

THE Servant of India

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Office: KIBE WADA, BUDHWAR PETH, POONA CITY.

VOL. V, No. 35.]

POONA—THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 1922.

{INLAND SUBNS. Rs. 6.
FOREIGN SUBNS. s. 10.

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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

ACCORDING to the information supplied by Government in reply to Sir D. P. Sarvadhikary's question in the Assembly, the present system of selecting candidates for the Royal Military College at Sandhurst is exceedingly unsatisfactory. We pointed out only the other day that the Local Governments had sent very poor material to the Military College at Dehra Dun which is intended to prepare students for the Sandhurst College; and now their selection of candidates for Sandhurst direct seems to fall below even that standard. Under existing arrangements ten or twelve Indians would be able to get admission every year at Sandhurst and the Local Governments should be easily able to send up about a hundred suitable candidates from whom the selection could be made. As a matter of fact, only 48 names were forwarded by the Local Governments in 1920 of whom again only 9 were found suitable, and in 1921 the number of candidates forwarded fell to 23 of whom only 6 passed the medical, written and oral tests, and they were all nominated to Sandhurst. The selection is made twice in the year and for the first selection this year only 11 candidates were nominated by Local Governments, of whom 2 did not present themselves for examination and of the remaining 9, only 4 passed the tests, all whom were sent up to Sandhurst. We are told that the Local Governments will be asked to investigate thoroughly the cause of this lack of suitable candidates and to give due publicity to the conditions of selection but we do not think any improvement will result unless the educated classes and people of the more advanced provinces are viewed from a very different angle of military vision.

SPEAKING on Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas's resolution in the Council of State, recommending that political prisoners not guilty of violence or destruction of property or incitement thereto, should be treated as first class misdemeanants as in England; Mr. O'Donnell said on behalf of Government that instructions had been issued to local governments, with a view to ensure uniformity of treatment in all provinces, which instructions did not differ from the special rules issued in the case of Sinn Feiners. This is no doubt satisfactory so far as it goes; but he said further that special treatment would not be accorded to all political prisoners, but a selection would be made based on their status, character and education. We are very often told that the law is no respecter of persons, but any discrimination on account of the status of an offender is clearly against that principle. Mr. O'Donnell mentioned a long list of offences, persons guilty of which would not be entitled to special treatment. The list is not objectionable; but after making these exceptions, any selection of prisoners for special treatment becomes utterly unnecessary. One of the privileges included in special treatment is that of permitting a prisoner to get his own bedding. To this the Punjab Government have put forward the ridiculous objection that as that province "contained warlike and virile people, there was every possibility that beds would be broken and used as weapons to fight against each other, thereby impairing jail discipline." It reveals a mentality which is utterly incapable of differentiating between a political offender and an ordinary criminal.

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Jejune Speech.

ON Thursday last H. E. the Governor of Bombay went for the first time since the creation of the present Legislative Council of the Province to open a session by a quasi-royal "Speech from the Throne". It is only natural therefore, that everybody should have looked forward to some momentous utterance—all the more so, since the Under Secretary of State for India came with the Governor and attended the opening ceremony, accommodated in a special seat of honour. Such expectations, however, were doomed to complete disappointment. There was no mention even of Lord Winterton's visit; no allusion to the present or future policy of the British Cabinet, whether regarding the Reforms or the Near Eastern or any other question of the day.

Instead of all this, one listened to amiable platitudes and witnessed a display of pageantry, the special necessity for all of which was anything but obvious. The only function claimed by him appears to be to give a detached historical review of matters no longer controversial. This semi-royal detachment is from a constitutional point of view perhaps deserving of all praise: yet it was hardly complimentary to "his" Legislature for the Governor to say (*in re* Bombay Development Scheme) that he would confine himself to some few remarks on this occasion, as he hoped to speak in more detail "further a few weeks hence": thus ranking his opening speech no higher than any other speech of his, made in reply to an address or on some other ornamental occasion. If H. E. meant to address the Council at all, the Legislature surely was entitled to hear something about, say, treatment of political prisoners or separation of Executive from Judicature, rather than engineering details of works begun a decade or two ago.

* * *

IT will be remembered that some time ago the *Hindu* excelled itself by continuing the practice of advertising British goods while preaching their boycott, urging the plea that it must exist. It is now the turn of another champion of non-co-operation, the *Bombay Chronicle*, to give a similarly entertaining explanation of its conduct. Charged with contempt of court in respect of an article on the Malegaon riots, its editor defended himself by engaging counsel; and an unkind correspondent has accused him therefore of inconsistency in appearing before a law court of the 'Satanic' British Government while preaching its boycott in accordance with the most rigorist doctrine of non-co-operation. The delicious explanation given by the editor is that non-co-operation is good for Indians but not good enough for an Englishman who sympathises with them.

"He honestly believes that non-co-operation is the only policy for Indians who have any feeling for their country's honour until certain crying wrongs have been redressed...But he is not a non-co-operator in the sense that any Indian is a non-co-operator...As a Muslim he owes precisely the same allegiance to the Khilafat as the Indian Muslims owe, but he is not in precisely the same position as the Indian Muslims in regard to India." This distinction is too subtle for people like ourselves who have believed the main ground for Indian Muslims non-co-operating with the British Government, even to the extent of some of them becoming *Muhajirins* was the Khilafat wrong. But what can be said of Mr. Pickthall's further *tour de force*: 'As an Englishman, having the rights of an Englishman to free opinion and claiming the same rights for Indians, not as an Indian editor, he goes into the courts.' Which of course, Indians, though having the same rights, may not do! We have always considered this the greatest weakness of the Non-co-operation Movement that they do not fit their theories according to the facts, but try to fit facts to their theories. Always a most pitiful

performance, this last intellectual somersault surely caps them all. Oh for a little intellectual honesty!

* * *

Non-Brahmins
and Panchamas.

A CONFERENCE of the so-called depressed classes of South India was held last week at Chidambaram, a town in the South Arcot District of Madras Presidency. The promoters of the conference gave it the name of "Congress" perhaps, to emphasise its political character. The address of the president, Rao Bahadur O. Kandaswami Chettiar, a well-known social reformer, was entirely political. We quite admit the urgency of the political awakening of the depressed classes, without which there can be no real democracy in the country, though we cannot help wishing that Mr. Kandaswami Chettiar had also dealt with the social and economic needs of that large community. His address is a vigorous attack on Sir P. Theogaraya Chettiar's leadership of the Non-Brahmin movement, which is described as having lost all its democratic character and become an instrument of reactionary landlordism. He shows how the Non-Brahmins in redressing their grievances against the Brahmins are adopting the same methods as the latter and are perpetuating in the present the abuses of the past.

"Retaliation and paying in one's own coin will not put South Indian life on a higher plane. The best way of vanquishing the Brahmin is not to use his own methods against him and against others whose interests clash with ours, but to show how higher methods pay in the long run. If we adopt his strategy and are actuated by his spirit of exclusiveness and aggressiveness, how are we better than he?"

The Non-Brahmin movement to be democratic and progressive should certainly have a progressive leader, which Sir P. Theogaraya Chettiar as certainly not.

* * *

Principles,
not Birth!

MR. KANDASWAMI CHETTIAR correctly depicts the weakness of the communal party system now prevailing in Madras when he says:

The two parties or groups in this Presidency are Brahmin and Non-Brahmin, and there is no chance of a Brahmin ever becoming a Non-Brahmin nor of a non-Brahmin ever becoming a Brahmin. The division is perpetual. There is no chance of the Brahmins ever getting into power, nor, as things stand at present, is there any opportunity of Non-Brahmins going out of office and exercising the wholesome function of an opposition. Birth as before has become a badge of political status. Consciousness of perpetual powerlessness (power?) cannot but produce irresponsible action, even as consciousness of perpetual powerlessness cannot but produce irresponsible criticism.

But the remedy suggested is impracticable, if not worse than the disease. He wants communal representation in the Ministry: two Ministers from Non-Brahmins, and one each from Brahmins, Muhammedans, Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians and Depressed Classes. The real remedy is to overcome the narrow communal feeling and organise parties on principles and not on birth. Then only can there be justice all round and amelioration of the oppressed sections of the population.

THE PROTECTION OF DESPOTISM.

ON Saturday last the Home Member introduced in the Legislative Assembly a Protection of Indian Princes Bill. The Assembly promptly rejected the motion for even the mere introduction of the Bill—an unusual procedure certainly and one for which we believe there exists no precedent in the British Parliament. All the more proof surely of the very strong feeling that exists against this Bill. But since The Government of India Act 1919 Section 26, definitely provides for the contingency of "either chamber of the legislature refusing leave to introduce any Bill," we really cannot follow some Anglo-Indian papers who see "great discourtesy to H. E. the Governor General" in the fact of the Assembly having acted in a manner provided for in the law, to which it owes its existence. This by the way.

But if the Assembly established a precedent by refusing leave to introduce this Bill, so has the Governor General, by availing himself for the first time of the permission given to him in the same section of the said Act on such a contingency arising, viz. that of "certifying that the passage of the Bill is essential for the safety, tranquillity or interests of British India or any part thereof and thereupon laying the Bill before the other chamber," as he did on Tuesday last.

What then is this Bill which is so essential for the "safety, tranquillity or interests of British India"? It is designed to "prevent dissemination by newspapers &c. of matter calculated to bring into hatred or contempt or excite disaffection against Princes and Chiefs of States in India or the Governments or administrations established in such States," and it is contended that the enactment of this Bill is called for, because it merely continues the protection hitherto enjoyed by these Princes &c. under the "Indian Press Act 1910" which has recently been repealed *in toto*. Section 4 of that Act punished the "printing &c. &c. of any words &c. &c. which are likely or may have a tendency, directly or indirectly, whether by inference, suggestion, allusion, metaphor, implication or otherwise to bring into hatred or contempt any Native Prince or Chief under the suzerainty of His Majesty, or to excite disaffection towards any such Prince or Chief"; the expression "disaffection" being explained as including "disloyalty and all feelings of enmity 'but excluding' comments repressing disapproval of the measures of any Native Prince or Chief with a view to obtain their alteration by lawful means."

The first point that strikes one in considering the alleged necessity for re-enacting a similar provision now, is the fact, clearly stated by none less than the Viceroy himself (in his opening speech on the 5th inst.) that "this protection to the Princes was first given by the Act of 1910." If the "safety, tranquillity or interests of British India" were not affected by the absence of any such legislation during the centuries stretching from the first

advent of the British in India until 1910: what has happened since, that should make so novel a departure necessary? The Viceroy, in the speech already quoted, states that the Government of India and the Secretary of State for India had been in correspondence on the subject and had "decided that we are bound by agreements and in honour to afford to the Princes" this measure of protection. What then are these agreements which must have been entered into since 1910? Neither he nor Sir William Vincent, when asking leave to introduce the Bill, have told us. The expression "bound in honour" has been no more elucidated; but if such elucidation in the nature of the expression must be difficult, no such plea can be put forward on behalf of the words "bound by agreements." If, as the members of the Legislature are now suddenly being told, there are such agreements, they have a right to know them, by chapter and by verse; and they and the whole Indian public are particularly entitled to know the consideration, for which such agreements were suddenly entered into.

Before going further, it is well to clear out of the way any possible misconceptions as to the measure of protection already enjoyed by these States and Rulers under the common law of the land. Let us remember then that already the incitement to violence or to crime of any sort is punishable and that a person in British India who so incites others to commit outside of British India an act of violence is committing an offence under the Penal Code of British India. Let us further bear in mind that blackmail, libel &c. committed in British India against Indian Princes expose the accused newspaper to prosecution in the Courts under whose jurisdiction the said newspaper comes. It is therefore clear, that every Prince has already the remedy of vindicating his honour against scurrilous attacks in the British Indian press, by instituting a suit for libel in a British Indian Court; that already the instigation or abetment in British India of any crime to be committed in an Indian State is punishable in British India.

That being so, we again ask, what has happened that has made these provisions of the law, which were deemed quite sufficient up to 1910, to be such no longer? From the Home Member's speech it would almost seem, that "the agreements" referred to by him consist in a message conveyed by H. R. H. the Duke of Connaught during his visit for the inauguration of the new Assemblies, that "the rights, dignities and privileges of the Indian Princes must be protected." If that is so, one is irresistibly driven to the conclusion that the event which makes this new departure so essential, is the Reform Act; is the fact that thereby—in the very words of H. R. H.—"the principle of autocracy has all been abandoned." And if that is so, the "rights, dignities and privileges of the Indian Princes" which are now to be so protected consist in nothing more nor less than—their Autocracy.

Is that, then, the honourable agreement which

must now be kept, that the Princes and Chiefs, in consideration of not impeding the abolition of autocratic rule in British India, were promised the permanence of their own autocratic rule? And are we to understand, then, that these "loyal" Princes would have made mischief, if such pledge had not been given at the time; and that even today the "safety, tranquillity and interests of British India" are imperilled, unless these "loyal" Princes get their pound of flesh?

If other conclusions are possible, we should be glad to hear of them. In the meantime the Indian public will remember the way in which H. E. the Viceroy on Feb. 9th 1921 emphasized how on that day "the conception of the British Government as a benevolent despotism was finally renounced;" how his successor told the assembled Princes only last year that the protection demanded by them would "require very great consideration;" and how now suddenly this "measure of protection" is being forced through over the heads of the Indian Legislature—after having been "the subject of correspondence between my Government and the Secretary of State."

The impression is inevitable, that this measure is now being put forward, not so much by the Government of India, as by the Secretary of State of a British Government of out-and-out reactionaries; that it is not the Indian Princes who make this Bill the price of their loyalty and who are now riding roughshod over the new-won liberties of British India: but that it is the sinister forces now ruling at Whitehall, which are pursuing the policy of saving India for autocracy by entrenching it forever, as they hope, in the dominions of the Seven Hundred Irresponsible Governments of Feudatory India.

MR. INNES ON MINING.

IT was a very feeble reply which the Member for Commerce and Industry, Mr. Innes, made in the Legislative Assembly on September 20 to the earnest advocacy on the part of Mr. Joshi, of the prohibition of the employment of women below ground. Mr. Joshi had in the course of his speech remarked on the striking contrast between the Government of India's attitude towards factory legislation and that towards mining legislation. While in England and other countries the need for restrictions on mining work was felt sooner and it was recognised that more stringent regulations were required in the case of the mining industry, it was otherwise in India. The factory law was enacted in this country first, and the mining law afterwards; and when the Mining Act was passed at last, it contained no labour provisions whatever, and even when they are being introduced now, they are of a far lower level than those embodied in the Factory Act. Now, what was Mr. Innes's reply to this. He did not deny that the Government of India had been tardy in this matter, but he sought to justify the belated and

hesitating action of Government by denying that there was any analogy between factory labour and mining labour. Indeed there is a difference between the two, but it is a difference which imperatively calls for mining regulations being more rigorous than factory regulations. For work in mines is more arduous and hazardous than work in factories. Mr. Innes, of course, denied the truth of this statement but we do not propose to adduce any proof here except to point out that Lord Curzon, than whom Mr. Innes would not recognise a higher authority, called mining "an occupation at all times severe and sometimes perilous." There is only one point of difference between work in factories and work in mines which seems at first sight to tell in favour of the former, and Mr. Innes was not slow to mention it. A factory covers a very small area and the operatives working in it are consequently crowded. The workings in mines however do not go on merely on the surface, but also at different levels below ground. There is therefore more space in mines than in factories. This is quite true, but it must be recognised that this advantage is secured only by sending the work people underground; that is, by denying them fresh air and light. And this is precisely what makes miners' work more disagreeable, unhealthy and unsafe than that of factory operatives. Mr. Innes only knows that miners are less cramped than factory labourers, but he does not know that they are engaged in taking coal or other minerals out of the bowels of the earth, while mill employees work on the surface; or if he does, to him it makes no difference whether work is carried on above ground or below ground. Mr. Innes pointed out another difference between factory labour and labour on the mines as being to the advantage of the latter. He referred to the independence of miners, to their being free to commence work when they liked and leave it when they liked. This is not much of an advantage as the necessities of existence in practice make them labour, though engaged on piece work, as if they were engaged by the day. But even if there were a considerable advantage in the fact that the miners are independent, it does not follow as Mr. Innes implied, and as the Mining Committee of 1895 (consisting of a majority of employers) openly said, that there need not be any restrictions or as many and as stringent restrictions on the employment of operatives in mines as in factories. It is not only in India that miners are paid by the work they turn out and are consequently independent. It is so all the world over. But in no country are mining regulations less strict than factory regulations; indeed they are more strict.

Mr. Joshi also said in his speech that on both the occasions when the Government of India were moving to make any regulations in the interest of the miners, they did so as a result of the pressure of outside agencies. The Berlin Conference of 1890 led to the Act of 1901, and the recent Washington Conference is the mainspring of the present Bill.

This is not a statement which is likely to soothe the *amour propre* of any Government; and Mr. Innes seemed to resent it. He denied that the International Labour Conference of Washington had anything to do with the present legislation, and in support of his contention referred to the fact that the Government of India obtained the services of Mr. Treharne Rees to examine the problem of mining and appointed a Committee to consider his conclusions, prior to the Washington Conference. To those who have not studied the mining question Mr. Innes's argument must have seemed very plausible, but those who are in touch with the question are aware that both these investigations were conducted in the interest of mine-owners. Mr. Rees was brought out to this country "to advise on the best means of securing greater economy in the production and consumption of coal;" not to advise on measures calculated to improve labour conditions. Mr. Innes gave considerable credit of the Government of India for the fact that, before the Washington Conference met, they were occupied in considering the question of shifts, but was it being considered in the interest of labourers or proprietors? Mr. Rees recommended shifts in order to enforce discipline and control on labourers and with the object that "the management can be assured of a fairly constant supply of labour." Nor did the Committee reject the proposal because they thought it would hurt the interests of labour. Neither the appointment nor the conclusions of Mr. Rees and the Committee, had any reference whatever to the improvement of labour conditions.

Mr. Innes charged Mr. Joshi with concerning himself exclusively with labour interests and ignoring those of the mining industry. It is not so; the larger measure of protection which Mr. Joshi asks for in the interest of labour can be afforded without injuring the industry. Mr. Innes, in order to prove the impracticability of the prohibition of the underground employment of women, asked shall we pass a drastic piece of legislation reducing at one stroke the number of coal miners by one third and therefore reducing the output of the key-industry by one third? In the first place one may ask by way of answer, if the prohibition of women from underground work is *per se* desirable, as Mr. Innes himself acknowledged, is it a reform which can be carried out in stages; rather is it not one of those reforms which can be undertaken only *per saltum*? Was not the prohibition of female labour down the mines enforced in England in 1842 at one stroke? Did it harm the industry though it might have caused some slight dislocation for the time being? But it is entirely wrong to suppose that a reduction of one third of the labour force will reduce the output by one third. There is very large scope for the introduction of mechanical appliances and improved methods of the cutting, fitting and conveying of coal and other minerals. How much fewer workpeople will be required if mechanical coal-cutters are employed, will be understood by the

evidence of Mr Kirk before the Coalfields Committee. The latter said; "We are getting four tons per man and should go up to 5 tons. We only got 7 or 8 cwt (i. e. nearly $\frac{1}{3}$ of a ton) per man in hard-cut places, but no coal is being produced at this mine by pick labour." Machine-cutting is not being introduced in this country chiefly because employers get manual labour at too easy rates. For instance, the representative of the Indian Mining Federation told the Coalfields Committee (p. 80 of the report): "Universal introduction will, in my opinion, be unsuitable and unwelcome, because labour is too cheap." Another employer, Mr. M. R. Heron, said; "For opening out a mine rapidly, mechanical coal-cutting is a success. It has not been used more because output is already excessive." Lord Curzon himself said in the Imperial Council when the first Indian Mining Bill came on for discussion: "I think too that Government should not shut its eyes to the fact that in a good many cases the labour of women and children is really engaged not for domestic reasons but simply for economy's sake; in other words, because it is cheaper than that of men." All this will show that with improved methods of cutting and carrying coal, the exclusion of the women from the mines can be carried out without detriment to the industry or the mine-owners. In England also the mine-owners bore testimony to the fact that the prohibition of women from underground work had no prejudicial effect on the industry. We quote here only two statements from Hansard, Vol. LXIII for 1842, col. 1339:—

"Since young children and females have been excluded from—s mines, we never had occasion to increase the price of coal."

"Women ought to be entirely disused underground; and no boys ought to be permitted to go below under twelve years of age. These have been the rules in this colliery for some time past, and already the good effects are being felt; the houses of the workmen are clean and comfortable the children are well looked after by their mothers, the young women are going out to service, and the whole workpeople have a better moral aspect. Colliers prior to our regulation emigrated in the proportion of one-fourth; but now not in that of one-tenth."

The moral effects of the disemployment of women are of course incalculably beneficial, but even mere economic effects are not prejudicial to the growth of the industry; and there is really no excuse for the Government of India to refrain from the prohibition of female labour underground, except, as we said on a previous occasion, lack of vision and courage on their part.

THE BOMBAY RENT ACT.

THE two Rent Acts which were passed in the year 1918 to protect the people of Bombay from the tyranny of the rapacious landlords, expire on the 31st of August 1923, and therefore a new Bill has to come before the Bombay Council which amends these existing Acts. In the year 1920 the Hon. Mr. P. C. Sethna proposed the appointment of a Committee to improve upon these Acts with a view to redress the grievances of the landlords,

who complained that their tenants took an undue advantage of the protection given to them by legislation. This committee sat for several months and examined witnesses both from among landlords and tenants. The report was sent to Government in October 1921 but it took nearly one year to reach the public. The Rent Act Amendment Bill, which comes before this session of the Council is based on the recommendations of the Committee. Every clause in this draft is favourable to the landlords and there is nothing which is to the advantage of the tenant. The main provisions of this proposed legislation are that (1) the period of the operation of the Act should expire on the 31st of August 1924; (2) the landlord should have an increase of 33½ per cent. on the rents of January 1916 including the 10 per cent. which he has already got; (3) subletting of premises should be disallowed; (4) the rents of new buildings should be those which the landlord can get on the principle of supply and demand; but once he charges a certain rent, he cannot increase it.

This legislation is applicable to the City of Bombay, Salsette, Karachi, the Cantonment of Poona, the Poona Suburban Municipal area and Aden. As soon as Government expressed their desire to bring the Rent Act Amendment Bill before the Council, the tenants of Bombay held several meetings protesting against the proposed increase of 33½ per cent. on the rents of 1916 and, also against the short period. The Corporation of Bombay spent several days in discussing the question.

The landlords of Bombay have already got an increase of 10 per cent. on the rents of January 1916. They say that it is a poor return for their investments. The figures which the Improvement Trust of Bombay has supplied, show that from their several estates in the City they got a return of 5½ per cent. in 1916. 10 per cent. rise on this means at least 6 per cent. There is one more consideration which ought to be taken into account. A private landlord generally has to spend less on his buildings than a body like the Improvement Trust, and the rents charged by the former are always more than those charged by the latter. Thus the return to a landlord may be said to be not less than 7 per cent. Besides, from buildings constructed before 1916 when the prices of building materials were very low, the return is much higher.

The rise in the value of house property in the years 1917 to 1920 was due to speculation and it should not therefore guide us in determining rents. Properties have considerably gone down in value and many persons who paid fancy prices have now come to grief, but it is not fair to penalise the tenant for the speculative tendency of his landlord. The owners of old buildings grumble, because those who build new houses have no limit placed on the rents which they should receive. When we want many new houses and when the construction of many new buildings is the only lasting remedy for

the present state of things, we must somehow or other induce capitalists to invest their money in house property, and under the present circumstances, when money is scarce, every facility must be given to a person who constructs a new building. The owners of old houses urge another grievance. People who invested money in the shares of mills, they say, have made large fortunes, whereas property owners in Bombay have to be satisfied with much less. They forget the risk involved in investments yielding larger returns. Besides, the possession of landed property gives one a higher social position in the eyes of the people. That is also some compensation for a lower return from land investments.

It is urged that poor landlords will be hit hard in case there is no substantial increase in the present rents. From the figures supplied by the Bombay Corporation we learn there are 7409 property owners whose income from rent is less than Rs. 300 a year. It is difficult to say how many of them are really poor. Most of them must have other sources of income and some may be quite rich in spite of the small income from their landed property. The number of poor landlords thus remains uncertain. Then we are told there are many widows among these who are owners of property. Out of 886 widows, who own landed property, 243 have an income less than Rs. 300 a year. Even in their case the number of poor widows, who have no considerable income from other sources, remains an uncertainty. The attempt to make out a case for poor landlords is not convincing. However, if some practical suggestion is made to relieve those who are really poor, it ought to receive sufficient consideration.

Some tenants complain about the clause which prohibits the subletting of premises by tenants. It must be admitted that some of them have misused the power given to them by law and hence the necessity for protecting the landlord against such misuse. A case came to light some time back, in which a tenant took a house on lease for 5 years at a monthly rent of Rs. 500. It was agreed that the taxes were to be paid by the landlords. The tenant then sublet the premises for Rs. 3000 a month to different sub-tenants. The Assessment Department charged the taxes on Rs. 3000 and the poor landlord had to pay more than what he earned by way of rent. This is an extreme case but there are many cases in which injustice is done to the landlord more or less. Some control over subletting is therefore necessary. As regards the period of the operation of the new legislation there is not so much difference between the views of the two parties. Two years are considered extremely short. Either no period should be fixed and the Act should be cancelled as soon as it is found to be unnecessary, or five years should be put down as the definite period.

The Committee appointed at the suggestion of Mr. Sethna took two years to publish its report. The period mentioned therein expires after two years. Thus to provide for the time immediately after

that, we must appoint a Committee to-day so that by 31st August 1924 we shall have our legislation for the time that follows. The Development Department promised us many things. The public knows what it has done during the last 18 months. The present conditions as regards housing are sure to last for some time and if at all the period of the Rent Act is to depend upon the completion of the 50,000 tenements promised by that Department, there should be no objection to fix the completion of these tenements as the time for the abolition of the Act. Commonsense should tell us that it cannot be earlier than five years.

After all, the question of the Rent Act depends upon our view of property and life. Life must be considered more valuable than property, and it is after all not a very great sacrifice that is demanded of the landlords. Here are more than a million people, 80 per cent of whom are living in one room tenements, having the bare necessities of life and in many cases bordering on starvation. To compel them to pay $23\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. more rent in these hard times, when unemployment is such a serious question and the days of prosperity are gone, is to make their hard conditions harder still. Therefore the increase of rent at such a time is not at all justified.

T. A. KULKARNI.

THIRD CLASS RAILWAY PASSENGERS.

Mr. N. M. Joshi, the Nominated Representative of Labour interests in the Assembly, whose speech on the resolution relating to the improvement of the third class passenger service, appeared in a recent issue of the SERVANT OF INDIA, has done a distinct service to a class of the travelling public hitherto unbefriended by our public men and the Government alike. The resolution which was carried against Government opposition by a large majority, reflects no less credit on the non-official members than on the mover of the resolution. It is, as rightly pointed out by Mr. Joshi, difficult to remember a single important committee which considered this question in its entirety. Apart from the enquiry made by the late Mr. Thomas Robertson who was sent out by the Secretary of State for India in 1901 as a Special Commissioner for Indian Railways, the committees which, within living memory, have enquired into railway matters, were the Select Committees of 1878-79 and 1884, the Committee on Indian Railway Finance and Administration of 1907-09, the secret Inchape Conference of 1911-12 and the Indian Railway Committee of 1920-21. None of these enquiries however, so far as we can remember, dealt exhaustively with the requirements of the third class passenger, although even to the limited extent they dealt with these requirements the recommendations made have not been carried out with anything like the thoroughness or even the seriousness they deserved. For instance, Mr. Robertson made the following recommendations

affecting the interests of the third class passenger :

(i) Third class accommodation on trains should be increased.

(ii) Third class carriages should be provided with latrine accommodation.

(iii) Means of communication between passengers and the train staff should be provided on all trains.

(iv) Lighting of trains should be improved by substituting gas or electricity for vegetable oil.

(v) Native refreshment rooms should be provided at convenient stations.

(vi) The number of booking offices should be increased.

(vii) All the booking offices should be opened sufficiently early.

(viii) Third class passengers should be afforded reasonable protection from intimidation and harassment by the police and the railway staff.

(ix) Third class carriages should be run through to the final destination of through trains.

One of the recommendations of the Special Commissioner was the abolition of the Railway Branch of the Government of India Secretariat and the institution in its place of a small Board composed of men enjoying freedom from local traditions and prejudices and specially qualified by railway experience to manage the railways in India on commercial principles with regard both to economy and public convenience. This Board was duly constituted early in 1905 and it was expected that it would carry out, among others, the few but very sensible and overdue improvements in the facilities provided for the third class passenger. The recommendation which excels all others in importance and urgency is that relating to the adequate provision of third class coaches. It will, therefore, be our endeavour in this article to see how far this important improvement has been carried out, particularly during the pre-war years, when the difficulties produced by the war and its after-math had not come into being and could not therefore be pressed into service to explain away the state of affairs as it stood even before the war.

One of the stock excuses frequently advanced in connection with overcrowding is that family parties desire to travel together in the same compartment. We have always had grave doubts about the real extent of this general desire, but whatever the extent, as pointed out by the Special Commissioner for Indian Railways in paragraph 173 of his report, passengers, especially those going on a long journey, would not wilfully overcrowd themselves, if sufficient accommodation was provided in trains for them: while in so far as those, if any, who wilfully desire to overcrowd themselves, are concerned, the elimination of small compartments has exhausted all the force the excuse may have had at any time previously. Another of the stock arguments is that overcrowding is inevitable and that it occurs all the world over and is not by any means peculiar to India. This only evades

the real issue which is, not whether overcrowding is an inevitable normal feature of railway service, but whether the extent to which it obtains in India is also an inevitable feature common to all countries. On this point we have the authority of the Special Commissioner to say that even as long as two decades ago the average number of passengers in a train was greater in India than in any other country in the world, that the system of conveying pilgrims in goods wagons in India, at all events to the extent then obtaining, also pointed to the absence of proper facilities and that generally speaking, the amount of stock provided on the trains was inadequate. In support of his statement the figure quoted by the Special Commissioner against, say, the Great Indian Peninsula Railway was 154.41 passengers in a train. It rose to 160.81 in 1913-14 and to as much as 229.45 in 1920-21. These figures are significant enough, but what makes matters worse is that concurrently with this increase in the number of passengers, there has been a reduction in the average number of third class coaches in trains. For instance, during the year 1905 the highest number of third class coaches in a broad gauge train composed of 16.43 vehicles was 10.26; equal to 62 percent. During 1913-14 it was 8.43 in a train of 16.21 vehicles, bringing down the percentage to 58, while during 1920-21 it was 9.75 in a train of 17.30 vehicles, still further reducing the percentage to 56. The conclusion therefore is inevitable that instead of increasing the third class accommodation on trains as recommended by the Special Commissioner, there has been a distinct going back even upon the position as it stood in 1905.

The causes of the neglect of the third class passenger in regard to the accommodation provided, appear to be:—

(1) unnecessary incurrence of responsibility for the provision of rolling stock for non-state Railways;

(2) unequal distribution of funds as between carriages and wagons; and

(3) unequal distribution of funds as between third class carriages and carriages of the upper classes. The one constant complaint of Government has been that they have never been able to get sufficient funds for their railway requirements, and yet Government have undertaken to find rolling stock at their own expense for over 2400 miles of railway not belonging to themselves. This, so far as we can see, is anything but sound business.

As regard the results proceeding from the second cause, taking the Great Indian Peninsula Railway again, during the 14¼ years ending on 31-3-1921, Rs 489.04 lakhs was spent on carriages and wagons, bringing the total value of the stock of each kind on that railway to Rs 284.37 lakhs and Rs. 599.04 respectively. The expenditure on wagons was more than twice that on carriages, the exact figures being Rs. 33.30 and Rs. 155.84 lakhs respectively. This disproportion will be justified if it can be proved that the actual require-

ment of goods traffic are twice those of passenger traffic. It therefore becomes necessary to examine whether there is anything in the statistics published by Government to show that the requirements of the two classes of traffic do stand in this unequal proportion. It must be remembered that Mr. Robertson, so far from considering that the wagon stock was inadequate, gave it as his opinion (vide paras. 181-190 of his report) that the fact that the extra wagons had to be maintained even though they lie idle for a greater part of the year, does not in any way justify the large excess of wagons over normal requirements which is now maintained on some of the railways. The stock of wagons on railways even in 1903 was considered to be more than sufficient and an increase in the running speed and the elimination of the delays on the lines indicated by him was calculated to help materially to develop business, reduce working expenses and increase receipts with only half the wagon stock. What, however, we do actually find is that the surplussage of wagon stock over the number necessary to carry the traffic has been increased to an enormous extent. In 1905 the number of passengers carried was 248,157,000, and the number of coaches was 22,143 (page 2062 of the Leg. Assembly Debates, Vol. 11 No. 25). Thus each vehicle carried on an average 11,622 passengers per annum. In 1915-16 the numbers of passengers carried rose to 461,81,000 for which, at the average rate of 11,622 passengers per vehicle, there should have been a total supply of 39,957 coaches, whereas the actual supply available was 31,199 or a shortage of 8,758 coaching vehicles. As regards goods traffic, in 1905 the total tonnage hauled was 54,936,000 and the number of wagons was 121,135 giving an average of 454 tons per wagon. In 1915-16 the tonnage rose to 82,49,00, which at the average of 454 tons gives a requirement of 181,716 wagons against an actual supply of 198,139. This means that the railways were overstocked to the extent of 16,423 goods wagons against a shortage of 8,758 coaching vehicles.

It is impossible to find out from Government the exact relative strength of the different classes of coaching stock or the amounts spent on them. But there is a very significant statement which Government used to publish with their annual Railway Administration Report up to 1913-20, showing the percentage of freight upon carrying capacity hauled. This statement shows that the net result up to the end of the year 1919-20 of the policy pursued in the distribution of funds between the different classes of passenger stock is that the excess of stock provided over actual requirements is far greater in the case of the upper class passengers than in the case of the third class passengers. For instance, during the year 1919-20, the percentage of freight upon the carrying capacity hauled on, say, the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, was 12.89 in the case of 1st class, 20.67 in the case of 2nd class and 54.62 in the case of 3rd class, so that while the surplussage of 3rd class

carriages over the traffic actually offering or carried is only 45 p. c. it is 79 p. c. in the case of 2nd class carriages and as much as 87 p. c. in the case of 1st class carriages. We are fully alive to the fact that there must be a certain surplusage in any case, but there is no reason why this surplus account should be so unequally distributed. The object of the change of Government control introduced in 1905 was that the Railway in India should

be managed on commercial principles with regard both to economy and public convenience, and one may imagine that this surplusage is in direct proportion to the profits earned from the different classes of traffic, but a little examination will show that this is far from being the case. We give below a statement showing the results of the 10½ years ended the 31st March 1920 on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway:—

Year.	Half year.	Loss per	Profit per	1st Class	3rd Class	Total loss	Total profit
		1st Class vehicle mile.	3rd Class vehicle mile.	vehicle mileage in thousands	vehicle mileage in thousands	in 1st Class traffic in thousands	in 3rd Class traffic in thousands.
1910	1st half	Pias. - 5.79	Pias. 24.10	7156	30161	Rs. 216	Rs. 3785
	2nd half	-10.42	14.52	7193	31723	390	2399
1911	1st half	- 8.43	23.10	7254	30876	318	3715
	2nd half	- 5.30	20.50	8580	31102	237	3321
1912	1st half	- 9.48	47.62	7783	35335	384	8764
	2nd half	-11.45	20.05	8591	36258	512	3786
1913-14	1st half	-16.20	21.67	8637	38664	729	4364
	2nd half	-11.95	20.45	9618	37695	599	4015
1914-15	1st half	-23.26	11.66	8980	39607	1088	2405
	2nd half	- 8.30	18.65	9355	40370	404	3921
1915-16	1st half	-16.62	15.50	8431	40152	730	3241
	2nd half	- 9.62	17.27	9142	42080	458	3785
1916-17	1st half	- 9.48	22.41	9098	45040	449	5257
	2nd half	- 5.35	21.57	9195	41161	256	4624
1917-18	1st half	- 4.80	33.78	8616	40706	215	7162
	2nd half	+ 0.43	34.20	8949	37980	+ 20	6765
1918-19	1st half	- 2.81	36.74	9008	42082	208	8052
	2nd half	- 5.99	35.68	8519	40107	266	7453
1919-20	1st half	-11.65	41.11	9369	41836	569	8953
	2nd half	- 7.87	41.86	10910	43495	447	9483
Average ...		-183.84	522.44	174384	766430	-8455	105055
Total ...		- 9.19	26.12	8719	38321	- 422	5252

It will be seen from the statement that during the period in question, while a profit of no less than 1050.55 lakhs was wrung out of the 3rd class passenger, the first class passenger traffic not only did not give a single pie as profit, but involved a loss of as much as Rs. 84.55 lakhs. Such is the commercial management of Railways with regard both to economy and public convenience: economy with respect to the third class passenger who gives large profits, and public convenience in respect of the first class passenger who inflicts huge losses!

ECONOMY.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE.

What is Civilization? We have on several occasions referred to the extremely interesting developments which are going on in Mexico. Our readers will remember that the great and so highly civilized Government of the U. S. A. has not yet seen its way to "recognise" that of Mexico—that poor, savage country. As bearing out the utter unfitness of President Obregon's government for the comity of Western Civilization, we noticed that Mexico's Secretary of Public Instruction has recently claimed that his government spent a greater proportion of its revenue on education, than any other country in the world; the educational budget having risen to the respectable sum of Mex. \$57, 233, 832. Add to this that military expenditure has been reduced

by 50%—and you will understand, how hopelessly out of tune these wild Latin American brigands are with the old civilizations of the West which have made Europe what it is. Take that banner-bearer of culture, France; listen to what one of her best-known military experts recently confided to the Paris correspondent of the *Morning Post* (of August 12th): and then judge whether Mexico is fit to be "recognised" and to enter so illustrious and cultured a company! "Chemical Warfare" said this friend of the human race, "specially the asphyxiating gases, have certainly not finished their role in future warfare. Aeroplanes dropping mustard gas bombs on a town will, in addition to causing the death of many of its inhabitants, render the place absolutely uninhabitable for a number of days. It will also have the great moral effect of tending to ruin the resisting power of a nation. The effect of this gas, causing as it does dreadful pains and in many cases permanent blindness, is particularly impressive for the onlooker. The various nations should therefore particularly direct scientific research to the betterment of mustard gas; gas experts would endeavour to render it more persistent and dangerous. Other gases are also under consideration. Among them are certain substances intended to cause temporary loss of control and clear thinking to those coming under their effects. Scientists assume that the moral equilibrium of the individual, his faculty of reasoning and intelligence depend upon the smooth operation of certain

organs. Every penetrating gas which could reach those organs, or, at any rate, influence them, would determine the temporary insanity of its victims. We could thus, after an attack, witness a whole city staggering to and fro, the inhabitants being deprived of all moral and physical control and as unconscious as drunkards or idiots. "

France's "Leadership." A perfectly charming outlook. Not to be outdone, the famous inventor, Mr. Thos. A. Edison, claims that the American gas "Lewisite" could today wipe out the whole population of London within three hours of an aerial attack. And be pleased to observe that all these discussions, all these avowals of intensive preparation for chemical warfare are taking place, when the ink is hardly dry on the signatures of the Washington Covenant which solemnly ruled out the use of gas in any future war! International jurists are holding a big Congress just now in Buenos Ayres (another one of these benighted Latin American places!), to invent machinery for making "chemical warfare" internationally impossible: but, poor dears, what success can they expect from civilized Europe? Our own inimitable Mr. George alone can be trusted to bless the Buenos Ayres Congress with one hand and chemical "Progress" as applied to warfare with the other. Has he not just made a great and most moving speech to his fellow Non-conformists at their Westminster Convention, vowing that he would devote the rest of his life to Peace, the League of Nations and the Abolition of War—and within exactly one week of that date made an impassioned appeal to add at once or sooner 500 aeroplanes to the Empire's air fleet? France of course notoriously outnumbers England in this, as in most other military respects—so much so that a great English publicist believes that the constant giving in of Mr. George to M. Poincaré is due to nothing else but recognition of this British military inferiority and "the 800,000 good reasons" which England has to fear France. Meanwhile Germany, prohibited by the Versailles Treaty from manufacturing any aeroplane engines, has revolutionized flying by discovering "sail planing" i. e. flying with aeroplanes without engines! Truly, as "The Manchester Guardian" says, there is no help against these Germans except the excision of all their brains! Fancy mere youths from technical high schools remaining for over three hours in the air, soaring, manoeuvring, tacking, rising, landing, without any motive power except that supplied by the currents of the air! Yet such are the achievements of a competition recently held on the Rhoen Hills. Some people! Which reminds us that there has just been published a monumental work on the League of Nations Constitution by Prof. Walter Schücking, the brother, we believe, of our own esteemed "Continental Letter" contributor. And so Germany, considered unfit to belong to the League, has alone shown itself capable of supplying the needed scien-

tific, juridical exposition and commentary on the constitution of the self-same League! Well, well.

THE publication of Mr. F. Bausman's *Let France Explain* (Allen and Unwin, 10s 6d) is significant of the tremendous revulsion of feeling which has come over American public opinion in regard to the late war. America which at first paid little attention to the European conflict and dismissed the merits of the two contending sides as "six of one and half a dozen of the other", did as a matter of fact out-herod Herod in portizanship, once it had entered the War. The Central Powers were all unrelieved black, the Allies purest lily-white: thus ran the easy creed. It speaks volumes for the crass stupidity and criminal ambition of France, that so great a store of good will and confidence should in so short a time have been completely dissipated. For that is the principal conclusion we draw from this arresting look by a former judge of the Supreme Court at Washington. Mr. Bausman indeed not only would no longer call Germany black and France white, but goes so far as to contend that Germany is altogether innocent and that the one archfiend and enemy of the human race is—France. Personally we cannot subscribe to this thesis; but we welcome the indication that even in America there has begun the great "re-valuation of values" regarding responsibility for the late war, for without such moral and judicial re-orientation there cannot be any Peace worthy of the name. The great myth of an unprepared France and Russia being pounced upon by a Germany super-ready for "The Day" has of course been exploded. It is Russia, we know now, who prepared and instigated and began the war, to bolster up its tottering Tsardom; it was a Russian secret society of the "Black Hand" which murdered the Austrian Archduke; it was Russian designs on Constantinople, the break-up of Austria-Hungary and Russian hegemony in the Balkans, which were the object of the war. France aided and abetted, as it saw its opportunity for taking revenge for 1870-71. But if Germany was not the proximate cause of this war, its blatant militarism and junkerism, its arrogance and megalomania, were indispensable ingredients, to make the war possible. The only conclusion is that "we are all miserable sinners": but until we all make that general confession, it is hopeless to expect sanity to return to our international relations.

"FOREIGN AFFAIRS" of August contains a most illuminating sidelight on the "Scrap of Paper" propaganda which was so much responsible for raising to the requisite fever-heat the indignation of the English people—an indignation at the wanton invasion of a defenceless country, whose very integrity and independence had been solemnly guaranteed (in 1839) by the subsequent invaders; an indignation, without which it would

have been altogether impossible to get England into the war or to keep it there. Mr. Morel in the article mentioned reminds us that at the very time that England's manhood sprang to arms to protect Belgium, the British Government abetted and shared in an outrage on a neutral, defenceless Power, absolutely parallel to that committed by Germany on Belgium. For in 1911 Britain and Japan had renewed a treaty, one of the provisions of which solemnly guaranteed the integrity of China. Yet within four years Japan invaded Chinese territory, then a neutral power, and occupied it for a length of 150 miles, in order to execute a flank attack on Kiaochow, the German colony in China, and in that attack a British contingent actually participated. And then these diplomats dare to speak of the "honour" of their country which somebody else, *i. e.* the common people, is called upon to defend! If ever the name of England has been dishonoured, it has been by those directors of its foreign policies, who, unknown to the people or to their representatives, have again and again broken treaty pledges and sacrificed the rights of defenceless third parties, because it suited their book at the time. Thus Korea and China were sacrificed to Japan, as before Persia had been sacrificed to Russia—and then Englishmen wonder that "English prestige in the East has deteriorated!"

The Chinese Puzzle.

MEANWHILE China continues in a state of confusion which has become chronic during the last ten years and which becomes increasingly difficult for an onlooker to disentangle. The main reason perhaps for this difficulty lies in the unreliability and paucity of news. Everybody by this time is familiar with the three persons who are holding the stage—Sun Yat Sen in Canton, Wu Pei Fu at Hankau and Chang Tso Lin at Mukden. Dr. Sun is now once more a refugee, General Wu holds Peking and has set up a new government there, whilst Chang, though pushed out of Chili, holds impregnably the whole of Manchuria. Now Chang has always been looked upon abroad as a Japanophil; much to one's surprise a reliable correspondent just back from there (Mr. Orrin Keith) reports that the Chang regime is liked by everybody in Manchuria, except the Japanese! Again, a critical student of Chinese affairs must constantly bear in mind that English news is inveterately biassed against Dr. Sun Yat Sen, who at the best is always described as "weak," "phantastic," and, most damning of all in English eyes,—an "idealist doctrinaire." It will be remembered that he was reported to have entered into an alliance with Chang Tso Lin: it now turns out, that there is no truth in that at all. General Chang apparently approached Dr. Sun and told him, he was out to end military dictatorship: to which Sun replied, that he was glad to hear it and when he had achieved it, would talk to him again about it. Meantime, Wu Pei Fu on his part says he is abolishing the military dictatorship, also

of course by military force. And for all the fair stories one hears of his success, one wonders whether Wu will give the supreme test of sincerity by ultimately abolishing himself. One wonders—and feels anything but sanguine.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NATIONALIZATION OF VICE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—Next to the *Indian Social Reformer* I dare say the public is indebted to you for your review of the Bombay Prostitution Committee report in your last issue. May I just raise a point through you if the scope of the present enquiry may not be widened with advantage outside the limits of the city and Island of Bombay. If the legislature is to be moved at all to a Bill, municipal or otherwise, is it not time now for other big cities to take the hint and to cleanse their own stables? I have already consulted some friends both in the Cantonment and the City of Poona, and they do not seem inclined to think that our city is after all so meritorious in this wise as its name denotes. Social legislation ought to be a test of our recent reforms. If we avail ourselves of them with regard to our social regeneration in a businesslike way we need not be afraid of even the threats of Mr. Lloyd George against the reforms.

As to the liquor traffic, to which some of the most civilized Governments, including our own, seem to have almost established a prescriptive right, it is nothing but another form of nationalizing a very gross vice. Even America where prohibition has scored the highest record does not promise to a prove consistent exception to this rule. The following extract from the *Literary Digest* on the Bootlegging Menace in U. S. A. is very unpleasant reading indeed: "Rum-running has assumed organized and formidable proportions, because the prohibition law is an unpopular one and because the national thirst was by no means quenched by the enactment of the Volstead Act. Men in all walks of life are conniving in the crime of bootlegging. These criminals sit in legislative chambers, both state and national. Among them are highly placed men—Judges, bankers, lawyers, and millionaire merchants. Political intrigue is hard at work in support of an unhampered liquor flow. A multitude who always find it difficult to get an honest living, including burglars, gamblers, pick-pockets, and confidence men, have abandoned those uncertain and dangerous pursuits for this much safer and more profitable one. It is believed that seventy-five percent. of the bootleggers of New York are recruited from the alien classes. Wealth may be acquired in a short time and then the person may avoid the law by returning to his own country." By the way what is our Excise Committee doing? They don't seem to be in a particular hurry about their task. Why not? Wayfarer in your last issue was hard on the Ministers in Behar. His visit to some of our Ministers over here should I think be highly welcome.

Ahalyasharam.
Poona City,
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