

# THE Servant of India

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## TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

THE enemy has made no headway during the week on the line of advance towards the Channel ports. Thus there is another lull in this important part of the war theatre. In the middle East the Germans are having everything their own way. They have already established a sort of dictatorship in the Ukraine and have practically commandeered all the supplies. Now it appears to be the turn of Roumania. The latest news is that important portions of her territory have been taken away from her by Bulgaria and Austria and she has been cut off from the Black Sea as the Central Powers have appropriated the bulk of the Dobrudja.

BUT the proceedings in the House of Commons would have thrown into the shade the most stirring news from the war fronts. The episode of the Maurice letter is now common property and is not likely to be soon forgotten. It reveals rather a grave situation in the higher army circles, when a General of the status of General Maurice tries to ventilate his own grievances under the guise of public interest. It is even more disquieting still that at least for some time the fate of the Ministry was hanging in the balance. A committee of the House of Commons to inquire into the question of the accuracy of ministerial statements can only be regarded as tantamount to the old process of impeachment, and no Ministry that cared for its reputation would have continued in office a moment longer than absolutely necessary if the motion for such a committee had been passed by the the House. The voting in the House was decisive and it is a great relief to see the Ministry continue

in power. But as the Premier observed, " these controversies are distracting and paralysing," and are not calculated to maintain that feeling of confidence without which a vigorous prosecution of the war is not possible. This is not the first time that an attempt has been made to defeat the Government. Although Lord Hugh Cecil's reading of the situation that ' only fear of Mr. Asquith's return kept the Government in power ' may not be correct, the force and the frequency of the attacks on the ministers do not fail to create a feeling of uneasiness on more grounds than one.

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THE resolution passed by the Bijapur Conference on abuses in connection with recruiting in the Bombay Presidency, especially in Sholapur district, should serve as a grave warning to Government. Several speakers, some of them officially associated with recruiting boards, brought to the notice of the Conference specific instances of the use of violence and oppression by officials in charge of recruiting. It would appear that some of the men who complained of being forcibly led to the recruiting depot, have been released on having appealed to the higher authorities, which shows that the latter are not unaware of the grievances of people in this respect. This makes it the more surprising that Lord Willingdon's Government should not have taken immediate steps to remove all causes of legitimate complaint. What the Viceroy and Sir William Meyer said with reference to the war loan is even more true of recruiting. " Compulsion almost certainly does us more harm than good in the long run." But the lower officials take a narrow view of their duties and work mischief. If they were inspired by a sense of scrupulous regard for the feelings of people, which the Viceroy has enjoined upon them, no mamlatdar would put away the complaints of a member of a recruiting board as calculated to discourage recruiting, and no Collector would refuse permission to a gentleman of the Hon'ble Mr. Sathe's standing to inspect recruits in the absence of officials, as seems to have been done. Nothing is more likely to harm recruiting than this attitude of officials, which is entirely out of accord with the spirit of the Delhi resolutions. The panic raised by the stories of kidnapping has created a cessation of trade and a scarcity of labour in Sholapur, and entails serious inconveniences on the public. This state of things must be set to rights promptly and effectually.

EXPRESSION was given to a similar complaint in a resolution at the Madras Provincial Conference. It pointed out that some of the present methods of recruitment were highly unsatisfactory, being practically an illegitimate method of conscription in which no self-respecting Indian would take part. This shows that the feeling is wide-spread that the lower grade officials resort to methods open to serious objection. Government must therefore issue strict orders not to give ground to any such complaints or fears, in future. Since conscription has been rejected, let the voluntary system be given a fair trial. Let earnest efforts be put forth to organise local militia and to inspire young men to undertake the defence of their country. But attempts to enforce compulsion under the guise of voluntarism must be sternly put down.

AMONG the resolutions passed by the Bombay Provincial Conference two deserve to be specially noted, namely, those regarding votes for women and Native States. The former, moved by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, recorded the opinion of the Conference that the franchise should be given to women at the same time as to men under suitable conditions; and the latter that time had arrived when rulers of Native States in the presidency should follow the example of modern Governments and give their subjects political constitutions guaranteeing to them progressive responsible government and institute immediately elected legislative councils as a first step. The Conference has broken new ground in these two resolutions, which no doubt express unanimity of public feeling in the matter.

ANOTHER resolution passed by the Conference called upon all political bodies to carry on educative and propagandist work throughout the year. The need for such work is brought home also in a different sense to that intended by the Bijapur Conference. The *Indian Social Reformer* observes that there is "urgent need for sound political instruction to the people where they are awakening to a sense of their power." It says, "Unless simultaneously they are educated to a due sense of their responsibilities, the result must be harmful. We are sorry that we should have to say that this aspect of the situation is very imperfectly realised by some who enjoy much popularity at present. . . . This was painfully evident in some of the speeches made on the resolution about organising the manpower and resources of India in view of the present military and international situation. The wording of the resolution itself does not imply that view, but some of the speakers spoke as if it was doing a favour to the Government of India to adopt measures to ensure that the people of this country shall be in a position to face any contingency rendered possible by the present military and international position."

IN the Madras Provincial Conference, however,

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and Mrs. Besant expressed themselves strongly against this view. It is best to transcribe here the inspiring words of these two leaders in this connection. Said Mrs. Sarojini Naidu in her presidential address:—"There are those amongst us who say: Don't accept, don't respond; make conditions, let England suffer, let the Allies be crushed in the contest. This is the hour when we shall make conditions, and the hour of peril shall be our way to victory. There are others again who say: No, let us forget our domestic questions; let us forget our grievances; let us assume for the moment that we are not slaves; and let us not make conditions. Shall we, who hold such noble traditions of martial valour, of secular learning, of spiritual power, be content either to withhold our hands or go merely as camp followers of a battling power? No, rather would we fight, give the very flower of our manhood so that our men may light their way to victory. We make no conditions because we are not shopkeepers. We are children of rishis, and ours has always been the religion of self-sacrifice. . . . Therefore without question, without condition, without making this clause or that clause, enlist in thousands, so that England's need may be served incidentally and India's need ultimately."

MRS. BESANT spoke in the same strain in moving the resolution on man-power. "I say here," she declared in emphatic terms, "that I am prepared to act and to help in recruiting, especially for a citizen army, without regard to anything else that may happen, because I can see that when the country is in danger of invasion, none has the right to stand aside." Further the resolution asks "you to do what you must do if you are to be home rulers. For home rule and home defence go together, and those who will not defend their motherland have no right to claim liberty of the motherland." Mr. Satyamurti, however, who moved an amendment for the deletion of that part of the resolution which called upon all patriotic organisations to aid in recruiting, thought that the statement that India was in peril was only a red herring drawn across their track in order to postpone reforms. In view of the fact that, despite India's help during the last three and a half years, internments continued and deputations to England were prohibited, he could not consent to pass the resolution. He would rather tell the Viceroy that it was adding insult to injury not only to keep them bound hand and foot but also to ask them to fight for the Empire. On votes being taken, the amendment and the original proposition found an equal number of supporters, and the President casting her vote against the amendment, it was defeated. Mr. Satyamurti and others at the last moment withdrew their opposition, and the resolution was passed *nem con.*

PROFESSOR K. Ramanujachari of the Pachai-pa's College delivered a thoughtful address last

week as President of the tenth session of the Madras Educational Conference, in the course of which he examined some of the sophistries with which the national education movement is sought to be supported. Prof. Ramanujachari did not claim perfection for the present system of education; he admitted, as everyone does, that there were certain grave defects in it. For one thing, the control of education was largely in the hands of foreigners, often out of sympathy with the ideals and feelings of students; for another, Indian vernaculars took a back seat in the curriculum; and so on. But he contended that any reform that was needed should take the present system of education for its basis and should not seek to institute another system parallel to it. It would merely amount to a duplication of machinery, and after all it must be remembered that no other agency than the State could carry on education systematically, comprehensively and without ignoring all diverse interests. He thought that the new movement for national education would be productive of more good if it took up technical instead of general education and established technological institutes or founded schools and colleges for girls. Private agencies could not be a substitute for State agency, even though they might be useful for filling up gaps or making novel experiments. It may be noted in passing that the Bijapur Conference did not pass a resolution on national education.

THE Hon'ble Mr. S. Srinivasa Aiyangar, who presided over the Madras Social Conference made some wise observations in his address on the inwardness and ultimate goal of the non-Brahmana movement. It must be regarded, he said, as an emphatic protest against the institution of caste, against the dogma of hereditary religious or social status and made a strong appeal to the sense of self-respect of the non-Brahmana. On the cramping effects of caste system, Mr. Srinivasa Aiyangar remarked: "It has prevented the realisation of the ideal of a united nation leading a full life, dwarfed the growth of the individual and seriously circumscribed his hopes and aspirations. . . . It has been responsible for a whole code of unmeaning restrictions upon individual liberty, for much social harshness and misery, for the prolonged indifference to the unsatisfactory social and religious conditions of the Panchama community. The noble ideals of an Indian national life that are current make the fervent appeal that there should be no intermediate divisions of a hereditary nature between the Indian nation on the one hand and the individual on the other. From the ethical and the religious points of view, the evils of the caste system are graver still. It clouds our vision, limits our experience, hardens our heart, narrows our spheres of responsibility, and prevents justice and love and sincerity from becoming perfect."

WITH a view to mitigating the evils of caste

system, Mr. Aiyangar advocated legislation removing the existing legal disability as regards inter-marriages between members of the primary castes of Hindus. Such an enactment would materially reduce the inelasticity of the caste system, which was its most objectionable feature, and Mr. Aiyangar felt that there was need for a measure on the lines of Mr. Basu's civil marriage bill being introduced in the Indian legislative council. In the Bombay Social Conference the opponents of Mr. Basu's bill created such a confusion that a resolution, supporting the principle of the bill, had to be dropped. Seeing that the bill only sought to extend the benefit of a civil marriage to all, without requiring them to avow their disbelief in any of the recognised religions, the *Indian Social Reformer* has rightly characterised its opponents as lacking in a perception of the elements of national freedom. It says, "To insist on a man or woman professing a disbelief in anything as the price of exercising their individual wishes in the matter of their own marriages is fundamentally incompatible with an educated sense of political freedom. . . . Though many use the name of freedom, few thoroughly believe it in all its implications." In the Madras Social Conference a similar resolution was moved by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and unanimously passed.

LORD HALDANE, in an interview he gave to a representative of the *Christian Commonwealth*, dwelt upon the great injury that was done to the nation by denying a chance of full education to the children of the poorer classes, and thus explained his idea of a really national and democratic system of education. He said, "I want to see a system of continuous education set up for learners of all ages, beginning with the elementary schools and opening up a clear path through the intermediate schools to the universities. In the organisation of this system I believe we should be acting wisely if we based it upon the principles adopted in organising our great modern armies, dividing the country into a number of educational provinces, where the local authorities would have a large measure of autonomy and control. We do not want to supersede the local education authorities, but, on the contrary, to extend their work while providing that the extra cost involved in such extension should be borne by the State. The basis of reconstruction in our system of education is this scheme of provinces, each of them charged with the task of evolving order out of the chaos of schools that exists at present, and developing a complete system of secondary education, and in each of the provinces a university radiating its influence throughout the locality." "Education," added Lord Haldane, "is the most important element in reconstruction after the war, and if we can solve this problem as it should be solved the social and economic problems that lie before us will largely solve themselves."

### THE PRESENT POLITICAL FEELING.

BEHIND the resolutions and speeches that one reads about in the papers, and only approximately expressed by them, there lie two distinct varieties of political feeling in non-official circles. Both alike realise the danger to the Empire and to India and both alike keep in the forefront of their view the political status of India within the Empire. In short, the two supreme aims of the moment are safety and home rule. Both parties would be glad if the two aims could be pursued together and both are agreed that home rule, if guaranteed within a reasonable period of time, would go very far towards ensuring safety. One party would fasten on this idea and stake everything on its acceptance by Government. They would be thoroughly frank with Government in this grave crisis and make it clear that the certain prospect of home rule is the indispensable condition of any large recruitment, whether in the regular army or in the Indian Defence Force which may grow into a citizen army. The other party take account of other probabilities of the situation. Recognising that the safety of the country is first and home rule second, and recognising further that there may be delay in the achievement of the second which the first cannot brook, they are willing to do all that can be done in co-operation with Government to cope with the danger to the country. Mr. Gandhi represents a comparatively small class of Indians, who would say nothing of political reform till the Empire and India were quite safe. Others, far more numerous, would urge on Government a striking declaration of political autonomy as a means of capturing the imagination and drawing the man-power of the country to the utmost degree to the service of the State, but they would not make this a *conditio sine qua non* of their putting forth all their energy and power to meet the crisis. They feel that once the danger is past the constitutional struggle for self-government may be resumed with a greatly increased chance of success. It is this party which has so far prevailed in the country.

The All-India Congress Committee on which both parties are well represented have passed a resolution on the subject in which the view above mentioned is embodied. The Bombay Provincial Conference held at Bijapur has repeated the resolution. The Madras Provincial Conference held at Conjeevaram has likewise passed a similar resolution, but in circumstances which merit some attention. On the subject of loyalty to the Crown and the general duty of India in this crisis the Conference was of course unanimous. When, however, the question of concrete co-operation came up the delegates were found to be equally divided, one party saying we cannot possibly co-operate with-

out promise of home rule, the other saying we cannot wait for home rule, but must do whatever may be possible. The President decided the question in the latter sense by her casting vote. It was obvious, however, that the Government had lost the confidence of the people to a dangerous extent and that this loss of confidence was greater among the younger than among the older Congressmen. Even to one who had for some years known of the fact its manifestation at Conjeevaram was an impressive lesson. It prevails in the Madras Presidency to a very large extent, but its existence in other provinces of India to a larger or smaller degree is undeniable. We would draw the earnest attention of the authorities to this circumstance and trust that they will do everything in their power by a radical alteration of policy to repair the great mischief.

The younger generation, who are impatient, point to Ireland and ask why India should be differently treated. The question is natural and pardonable to patriotism, but the difficulties that face us cannot be overlooked. The British Cabinet made its historic pronouncement in August last, promising self-government for India in stages and the whole of India acclaimed it heartily. All sections of the people placed their views before the Secretary of State and the Viceroy when they visited various parts of the country to ascertain public opinion on constitutional reforms. The scheme, as it has been agreed upon between them, is on its way to Great Britain on the high seas. Supposing that a unanimity had been secured among Indian leaders at the War Conference at Delhi, we ask what effect it would have had on the Viceroy in the direction of drawing a statement of policy such as was desired. The Viceroy could not possibly improve the scheme off his own bat, and the Cabinet could not pronounce any opinion on the details of a scheme which they had not seen. The only effect would perhaps have been to accelerate the publication of the proposals by about a month, a result which certainly was not the aim.

We would, however, impress on the Government that any undue delay in the publication of the scheme would be fraught with danger, and we would urge that the Cabinet should see that it is conceived on broad and generous lines before they publish it, which will, according to general expectation, be some time next month. The demand that the scheme of Indian reforms should be considered as a war measure cannot be dismissed lightly. The authorities should clearly recognise that it is a war measure and set about shaping it with a view to evoke the hearty support of the people and satisfy their aspirations. We affirm our hope that this will be done.

As Mr. Sastri pointed out at the Delhi Conference, in spite of reactions and temporary vacillations there is behind the British Empire a principle of progress and self-determining freedom, and we may trust that that principle will assert itself at the present crisis in India's fortunes.

### THE WAR LOAN.

THE terms of the second Indian war loan have been announced, and it must be stated that, on the whole, they are sufficiently liberal. The Government has profited by the experience of the last loan and an attempt is being made to ensure a greater success than was possible in the case of the first war loan. It may be recollected that the Finance Member had calculated, with a caution that was not at the time unreasonable, that the war loan of last year would yield about fifteen crores, and he was most agreeably surprised at the unexpectedly large amount he actually received. This time he has not ventured to make any forecast, but he must certainly be counting upon attaining even a larger amount. The new war bonds are all free from the income-tax and those repayable in 1921 and 1923 bear  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. interest. The bonds which will be repaid in 1925 and 1928 will, however, bear a slightly higher rate, as Rs. 103 and Rs. 105 respectively will be paid for every bond of Rs. 100 in these two classes. There are certain special rights attached to the bonds and the procedure of issuing them has been materially simplified. Bonds may be purchased through Post Offices and the five-year cash certificates will continue to be sold.

It is necessary that people should clearly understand their duty in connection with the war loan. That it offers a safe and attractive form of investment, will be obvious to all. The integrity of our Government has always been unchallenged and its solvency is beyond all doubt. A special obligation, however, rests upon the shoulders of the wealthy, intelligent and educated classes at this critical moment in the history of the world to strive to bring in as large subscriptions as possible by making a sacrifice, if necessary, of higher returns which other investments may be expected to yield. This is not a time for calculating the comparative incomes derived from different investments, and every one must contribute to the war loan to his utmost capacity. Even people with limited means can render help to Government by taking cash certificates, which will prove to them an admirable form of investment. A vigorous effort must be made to dissipate the doubt and the hesitation of the ignorant and the calculating; and the response of India to the Premier's appeal for assistance in this respect, must prove worthy of the undisputed loyalty and the whole-hearted readiness for co-operation of the people of this country.

The proceeds of the loan will be paid to His Majesty's Government for the prosecution of the

war as part of India's £ 100 million contribution and will not be spent for ordinary expenditure or even special military expenditure incurred by the Government of India. But why this hurry to pay off an amount for which India has already assumed responsibility? The answer to this question will bring out the urgency and the importance of making the war loan a decided success. In the first place, it must be borne in mind that when India made a gift of Rs. 150 crore to Great Britain, she undertook to pay interest upon that sum till it was actually paid off; and to the extent that this debit is reduced, the amount that must go out of this country in the form of interest will be reduced. By handing over the proceeds of the war loans to His Majesty's Government, the Government of India increases the public debt of this country, but retains in the hands of Indian people the money which otherwise would go to Great Britain for payment of interest. One-third of the war contribution was paid off last year, and the sooner the balance is paid the better for this country. This is an important consideration from the point of view of the economic interests of India, and though a hundred crores will be but small relief to a Government that is spending for war purposes ten crores every day, the interest on that sum means much to the people of this country.

Contribution to the war loan is a patriotic service rendered to Great Britain in another and a more substantial way. The Government of India has been spending crores of rupees for His Majesty's Government, in supplying a variety of useful material from this country. These transactions are taxing the resources of our Government to the utmost. Our currency note circulation has enormously expanded; so has the circulation of rupees. Silver and gold are hard to procure even at high prices, and monetary stringency is severe. We cannot demand from the British Government payment for our disbursements by means of the shipments of gold, and even if this were possible there is, after all, a limit to the expansion of metallic currency. Under these circumstances, there is only one patent remedy that may be effectively applied, and it is to attract money to Government treasuries by means of loans. The war loan thus obviates the necessity of issuing large quantities of currency, supplies Government with the money it needs for assisting His Majesty's Government in the prosecution of war and offers to Indian people an attractive means of investing their savings. It likewise enables the two Governments to cancel their mutual indebtedness and thus to put grease in the financial machinery of the Empire.

The war loan, therefore, presents to the people of India a splendid opportunity to assist in the prosecution of the war, and here even those can take part who cannot actually fight. Every one can do his bit here by directly contributing to the loan and by inducing others to do so. Contribu-

tion to the loan is twice blessed. It benefits him that gives and assists the Government which carries on the war. By contributing to the war loan people will assist Government in solving the currency problem and in minimising the exchange difficulty, besides helping themselves and the country by making the war debt a really national debt. A knowledge of these advantages of the war loan, we feel certain, will stimulate public contributions, and it is to be hoped that the second Indian war loan will turn out even a more splendid success than the first. Government should, however, see to it that there is no ground given for the complaint persistently heard from many quarters, that the moral pressure exercised by its officials often borders on something more severe.

### THE LESSON FROM IRELAND.

IT was announced in the House of Commons that the Irish Home Rule Bill would not be introduced in Parliament till about the end of the month. It is now perfectly well understood that the British Cabinet is definitely and solemnly committed to a policy of granting Home Rule to Ireland and so this postponement of the measure cannot possibly mean its abandonment. All the same this decision of the Cabinet and the circumstances in which it was arrived at, give rise to sad reflections. Here is a great nation which has bent all its energies to the struggle for its very existence but which finds unexpected difficulties created in its way by a handful of irreconcilables from two factions in a corner of its world-wide Empire. To-day the great problem before the Allies is the problem of manpower. For its satisfactory solution England sacrificed her long cherished traditions of voluntary service and went in whole-heartedly for the continental system of conscription. But Ireland stood out—Ireland the partner of England in her imperial destiny. Ireland has her own grievances: the centuries of ill-treatment and oppression, the domination of one religion over another, the keeping down by a foreign race of the children of the soil. So Ireland would not adopt conscription. England dared not force it upon her, unless accompanied by the grant of Home Rule. The British Premier has promised that the clauses of the Man-Power Bill would not be made applicable to Ireland until Home Rule became an accomplished fact. Recently this question has advanced a step farther. Instead of continuing to be a question of domestic politics, as it has been for so many years, it would appear to have reached the stage of internationalism. The Premier observed quite recently that American sentiment was strong in favour of the grant of Home Rule, and that the Americans would attach no value to the professions of the Allies if the principle of self-determination did not find acceptance in their internal affairs. With this preamble the Premier promised the introduction of the Home Rule Bill at an early date. But there were factors in the situation of which the

Premier had not taken note. There is Sir Edward Carson shaking off the trammels of office, ready for the fray and determined to oppose Home Rule as strongly as ever. There is also the small section of Nationalist irreconcilables equally determined to oppose conscription, Home Rule or no Home Rule. And so the all-powerful ministry of a mighty Empire stands stultified in the eyes of the world, unable to fulfil its solemn promise and untrue, for the time, to the great ideals for which, it says, it has staked its all.

These are facts well known to all. They are recounted here not to adorn a tale, but to point a moral. The lessons from Ireland must be taken to heart by all concerned. Otherwise there is serious danger of India drifting into the condition of Ireland. The Premier has addressed an appeal to the people of India to rally under the banner of Empire to help it in its hour of need. The heart of India is sound and the response has been as enthusiastic as was possible in the circumstances. Great leaders like Mr. Gandhi and Mrs. Besant have spoken. They have told the people that this was no time for bartering or higgling that the time to fight for their rights would come, but in this hour of danger it was their duty to fight for the Empire. This wise counsel does not prevail with a section of the younger people, and a few of the older generation, who are prepared to disown the leadership of Mr. Gandhi and Mrs. Besant on that account and who are prepared to preach the doctrine of England's difficulty being India's opportunity. This is a dangerous doctrine to preach and it would do the greatest disservice to India. It behoves all the leaders of public opinion firmly to set their face against it and to smooth the way of Government as much as possible. This is lesson number one from Ireland. The attitude of Anglo-Indians furnishes materials for the second lesson. If the Ulsterites stood between Ireland and Home Rule, Anglo-Indians are doing their level best to prevent self-government from being granted to India. The mistake committed by the British Government in Ireland is being repeated here. If Messrs. Carson, Smith and Co. were allowed openly to incite people to rebellion in Ireland, in India the Government complaisantly looks on while Messrs. Welby and Co. are playing their mischievous pranks. We warn Government against following the policy of *laissez faire* in regard to the Anglo-Indian agitation. It cannot be too often impressed upon Government that these things are contagious and however earnest the exhortations of Government to Indians to cease from political agitation the example of Anglo-Indians is bound to swell the volume of the agitation of Indians in addition to creating a feeling of unfairness and injustice. The third and the most important lesson is as regards inaugurating the new policy of political reforms leading up to self-government before it is too late. 'He gives twice who gives in time;' so goes the saying. If Ireland has taught



to the British Government one lesson more than another it is that of never delaying reforms too long. We hope Government has taken that lesson to heart. Still we cannot help feeling that Government has yet to learn a vast deal in that direction. The Delhi Conference has demonstrated to the world in a striking manner the solidarity of Indian opinion in favour of prosecuting the war to a successful issue. Government obtained the enthusiastic and unconditional support of the public in India. But if the Delhi Conference is not to be merely a show Government must also acquit itself of its duties in a handsomely liberal manner. Even the Montagu reform scheme might be and must be expedited. But even if we leave that aside for the moment there are things nearer at hand that can be almost immediately done. The pay and prospects of the Indian soldier can be substantially added to without any delay. So also the promised commissions in the army must materialise immediately. People in India have waited too long. They have experienced disappointments great and many, so many indeed that some of the ardent spirits are almost on the point of losing faith in the Government. This feeling of disappointment is likely to be deepened and turned into despair if Government even now continues to talk of promises and is not quick in performance. Here is the lesson from Ireland. 'Too late' is writ large on the Irish problem. And if the British Government is not absolutely bankrupt in broad-minded statesmanship, it will not allow a similar failure to be repeated in India and make of her, who can tell?, another Ireland.

### THE DELHI CONFERENCE.

( BY AN INDIAN. )

It is generally agreed that the immediate and tangible results attained by the Conference were inadequate to the time, labour and money spent on it. Its importance lies in the fact that it is the beginning of a new era of taking leaders of thought into counsel in order to concert measures and shape policy, and we are sure that for the settlement of outstanding questions in the immediate future conferences on a similar principle, though considerably improved both in the personnel and methods of work, will be found a very useful and perhaps the only possible method. As regards the present Conference itself, it is not too much to say that people looked for some soul-stirring announcement, which would have taken hold of the imagination of the people. Such expectations were unfulfilled, and one could only get to hear arguments to show why such an announcement was not possible at the time.

It must be admitted that no final announcement of political reforms in details could be expected at the time. These are in the hands of Parliament, which alone can enact them into regular shape. But some more hopeful words could surely have been uttered to allay the fears of many people

in this country that attempts, likely to prove successful, may later on be made to emphasise the words "gradual development" and to whittle down to nothing the words "substantial steps" and "responsible government" in the announcement of August 20. In any case something could surely have been done in those matters which were in the hands of the authorities themselves and which did not require legislation at the hands of Parliament. Such, for instance, are the matters of commissions in the army on which people have been crying themselves hoarse for half a century, changes in the administration of the Arms Act, and political amnesty. But our Government has apparently lost the saving gift of imagination. Concessions, which perhaps it was already decided to grant, appeared to be wrung from them, as in the case of the army commissions which, let us hope, will at last be liberal and broad-based. In principle the defects of a racial nature in the Arms Act have been admitted by all for a long time, but our rulers have not yet found time to redraft those rules, and it does not mend matters to hear Sir William Vincent saying *peccavi*. This want of imagination, unreadiness to take what they believe to be risks is one of the grave dangers of the Indian situation. In such grave crises the motto ought to be, "*de l'andace, encore de l'andace, toujours de l'andace.*" In a large measure of amnesty one realises that there may be some danger. But it is only such as would reconcile people to the large sacrifices that they are asked to make. Vague talks of a possible danger on the frontier—especially if no details can be given and if your words are intended to convey that it is remote—will not move people who find their nearest and dearest interned on mere suspicion to come to the recruiting booth to enlist. People must be frankly told that there is danger. This tendency to minimise matters is one of the besetting sins of officialdom. People in England complain of the same tendency, and at Delhi the Viceroy's speech was one more illustration.

But if we complain of a want of imagination in our rulers we have to complain of the same defect in some of our political leaders. If we ask our rulers to take risks, it is also right to ask our leaders to take risks. We refer to a spirit, far more common than we like, though its expression is often suppressed, to go in for a kind of bargaining in this hour of the Empire's necessity. The ideal thing would be for the rulers to give and for the people not to demand; the actual fact is for the rulers to refuse and for the people to demand. The former would strengthen the Empire to a degree almost unheard of and bind India to England by "chains light as air though strong as iron." Even when our rulers do not show their imaginative faculty, it would still be a very great thing if we on our part exercise it. For be it remembered that the officials in India are not the final arbiters of our fate. They have themselves their masters in the shape of the British democracy. We would ask our leaders to consider what an impression

would be produced on that democracy by our wholeheartedly co-operating with Government—with all the narrowness that characterises it now—to organise our man-power thoroughly. That democracy is sound in the main. It gave South Africa its freedom. Will it not give it to India?

A great deal is being made of the resolution on self-government which the Hon. Mr. Khaparde intended to move at the Conference and which was ruled out of order by the Viceroy. In some party organs attempts are being made to discredit everybody who would not say ditto to everything that the members of that party wanted. But in our opinion it is a discreditable manœuvre. Political sagacity is not a monopoly of the beloved of the *Kesari*. Messrs. Malaviya, Gandhi, Surendranath Banerjea, Chintamani, Sapru, and Jinnah can also claim some portion of it. In the man-power committee it was eloquently pointed out by Mr. Jinnah that a resolution on self-government, if accepted, would give such a fillip to recruiting, as nothing else would. The Chairman, however, rightly or wrongly ruled it out of order. But really the proceedings in a committee are not the proper topics for a public discussion. If everything said privately is to be brought out in the papers, it would be easy to tell that some men, who *pro forma* say that such a declaration on self-government is wanted merely to help recruiting, privately confess to a desire to make the best of our rulers' difficulties and that when asked a plain question as to whether such a declaration would actually make the recruiting booths more crowded than Shantaram's Chawl, they hedge and have to confess to a feeling of uncertainty about the results and only try to put the blame in advance on the rulers for their past sins of omission and commission. Things that come before the public meeting have to be hatched after a good deal of discussion. The proceedings of the Subjects Committee of the Congress were till recently regarded as confidential till the modern hustling methods in politics came into use. Have not men who opposed the phrasing of a resolution in the Subjects Committee to advocate the same in the open Congress?

After the resolution on self-government was ruled out of order, informal negotiations were going on as to the best course to adopt. Some proposed one thing, some another. Even Mr. Gandhi was opposed to a formal resolution in the open conference. A solid front on the main issue should be presented to the world, whatever our differences as to the methods. Apparently Mr. Jinnah thought the same. Mr. Gandhi was thinking of an alternative, but before anything could be settled, Mr. Khaparde had already taken the question out of everybody's hands by sending notice of a resolution to the Viceroy. He apparently takes the credit to himself of drafting that resolution. *But the paper he sent to the Viceroy did not contain even the verbal alteration of "we" to "I."* That paper was a letter sent to the Commander-in-Chief as the joint protest of some fifteen members of the

man-power committee against ruling the question of self-government out of order and fitted that purpose well enough as a part of it contained arguments. That self-same paper, with the resolution and arguments jumbled together, was sent by Mr. Khaparde to the Viceroy, and others can hardly be blamed if they refused to place themselves under such unsatisfactory leadership. As a matter of fact after the question was ruled out of order in the committee the only thing to do was to enter a dignified *caveat* in the speeches to the resolutions, and this work was very satisfactorily performed by many speakers, especially by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mr. Sastri, Sir Sivaswamy Aiyar and the Maharaja of Alwar. Perhaps Mr. Gandhi's idea may have been better, but there was no time for negotiations, and Mr. Khaparde's action rendered it almost impossible. The journalistic hacks of his party may raise him to the skies, but to many others this action of his and one or two of his performances in cool private discussion appeared to savour of a desire to discredit others and glorify himself. We say again that among the leaders of the people at Delhi there was no desire to hedge and they made their position perfectly clear; but the difference was only about the suitability of the methods to the time and place. Here surely there can be honest difference. Nobody expected the members of the Conference to come back from Delhi with a Home Rule Act in their pockets. They expected some tangible advance from Government and they did not get it. But we would regard the Conference as even a greater failure than it was if it is to help on the proscription of respected old leaders of the people and to put in their place—Mr. Khaparde of all others!

#### THE PRIVILEGES OF BACKWARD AND DUTIES OF ADVANCED CLASSES.

SELF-GOVERNMENT has now become only a question of time. That the executive should in some way be responsible to the legislative councils of the country, is admitted by the responsible ministers of the Crown and the instinct of Englishmen, which we are told by Dr. Gardiner is that it is better for a nation to muddle through, making mistakes as it goes, than to have the most excellent arrangement forced upon it by external violence, will ratify the decision of those ministers. The composition of the legislative councils, however, is a very hard nut to crack. What with the existence of castes, what with the neglect of backward and depressed classes by the powerful and self-complacent communities and what with the slow awakening of those down-trodden people who cannot see what, under the circumstances, would be the best course for them to follow, this question of the composition of our legislative councils bids fair to be the question of questions, probably more burning after the Secretary of State has fully published his scheme than now. The whole country has to be faithfully



represented in these councils. But as property and education seem to the ordinary mind, ignorant of the peculiar conditions of this country, to be the only fair qualifications in the electors of these national representatives, the backward and depressed classes, who on account of their lower social status and almost serf-like condition, are behind the advanced classes both in property and education, would suffer tremendously if the advanced classes do not give up their pretensions to superiority and if they do not at once begin to try their level best to raise these people from bondage. Communal representation which is talked of as the sovereign remedy for this evil will, in practice, I fear, not be found sufficiently efficacious, as under that system certain communities only can get representation and even those who get it, perhaps will not or rather cannot exercise their rights well and in the general interests of the country. Illiteracy prevails to such an extent among these backward and depressed classes that to expect them for at least a dozen years more to exercise their right with discretion, would be like asking for better bread than can be made out of wheat. If, however, we do not have recourse to such a course and have decided majorities of the now powerful classes in the same frame of mind as they have now, then we must bid good-bye to all real reform, and to all the reasonable aspirations of the country to take a high place among the civilized nations of the world.

The difficulties of the question are tremendous and the solution is not quite easy. But a good sign of the times is that, like the Liberals of England who took up the cause of the working classes there in their extremities, we have among us at the present juncture a large number of educated Indians of the advanced classes, thanks to the work of men like Agarkar and Gokhale, inspired with a fervent desire to raise the down-trodden, to work among them and for them, and to vindicate their rights before their inert and in some cases definitely antagonistic countrymen. If these men have not succeeded in doing all that needed to be done in the interests of the backward and depressed communities it is because of the fact that it is an extremely hard task to realise from outside the difficulties of people whose modes and manners of living are so entirely different from theirs. It must be admitted also that the prominent men from among the backward classes, the few educated men that are among them, have not to a sufficient extent sought the co-operation of these enthusiasts till now. In fact, the strange phenomenon of some of these people being led by social reactionaries is not quite rare.

It is necessary, when things have come to this pass, that those who desire the uplift of the masses, whether they belong to the masses themselves or whether they are liberal enthusiasts who believe that the salvation of the country lies in correcting the mistakes of the past and by raising their status, should be prepared to give the

lower classes an equality of treatment. All those who have faith in this uplift of the masses as a source of untold power must trouble their minds to devise the best means possible to bring about such a consummation—a consummation devoutly to be wished.

If we could but know what the duties of advanced classes and the privileges of backward classes are in this matter, we shall have cleared the ground sufficiently for our work. We do not speak here of the duties of the masses, who are too deeply steeped in ignorance to be conscious of their duties and high responsibilities. The few educated men from among them have of course tremendous burdens upon their shoulders, but they are very often naturally at sea, and they suspect, and not quite unreasonably, that they have to face an enormous mass of shrewd diplomacy of the reactionaries and an equally enormous mass of dark ignorance among their own ranks.

Speaking of duties of the advanced classes in this matter, we must first of all say that they should attempt at cultivating friendship with the backward classes, and that they must take the initiative in the matter of ameliorating the condition of the backward classes. The people of the backward classes either fight shy of the advanced, or, to avoid being insulted, stand at a convenient distance from them. It is the enlightened that must therefore make the first advances, and that in no spirit of condescension. They must put men of the so-called lower classes completely at ease in their social intercourse with them and renounce all privileges attaching to caste and social standing. They must show them by words and deeds that they are not benevolent despots, but that they are their real friends and that they would be prepared to do all that is needed in overcoming all artificial barriers against them. They would do well to often inter-dine with them, in public and in private, to frequently visit institutions and clubs started by them for recreation and instruction, and in general to help them in any legitimate work they set before themselves.

If to make the so-called backward classes feel that their social status is not intrinsically lower than that of the advanced, is the primary duty of the latter, it follows that every means should be devised to raise that status by giving them education—not only primary education—but secondary and higher education. This work requires more real self-sacrifice than is required in doing the other duty named above. The advanced classes may start educational institutions mainly for the backward classes, or may give important and attractive concessions to them in institutions conducted for all people, without distinction of caste and creed, or help them in raising funds for the education of their boys and girls. A large endowment fund for free studentships and scholarships, contributed by the advanced classes and by the Rajas and Maharajas at the pressing request of the advanced classes at such an insti-

tution as the non-sectarian Fergusson College, would be a fitting memorial of the liberal enthusiasm of the advanced classes for the amelioration of the educationally and socially backward.

Still another duty of the advanced classes, in respect of their less happy brethren—and important duty—is to try to remove all those restrictions upon the backward and the depressed classes that are galling to them. If the European does not tolerate your touch in the tram car in South Africa, or if there is a separate compartment reserved for Europeans and Eurasians in railway trains your blood boils within you, but you do not see that you do not bear the touch of so many of your brethren; you treat them as untouchables and you have in a city like Poona cisterns of water, maintained at public expense, where the non-Brahmanas are not allowed to bathe and drink with the self-honoured first caste. Are these not crying evils and is it not incumbent on the liberal and enlightened higher classes to remove them at once?

If the above reasoning is correct, it becomes an obligation upon all patriotic Indians to secure for the educated men from among the lower classes more places of honour than they have been so far given. The present writer has already stated that he has no faith in communal representation as the sovereign remedy for these social evils, but he believes that as seats in the council, while affording opportunities to work for the State, also confer a sort of honour on the occupiers of those seats, perhaps this otherwise not efficacious means might be of some use. The present writer does not advocate it for such a use, but has set it down simply as an instance of the natural desire of the backward classes for places of honour, which their liberal friends might see their way to satisfy.

The privileges of the masses of the country are that they should get an equal treatment in the country of which they are the mainstay, that they should get cheaper education and greater facilities to acquire it than those who have been mainly responsible in keeping them in the abysmal ignorance, that they should not be insulted by their own countrymen, and that as a compensation, if you like, for the hardships they underwent in their long bondage, they should be given even a larger share of the places of honour in the country than their present educational and other qualifications would appear to deserve.

The writer of the present article draws the attention of his readers to the fact that he has not put forward in it what he considers a solution of the difficulty of communal representation. He has only laid down here what is indispensable as a preliminary preparation of the solution of that question by an admirable settlement.

K. M. KHADYE.

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## REVIEWS.

### REPORT OF THE DECK PASSENGERS COMMITTEE.

This report embodies the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee, appointed by the Government of Burma, at the instance of the Indian residents, to inquire into the allegations of hardship and inconvenience suffered by Deck passengers immigrant into Burma from India. The Committee consisted of Mr. Hardiman, the chairman, Mr. Bell of the B. I. S. N. Co. and Dr. P. J. Mehta of the Burma Social Service League. The dissenting minutes of the last two gentlemen and the Government Resolution on the work of the Committee, are incorporated in the Report.

The hardships, to which the deck passengers are subjected, are a long standing grievance, not only in Burma but generally in all parts of British India. It must be noted, however, that the deck passengers possess an exceptional importance in the economy of Burma. Rangoon is the second largest immigrant port in the world, New York only exceeding it, and as remarked in the Statesman's Year Book, 1916, it is possibly the largest emigrant port. Burma has, to a very large extent, to depend upon India for its labour supply. As a matter of fact, the supply does not equal the demand; and hence in the interest of Burma herself, leaving aside the passengers' rights of comfort and convenience, it is eminently desirable to encourage immigration by providing attractive conditions of travelling accommodation. To shut out Indian manual labour, would most seriously prejudice the prosperity of Burma. The total number of deck passengers in Burma is about half a million. The shipping arrangements to carry on such a large number of passengers are full of discomforts even in normal times. But the dislocation, produced by the war brought the abuses to a head and led to the appointment of the present Committee. It made investigations into the following matters by recording evidence of important witnesses.

- (1) Facilities for obtaining passage tickets promptly and without any exactions above the standard fare.
- (2) Methods of marshalling passengers and the allegations of the use of sticks and canes by the wharf or steamer durwans.
- (3) Illegal demands by wharf coolies.
- (4) Time allowed for passengers to board the steamer on departure.
- (5) Amenities for women passengers.
- (6) Other deficiencies in embarkation and disembarkation.

In the opinion of the Committee, the desiderata are as follows:—

- (a) Shelter for passengers about to embark.
- (b) Space for marshalling them.
- (c) A covered inspection shed for passengers disembarking, in which they may undergo medical and other examination, and an observation ward, all in one place.
- (d) The abolition of the system, by which the passengers have to be transferred into flats from the incoming Calcutta steamers and towed downstream to the inspection wharf (Mr. Bell dissenting).

The Lieutenant Governor, however, complains that the recommendations do not sufficiently focus the points at issue and hence no definite orders can be passed. But in order to secure the tickets at published prices and to protect the deck passengers from being subjected to extortion on the part of the porters, when it is the distinct policy of the Company to transport that luggage free and to save them from being unduly harassed for medical examination, the Local Government have decided to appoint the Collector of

Rangoon to be the Protector of immigrants and emigrants for the Port of Rangoon. With the co-operation of the municipal and police officers, it is hoped, the end will be achieved. If the efforts fail, the Government has expressed its readiness to undertake the necessary legislation in the matter. Dr. Mehta's dissenting minute is notable for its exhaustive treatment as well as for its bold and sincere advocacy.

In reply to the defence of the use of criminal force, he says: "A great deal has been said on the question that the passenger's could not have been much hurt by the blows and canes. But whether they were much hurt or little hurt, the Company has no justification whatever in using force on the passengers, person. Nowhere in the world are private companies allowed to use force."

We fully endorse Dr. Mehta's suggestions about separate accommodation for women passengers and the prevention of overcrowding in steamers. In conclusion we hope that by co-operation with the Government, effect will be given to the reforms indicated in Dr. Mehta's convincing minute of dissent.

## LETTERS FROM THE PROVINCES.

### UNITED PROVINCES.

#### PROVINCIAL WAR CONFERENCE.

THE war is the all-absorbing topic of the day. His Honour the Lieutenant Governor came down from the hills to preside over the provincial war meeting at Lucknow on the 4th instant. The meeting was attended by all classes of people and representatives of all shades of opinion. There were the big taluqdars, the nawabs and rajas, leaders of public opinion, heads of different religions and officials. The gathering consisted of about three to four hundred people. The President made a non-contentious and rousing speech, the chief feature being his appeal to the leaders of public opinion and the young men of the province for their whole-hearted support. There was very little speech-making, the resolutions having been formally adopted. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's was the only speech, which he delivered in Hindustani with his usual eloquence and vigour. While calling upon the people to rally round the Government at this critical hour, he pressed upon the Government the necessity of being fair, just and free from any racial bias in its military policy. The speech was very well received by the audience and much appreciated by the outside public.

#### INCONVENIENCES TO THE PUBLIC.

The war is telling upon the daily lives of the people of these provinces also. The prices of even the daily necessities of life are going up rapidly. As if this was not enough the scarcity of silver in the market and the attitude of the banks in dealing with cheques and cash orders is causing further inconvenience to the public and is the source of all sorts of absurd rumours and alarm in the bazars. In payment of cheques and cash orders banks pay mostly in notes, but notes are not easily acceptable to tradesmen in the market. In Lucknow, one has to pay a discount of an anna or more for every note of ten rupees and so on. The situation is growing serious and should be carefully handled by the Government without further delay.

#### GARHWAL FAMINES.

The district of Garhwal in the hilly division of Kamaun is face to face with a severe famine. The route to the famous temples of Badrinath and Kedarnath is severely affected, so is the country round about Gangotri. People are in great distress, because grain is not available. The chief difficulty is of transport and communication. The officials of the district and the Tehri State are trying to relieve the distress of

the people but this is not enough. Non-official efforts and philanthropic agencies are badly needed. And it is matter of some satisfaction that the Arya Samaj has already taken the lead in the matter. Lala Hansraj and Mahatma Munshi Ram in the name of the Arya Samaj and Babu Jotiswarup in the name of Hindus have already appealed to the public for funds and volunteers. The Seva Samiti of these Provinces has not lagged behind. Pandits Hirday Nath Kunzru and Venkatesh Narayan Tivari, members of the Servants of India Society and Secretaries of the Samati, have already visited Dehra Dun, Shahjehanpore Lucknow with a view to organise relief and it is expected that the work will be in full swing by the end of this month.

The Hon. Pandit Motilal Nehru is, it seems, contemplating to start a new daily from Allahabad, which will voice the opinion of the Home Rule League Party, while the Hon. Pandit Gokaran Nath Misra has already taken preliminary steps to form a syndicate which will own the redoubtable "Advocate" and turn it into a daily at the earliest possible opportunity. It is doubtful whether the two new Home Rule dailies along with the well-established "Leader", will be able to flourish in this comparatively not very well advanced Province.

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