF THE PRICE INDEX. By J. K. MONTGOMERY. (King.) 1937. 20cm. 74p. 6/-

THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION AND ADMINISTRATION OF INDIA. By BAL KRISHNA. (Arya Book Depot, Kolhapur.) 1937. 20cm. 256p.

TO BECOME OR NOT TO BECOME, THAT IS THE QUESTION: EPISODES IN THE HISTORY OF AN INDIAN WORLD. By Mrs. RHYS DAVIDS. (Luzac.) 1937. 20cm. 164p. 1/9.

Printed and Published by Mr. Anant Vinayak Patvardhan at the Aryabhushan Press, House No. 915/1 Bhamburda Peth, Poona City, and edited at the "Servant of India" Office, Servants of India Society's Home, Bhamburda, Poona City, by Mr. S. G. Vaze.