

THE Servant of India

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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

THE Servants of India Society will take its humble share in relief work in South India and on the west coast. As Secretary of an influential committee that has been formed in Bombay, Mr. Devadhar is organising the collection of funds in Bombay and elsewhere from big and small alike. As many members of the Society as could be spared from other work have been asked to go to the affected area to acquaint themselves with the needs of each district and to be in a position to suggest the best way of utilising the funds which the Bombay Committee will be able to collect. One fact that has got to be realised even at the outset is that the area affected is so large and the damage done so great that no non-official organisation can give adequate relief even though it be of a supplementary nature. But a good deal of misery can be alleviated if all the agencies, official and non-official, local and outside, be properly co-ordinated. Fortunately such co-ordination is much easier on this occasion than was the case with the relief organised in connection with the Moplah rebellion. Working on non-party and non-communal lines the members of the Society will naturally seek the co-operation of all agencies. In this connection we regret to say that the series of articles on opium policy by Mr. P. Kodanda Rao will have to be suspended as he has been deputed for relief work. The regret is the greater because he had begun to deal with the consumption of opium in India, the aspect of the question with which we are most concerned, and was also nearing the end of an interesting enquiry.

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MR. ANDREWS does not take a pessimistic view of the condition of Indian labourers in Malaya, as does

Dr. Tagore. Mr. Andrews notes with satisfaction that owing to the excellent anti-malarial work of Dr. Watson, the death rate on the estates has considerably fallen in the last few years and that unassisted immigration has been rapidly increasing so that one may expect recruitment through Kangnies to cease in a few years. He does not speak of the major portion of the coolie's earnings going to the coolie Sardar, which silence confirms one's doubt regarding the accuracy of Dr. Tagore's statement. Nor did he refer to it in his address to the Planters' Conference at Kuala Lumpur, on whom he impressed the fact that emigration from India was now entirely controlled by the legislature and that they could not get labour from India if they did not satisfy Indian opinion. He pointed out over-crowding on ships as an evil requiring urgent attention and also recommended the collection of detailed information regarding cases of suicide. He did well in emphasising that Indian opinion was very sensitive about cases of ill-treatment and that it would give full credit to the colony if just punishment was meted to the offender. Mr. Andrews is quite enthusiastic about the good work of Mr. Arulanandum, the Indian Agent in Malaya—a testimony which is a strong argument for similar Agents of Government being sent to Fiji, British Guiana and other colonies, where their services would be extremely valuable to the Indian community.

* * *

The Colonial Secretary [is unwilling to include an Indian, either on the East African Committee or on the Commission, on the ground that local interests are not to be represented on these bodies. If it be really the case that none of the local communities is to have a champion on these bodies, but that they would be given a chance to put their case before these by producing witnesses, we should have no reason to complain. But it is very doubtful if this intention will really be carried out. Already the Colonial Secretary seems to be deviating from his original idea, for we read in the East African papers that when the Commission reaches Kenya, there will be added to that body some co-opted members, and the white settlers have been asking for the non-inclusion of any officials on the Commission but the inclusion only of white settlers. Now if co-opted members are to be taken, will there be a proportion maintained between European, Indian and Afri-

can communities? We are perfectly certain it will not be. The balance is sure to incline heavily on the side of Europeans. But we contend that even if a fair distribution of members were possible, which is not, the representatives of local interests should all be excluded from the Commission. They should only appear as witnesses. In any case it behoves Indians to represent the natives' case as well as their own before the Commission adequately which is by no means an easy matter. We trust that Indians will not fail in this duty and thus let the judgment go against them by default.

Advice to
Policemen.

MR. P. F. BOWRING, I. G. of Police, Mysore, delivered an inspiring address in opening the conference of Mysore Police officers. He held up the efficiency, integrity and popularity of the London police to the emulation of his hearers, analysed the chief causes of the unpopularity of the Indian police and detailed the reforms that could be effected if they all co-operated to achieve that end. Overbearing high-handed conduct towards the public, hectoring bullying methods, lack of consideration for the feelings of others—in short, forgetfulness of the fact that he was the servant and not master of the public—Mr. Bowring said this was the chief cause of the Indian policeman's unpopularity and pointed out that so far as Mysore was concerned the remedy lay in his hands and in the hands of his hearers. The utmost value, he said, was attached to courtesy in the British police. One who was arrogant, rude or unmannerly towards the public would not get promotion, even though he was successful in detection or possessed superior education and passed examinations. We are sure many of our police officers will be taken aback by this information. They are accustomed to regard courtesy rather as a weakness that almost disqualified a man for police duty than as a desirable possession.

Kenya Highlands

THERE were occasions, during the progress of the Kenya negotiations last year, when the then Secretary of State for India let down the Indian delegation and practically surrendered legitimate Indian claims to the advocates of white domination. In conducting the present negotiations too, the Crown Colonies Committee must have felt its hands considerably weakened by Lord Olivier, whose duty it was to put the Indian case at its highest and who did put it very forcibly in regard to other matters, waiving his objection to the reservation of the highlands for the whites, whether such whites be British subjects or non-British. Speaking in the House of Lords on February 26, the Secretary of State for India referred to this particular complaint of the Indian community as "a comparatively minor matter" and observed that in his opinion it could not be considered "to be in any way a really substantial grievance." There was certainly no justification for Lord Olivier to have negated in ad-

vance the Simpson Committee's plea for the removal of prohibition of Indian ownership of land in the uplands. Of course, even if Lord Olivier were as strong on this point as he was on others, there is no reason to believe that Mr. Thomas's decisions would have been any different from what they are but the fact remains that the Secretary of State for India to all intents and purposes did renounce India's claim to a share in the highlands, and this must have greatly embarrassed, if it did not influence, the Crown Colonies Committee in making representations to the Colonial Secretary.

Government of India's Weakness.

IF the Secretary of State for India gave away the whole case for throwing open the highlands to Indians as well as Europeans, the Government of India also was unwarrantably weak on this particular item in the Indian demands. After asserting, in an academical manner, Indians' claim to take up agricultural land in the highlands, Sir B. N. Sarma, in his speech of 10th March in the Council of State, said: "Whether it will be possible for the Committee to secure that, *i. e.* free grant of land in the highlands at the present stage or not is a matter of some doubt. But the Committee is free to negotiate with regard to the highlands if it thinks that the time is favourable or that it is possible to secure from the Colonial Office a favourable settlement with regard to the highlands." The Government of India's spokesman here no doubt left the Committee nominally free to advance a claim to land-holding in the uplands, but though in form he gave discretion to the Committee, in fact he invited it not to press the claim. We have no means of knowing whether or not the Committee took the hint and passed lightly over this part in India's demands, but we cannot but complain of the Government of India's attitude. This is greatly to be deplored, for though the Government of India awoke to its sense of duty in protecting Indian interests in East Africa only in 1919, still since then it has continuously stood by the side of India and used its best endeavour, in the restricted sphere in which it could act, to secure full justice for India. But on this occasion it has proved lamentably weak and our grief is the more poignant because the Government of India's spokesman on this occasion happened to be an Indian who was numbered for a long time among prominent public workers.

The Late Maharajah of Travancore.

THE sympathies of the rest of India will be with the people of Travancore who on the top of devastating floods have lost a pious and benevolent ruler whom they had learnt to love and look upon as their father. Though essentially of a conservative temperament, his administration of the State was most progressive. During his régime Travancore came to be the most advanced part of India in literacy and the higher education of women. In personal life he was simple and unostentatious, his palace expenditure being less than a third of that of Baroda.

THE KENYA BETRAYAL.

THE Labour Government has disgraced itself by its decisions on Indian claims in Kenya. The party, when out of office, had given a solemn pledge to undo the wrong that it fully recognised had been done to India, but within a year of this pledge it has gone clean back from it. There are no extenuating circumstances of any sort which may be appealed to for the palliation of this scandalous breach of promise. If the Labour Cabinet had pleaded that its grave pre-occupations in European politics left it no leisure to tackle this smaller but English problem; if it had proclaimed its inability, in view of its Parliamentary minority, to effectuate the reversal, however just, of the late Government's decisions, which would be strenuously opposed by the Unionist party; it would have been a perfectly intelligible position, though such a confession would not have commanded overmuch respect. But the Labour Government puts forward no such pleas. It propounds these decisions as being just in themselves and it feels no obligation whatever to explain what has led it now to conclusions directly contrary to those it favoured last year. In the absence of any such explanation we must assume that, however just-minded and free from race prejudice individual members of that party may be, the party as a whole is unable and unwilling to protect the interests of the blacks and browns against the aggression of the whites. The Kenya decisions have a far deeper meaning for the African natives than it has for Indians, for in disallowing the just claims of the Indians, the Labour Government has practically decided to subject the natives to the unrestricted exploitation of the white peoples. The former Government was known to employ the camouflage of native trusteeship to maintain European ascendancy intact. Till last year the Government of Kenya never disguised the fact that it was administering the country as a white colony, in which the interests of the whites must be regarded as paramount. There was no question till then of doing equal justice to people of all races. The Government of India no doubt maintained that there was no justification for assigning an inferior status to British Indian subjects in a Crown Colony or in a Protectorate, but it was a contention which was not accepted by the Kenya Government. The Imperial Government professed to alter its whole colonial policy by making the interests of the native races its primary objective. Every one knew, however, that whatever be the form of words used, the Conservative Government that was then in power would in practice so control the destinies of Kenya that the white settlers would be enabled to have everything their own way, even if they should drive the natives and Indians to ruin. The Labour Government has now sanctified the principle of white interests first and last and at the same time given its countenance to a transparent pretence, by confirming the former Government's decisions,

which are of course grossly unjust to the Indians, but still more unjust to the indigenous population of East Africa.

We will take *seriatim* the decisions announced by Mr. Thomas and show how iniquitous they are, not only to the Indians, but, by eliminating their competition with the Europeans, to the natives to whose interests the Government professes to give the first consideration. On immigration Mr. Thomas's position appears to be identical with the Duke of Devonshire's: like the latter he too has held up the Bill seeking to impose restrictions on the immigration, nominally of all races, but really of Indians, and Mr. Thomas also, like the Duke, is proceeding on the assumption that Indians tend to retard the progress of the natives, the only question for consideration being whether they enter the Colony in such large numbers as to constitute a serious danger. He therefore repudiates the view expressed by Lord Olivier from his personal investigations that Indians as a class do not prejudicially affect the natives' development but, if anything, only beneficially. The Indian could enter into competition with the native only in industrial employment, for the employment of Indians in subordinate offices of Government rests entirely in the hands of the Administration and does it not require the stoppage of Indian immigration to give a fair chance to the native. In industrial employment the native, because of his much cheaper living and consequent lower wages, automatically displaces the Indian whenever he becomes trained to do the latter's work and it rests with the Government to train the native in arts and handicrafts. Here, again, it is unnecessary to prohibit or even limit Indian immigration. The main industries of the country, however, are agricultural and pastoral, and in respect of both of them the Indian does not compete at all with the native but the European enters into such a disastrous competition with the native that the latter is entirely unable to protect himself from the European. First of all, the European has robbed him of his best land, and secondly, in order to develop it, he has to institute a system of what is in all essentials enforced labour and also to make barbarous laws for the detection and punishment of labour offences. In fact, a Sub-Committee appointed by both wings of the Labour party has come to the conclusion that in pastoral and agricultural occupations, which are the chief native occupations, "it is not the Indian but the white settler who has an evil effect upon the economic development of the native." And its general conclusion is that "instead of retarding the development of these (native) tribes, the Indians are the only people who in fact have done anything to further their economic development." In face of such clear evidence, Mr. Thomas who prates so loudly of trusteeship for the natives, not only does not propose to restrict the immigration of the whites, whose competition has proved so fatal to native progress, but does not even turn down the White Paper policy of

limiting the entry of the Indians, who alone are of material assistance to the advancement of the native races.

The continued reservation of the highlands exclusively for Europeans is not a measure that even Mr. Thomas can plead as dictated by a meticulous regard for native interests. For it is not only the 25,000 odd Indians who, in pursuance of this policy, are kept out of the highlands, but the three million natives, and surely it is not in discharge of the trust which the British Government has assumed for helpless native tribes that it has dispossessed them of their richest lands. The natives must, of course, be presumed to have an incontrovertible right to their own soil, and unless we are to believe that they enjoy being expropriated from their lands or that such expropriation does them unsuspected good, it is hard to understand how the reservation policy is to be related to the native trusteeship principle, which is supposed to be the corner-stone of the White Paper decisions. The whites' demand for the exclusion of Indians from the highlands really lays bare the inwardness of their demand for the exclusion of Indians from Kenya itself: the moving spring of both is the desire to remove the economic competition of the Indian who alone stands between the European and an unrestrained exploitation of the native by him. For the Indians' demand is not that the highlands should be thrown open to themselves and closed to natives, but that they should be thrown open to all; and the Indians further ask that if the highlands are at all to be reserved for any race, they should be reserved for natives. The result of such reservation for natives will no doubt be that for some years the highlands will not be developed. That, however, is not of much consequence: they have remained undeveloped for so many decades and centuries past. They can afford to await development for a few years, if at the end of this period the natives can come into their own. But by his decision to maintain the highlands purely white for all time, Mr. Thomas is putting an eternal limit on the economic development not only of the Indians, who, if they have no worse claim to the highlands than the Europeans, have no better claim either, but of the natives who are the rightful owners of all the soil.

Nor can the grant of a communal, instead of a common, franchise to the immigrant communities be related to the principle of native trusteeship. Whether representatives of immigrant communities are elected on a communal or a common register, the natives who have no electoral rights whatever are not concerned with it. Their real interests will be best served if neither Indians, nor Europeans, nor Arabs receive any elective representation, till they themselves can compete with all these races. This was precisely what was proposed by Indian representatives; but if the disfranchisement of these communities who are already given a vote is out of the question, they said, let certain qualifications of education and property

be prescribed and the franchise thrown open to all, irrespective of colour or nationality. Speaking before the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society, Mr. Sastri said: "It will not do to give to any people, whether white or coloured, or white and coloured together, any power over the natives of Africa. Let the Colonial Office keep the administration in its own hands and under the vigilant control of Parliament. . . . If that be the idea the Indians have nothing to say against it--they would gladly acquiesce in the arrangement. But if you are going to give the franchise to anybody in that colony, give it equally to all under the same conditions. Make your qualifications high enough to ensure that you will have a qualified electorate, but having made these qualifications, stick to them and admit thereto not Indians only, not Arabs only, but also the natives." It was wrong to have established representative institutions in Kenya, immediately after the intrusion of the Europeans in the country, when natives were unable to participate effectively for a long time to come; and in the early days far-seeing statesmen like Sir Charles Dilke protested strongly against bringing into being a Council which they knew would amount to a planter oligarchy. But having started on a wrong road, the best mode of minimising the evil would be to extend the franchise as largely as possible, for even if the franchise is not conferred upon the natives, the power of their worst oppressors, the Europeans, would thereby be lessened. It is in this sense that Dr. Norman Leys favours the extension of the franchise to Indians on equal and identical terms with the Europeans. He wrote last year to the *Manchester Guardian*: "In a nutshell the situation is this. A tiny oligarchy of Europeans in Kenya has in half a generation reduced the population by a quarter, crushed out native industries, and reduced the survivors to serfdom in order to make them labour for their profit. How best can privileges thus unwisely granted and unjustly used be dealt with? If the whole history of political privileges is any guide, the answer is, by the extension of these privileges to a gradually increasing number. The Indian proposals would enfranchise every educated man in Kenya of whatever race. . . . The burden of the Archdeacon-(Owen)'s letter is the need for voicing African opinion. The Indian proposals alone would satisfy that need, and they would do so increasingly until, as education spreads, African opinion would become, as of right, the dominant voice in an African country." The effect of Mr. Thomas refusing to grant the Indians' request for a common franchise is to stifle the African voice and to make the voice of the cruellest exploiters of the African natives the dominant voice in an African country.

If the trusteeship principle is honestly to be carried out, Mr. Thomas ought, first, to restrict the influx of Europeans in the country; secondly, to reserve the highlands for the native; thirdly, to abolish the Legislative Council; and fourthly,

to repeal inhuman labour laws. If this is much too radical a course for Mr. Thomas he must temper the present uncontrolled power of the white settlers by allowing Indians to compete with them on equal terms. The Labour Government, however, in confirming the late Government's decision, has in effect proclaimed its allegiance to the principle of white domination over all the coloured races. So far as India is concerned, she can never submit to this position. She will even face with equanimity the contingency of severing her ties with the British Empire, for she has no use for such an Empire if she can not maintain her national dignity inside it.

SWARAJISTS AND THE MASSES.

WHO said that the Swarajists as a party are committed to a policy of "continuous, consistent and uniform opposition" to all Government measures? They lie who say so. The Swarajists do not shrink from opposing Government, nor do they hesitate to lend their support, according as the objective which they have placed before themselves demands opposition or support on their part. The animating impulse of their policy is to support everything likely to favour the capitalists, from whom their sinews of war are principally derived. As with Government, so with the people. The Swarajists are not pledged to oppose every popular movement either; nor are they bound to support it. If a popular demand coincides with a capitalistic design, they will graciously lend it their full countenance. If however it runs counter to the interests of the wealthy classes, well, they will have, situated as they are, unfortunately to postpone the interests of the masses to those of their paymasters. People gained a glimmering of this position when the swarajist leaders not only supported a measure for the protection of the steel industry but strenuously opposed the insertion of provisions in the Act in the interests of labour. The country is however riding on the crest of a wave of Swadeshi and the full extent of the identification of the Swarajist party with the monied classes was not perhaps then realised.

The Bombay Swarajists' proceedings in regard to the Rent Restriction Bill will, however, serve as an eye-opener to those who thought that the affiliation of the Swarajists with the rich classes was none too close. Here was a private Bill—not a Government Bill, which, under the old exploded idea, one would have thought the Swarajists would feel bound to oppose. It was also a Bill which was opposed by Government. If the obstructionist idea had survived to the smallest degree, the Swarajists would have supported it, if for no other reason than that the Government had opposed it. And yet such a private Bill, opposed by Government, the Swarajists helped to defeat. They had it in their power either to save it or to wreck it; and deliberately they joined hands with the Government in order to wreck it. It was,

again, a first reading of the Bill on which their votes were asked. They could well have let the measure go through at that stage and reserved their opposition for a later stage, without exposing themselves to a charge of inconsistency. One can well imagine what an irresistible urge they must have had from their conscience when they thought it necessary to oppose at its first reading a private Bill which, having the good fortune of not being blessed by Government, one would have thought, the Swarajists would normally be keen on forcing on Government, but which in this case they felt impelled to kill at its birth. And it was a measure on which the Swarajist conscience would be fully awake, for it sought to afford protection to the tenant class against the rackrenting proclivities of the landlord class. Such a measure they were, of course, bound to oppose, even if opposition seemingly involved some amount of inconsistency with what is popularly but quite wrongly ascribed to them as their governing policy—opposition of measures favoured by Government and support of measures contemned by them. When it is a matter of conflict between the poorer and the richer classes, the Swarajists do not direct their own policy by what the Government does. The Government in such cases does not come into their consideration at all. The Swarajists have a duty to the wealthy classes which they must fulfil at all costs. And after all, the considerable enhancement of rent for non-residential areas in Bombay City which has followed in the wake of their action is not a very high price to pay, when the issue at stake is one of keeping the Swarajist party in being.

The leader of the Swarajist party in Bombay has however an explanation which he thinks is pat to the occasion. The Swarajists did what they did, he says, not because the Bill sought to give necessary protection to the lower middle class (the labouring class does not at all come within his ken), but because it extended unnecessary protection to the higher middle class. But this explanation is not quite so convincing as he imagines. Need the Swarajists have opposed motion for leave to introduce the Bill because the Bill was unequal in its operation? Could they not have themselves proposed amendments to cure this and other defects? If the Bill had to be killed, could not they have afforded to let it live for half an hour, till it advanced to the second reading stage? But why must they kill it at all, even supposing the inequality of which Mr. Jayakar complains is not removed? The inequality remains anyhow. No doubt, Mr. Jayakar has succeeded in not allowing a benefit to those who, according to him, do not deserve it. But has he not at the same deprived those who, on his own confession, urgently require it, of the benefit which is their due? He cannot immediately arrange matters in such a way as to give the benefit of rent restriction to those who stand in need of it and yet withhold it from those who undeservedly batten on it. Some time must elapse

before this millennial state of things comes into being by his exertion. If, in the meanwhile, one kind of incongruity or another is inevitable, if either the deserving class is to go without the advantage of rent restriction or the class which does not deserve it is to get it at the cost of the landlords (whose lot after all is not altogether unbearable), why does Mr. Jayakar show greater tolerance for the former kind of injustice than the latter? When the choice is between two evils, the evil of a discontinuance of the protection of those to whom lack of protection spells utter ruin and a temporary continuance of protection (till Mr. Jayakar launches a wholly beneficial measure) to those who do not absolutely need it, Mr. Jayakar instinctively chooses the former as the lesser evil. The exigencies of the party to which he belongs also point the same way: unlike the Judge who rather than convict one innocent person lets off a hundred guilty ones, the Swaraj party, sooner than give an unnecessary benefit to a handful of persons, will deny a necessary benefit to a mass of men—particularly when the benefit comes out of the pockets of those whom the Swaraj party has to conciliate for its very existence. Mr. Jayakar however relies for his defence upon Pandit Motilal Nehru's support of his action, and this plea would remove any doubt that may have been left in the public mind that the aristocratic classes dominate the Swaraj party.

One thing however falls to be said about the party, which redounds very much to its credit. There are some members who are jealous of the cause of poor people, but their misfortune is that they are in a minority and, what is more, carry little influence in the councils of the party. But, while criticising the action of the leader of the Bombay Swarajists, a due meed of praise must be given to those members of that party who lost no time in holding to public opprobrium those who by not voting converted a clear victory for the popular party into an ignominious defeat. Mr. Jayakar, of course, attributes their very strong remarks to a personal dislike of him, but when men like Messrs. V. J. Patel, Jamnadas Mehta, Balubhai Desai, Drs. Velkar and Deshmukh all combine to condemn his action, Mr. Jayakar may well assume their motive to be more disinterested than he is willing to allow. They all bewailed that Swarajists had helped "a powerful combination between the capitalists of a foreign Government and indigenous capitalists against the forces of democracy." Dr. Deshmukh neatly answered Mr. Jayakar's plea that he had remained neutral to keep the party together: "The party was for the good of the country, and if it did not do that the party had no business to live." That this comes from a prominent member of the Swaraj party is really very creditable to the party, but the pity is that there are so few who take such a large view of public affairs. Now that so many protest meetings are being held it will become necessary for Mr. Jayakar to organise some kind of meeting to support his action.

This will not, however, be an easy business, for if he were to brave the electors' displeasure in that manner, he will hardly have a chance of carrying through a measure which will be ideally just to all classes of tenants and acceptable to the landlords.

K. L. G.

OPIUM POLICY.--VII.

OPIUM-EATING AND THE LEAGUE

WE saw last week how neither on its merits, nor because of strong public opinion, nor even on the ground of harmonising India's policy with that of the League of Nations was a change in the current export policy either called for or justified.

The only other important use of Indian opium is the eating of it in India. It is on this matter that India got isolated in the League last year. It is, therefore, very necessary that Indian public opinion should inform itself well on this subject. It may be interesting to recall in this connection that the resolution of the House of Commons of 1891 condemned the use of opium for other than "the legitimate demand for medical purposes" as "morally indefensible." Opium-eating in India is a non-medical purpose in the sense that it is not prescribed by duly qualified and registered medical practitioners. The International Opium Commission at Shanghai in 1909 did not adopt this attitude of unequivocal condemnation of opium-eating but opined that the non-medical use of opium was a matter for *prohibition or for careful regulation*. Whereas the Hague Convention of 1912 completely abandoned that position and was content to ask for "control of the production and distribution" of raw opium. Mr. Campbell explained at the fifth session of the Opium Committee that "When the Hague Convention was being drafted, a long reasoned statement on this question (opium-eating in India) had been presented to the conference by the late Sir William Meyer. The Convention had been drafted with that statement before the conference and in such a way as to cover the special difficulties of India. The view of the Indian Government was that the Convention fully covered in its present form the use of opium in India, and that position had never been challenged until the present moment." Explaining the attitude of the Indian Government towards the Shanghai Conference resolutions, Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson said in his Budget speech in the Imperial Legislative Council in 1910, "We retain full liberty to protect the legitimate household and medical use of opium" in India. Again, in his Budget speech in 1912, Sir Guy said that the Hague Convention had imposed no fresh obligations on India and declared, "Our domestic control of the use of opium in India is not a matter in which we require international assistance." And there the matter stood before the War.

Since then the world's drug problem has become more acute. The morphia habit has grown to

Large proportions, particularly in China and America. So imperious are the needs of the addict, so overwhelming his craving, that he will pay any price to obtain his drug. Hence the drug trade is both secure and highly paying, provided there is a constant supply. And European countries are manufacturing from raw opium morphia and similar other habit-forming drugs by the ton and flooding the market. Anti-narcotic laws have failed to protect the people from having access to the drugs. Opium and its alkaloids offer great financial attractions and physical facilities for smuggling. As long as there is a single country which produces raw opium or its alkaloids, but does not strictly control their production and transport, no other country, whatever be the stringency of its laws and the efficiency of its officers, can effectively keep them out, however much it may desire to do so. There are many countries where there is either no control or the control is not efficient. But India is not among them. In India both production and transport are controlled, and controlled efficiently.

The only radical means of putting down the illicit traffic is to *limit production* itself to the requirements of legitimate use, and leave no surplus for illicit use. This principle of limitation of production was first enunciated in the League of Nations in 1921, with ironical appropriateness, by Dr. Wellington Koo, the representative of chaotic China, whose opium-Governors in the provinces were at that very moment actually forcing the cultivation of opium on the people at the point of the bayonet. The same principle was reinforced by the American delegation at the fifth session of the Opium Advisory Committee and has now been definitely accepted by the League of Nations at its last session. India gave its cordial adherence to this proposition, viz. *limitation of production*. This does not involve any fresh obligations on India, as opium production under Government monopoly is already strictly limited. Every year Government fixes the area to be put under poppy, on the basis of the previously ascertained demand and the normal crop. Private cultivation is negligible in British India, being only 182½ acres in 1921 as against 122,005 acres under Government monopoly.

Thus in the matter of limitation of production India is in agreement with the other members of the League. But difference arose between India and the other States as to what the production was to be limited to. Dr. Wellington Koo proposed in 1921 that the production of opium should be limited to "strictly medicinal and scientific purposes," though he did not insist that the policy, if approved by the League, should be given effect to immediately. This was opposed by the Rt. Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri, on behalf of India, for reasons which we shall discuss later on. At the instance of Mr. Sastri, the League substituted "legitimate" for "strictly medicinal and scientific." The consequence of this change was that instead of the League of Nations definitely ruling out opium-

eating as illegitimate, it left it to each consuming State to define what was legitimate use of opium within its jurisdiction. At the fifth session of the Advisory Committee on Opium, the American delegation, headed by Mr. Porter, took up a more categorical attitude. The two propositions submitted by Mr. Porter ran as follows:

(1) "If the purpose of the Hague Opium Convention is to be achieved according to its spirit and true intent, it must be recognised that the use of opium products for other than medicinal and scientific purposes is an abuse and not legitimate.

(2) "In order to prevent the abuse of these products it is necessary to exercise the control of the production of raw opium in such a manner that there will be no surplus available for non-medicinal and non-scientific purposes."

These propositions were of the nature of general principles and did not specify any particular course of action. They were opposed by the representatives of a number of States and among them by Mr. Campbell, on behalf of India, because of their immediate implications. Opium-smoking and opium-eating and the production of opium admittedly for smoking and eating, would become immediately illegitimate. The responsibility for the consumption of opium in the consuming countries would be thrown on the producing countries. We have seen already how France, Germany, Great Britain, Japan, the Netherlands, Portugal and Siam refused to illegitimise opium-smoking immediately in their territories. And surprisingly enough, Mr. Porter himself acquiesced in this reservation, which appeared to him to be "but a reaffirmation of Chapter II of the Hague Opium Convention, and, as such, gives rise to no question"! Thus on the question of opium-smoking, the American delegation, solicitude for whose susceptibilities was the dominating factor in the Opium Committee, completely failed. It was Sir Malcolm Delevingne, the British representative, that made practical proposals to bring about a more effective reduction in opium smoking. His proposal that a conference of States concerned should be called with a view to arrive at an agreement by mutual consent to reduce opium-smoking, was ultimately approved.

As regards India, the acceptance of Mr. Porter's propositions would at once wipe out the entire production of opium in India, for very little Indian opium is used for "medical" purposes in the sense described above. It was only during the Great War, when supplies of Turkish and Persian opium were cut off, that Indian opium was indented for by America and England for medical purposes. After the War, that demand ceased. At no time, however, not even when the War demand was at its highest, was the medical use of Indian opium anything but insignificant as compared with the total monopoly production, let alone the purchases from Central Indian States, as is shown from the following figures taken from the Reports on the Operations of the

Opium department.

Year	Monopoly production in mds.	Manufactured into		
		Medical opium in mds.	Special medicinal opium in mds.	Alkaloids in mds.
1911-12	31,642	28	...	258
1914-15	28,534	25	1,862	195
1915-16	27,134	44	4,642	343
1916-17	32,302	19	8,337	147
1917-18	32,412	35	5,463	254
1918-19	27,472	48	4,585	206
1919-20	22,841	23	2,151	247
1920-21	14,401	28	...	328
1921-22	18,535	6	...	200
1922-23	22,332	20	...	153

These figures show that almost the whole of Indian opium is used for non-medical purposes, smoking or eating, which will be rendered illegitimate by Mr. Porter's proposals. Although the illegitimatising of opium-smoking would do away with the whole export trade of India and involve great loss of revenue, neither in 1921, nor in 1923, did India object to it. On the other hand India welcomed it.

India opposed these proposals because opium-eating also would thereby be rendered illegitimate. The Government of India contended and still contends, with the implied consent of Indian public opinion, that opium-eating in India is semi-medical and is legitimate. We shall examine this contention later on. Here it is sufficient to note the Government of India's position in the matter.

There was no disposition on the part of any member of the Opium Committee at its fifth session to condemn directly and in so many words the practice of opium-eating in India. On the other hand, Sir John Jordon mentioned that "as far as he had understood, the American delegation was quite prepared to recognise the situation in India." Mrs. Hamilton Wright granted that "India could, of course, retain her special position" with regard to opium-eating.

It was also admitted that opium-eating in India was a domestic question which the Government of India should be free to decide as it thought best. Mrs. Hamilton Wright affirmed that "it was quite obvious that every nation had a right to determine its own policy within its own borders" and conceded "India's right to do as she pleased in her own borders." Sir John Jordon observed that "he had been led to believe, in conversation with Mr. Porter, that the American delegation had no intention of interfering with the internal practice in India or any other Oriental country." Mr. Porter himself went much further when he said in the Fifth Committee last year that "He did not desire to discuss questions of purely domestic legislation in connection with the use of opium, but the Government of the United States did not consider any international traffic in opium for other than medical or scientific purposes to be legitimate, except under the conditions explicitly laid down in the Hague Convention."

This last was another surprising *volte face* on the part of Mr. Porter from the position which he had taken up at the start, when he wanted a general recognition that the use of opium for other than medicinal and scientific purposes was an abuse. The Hague Convention itself did not limit its scope only to *international* traffic. It contemplated doing away with the abuse of opium in every country, where it must necessarily be a *domestic* question. The Convention called for the suppression of opium-smoking, which is a domestic problem for each country, and did not merely interdict the transport of opium for that purpose from one State to another, which would be international. As long as the League of Nations does not become a super-State, all international co-operation must ultimately take the form of domestic legislation. But that does not take away from the purview of the League. In fact on this very question of opium it was the Indian delegate, Mr. Hassan Imam, that said in the last Assembly: "The League, I confess, from the view of my people, is not and should not be interested in the question of dangerous drugs, only to the extent of international obligations, but we are prepared to accede to the view that no country is entitled to drug its own people, a drugging which interests the whole world and consequently comes within the purview of the League." If, however, the American delegation meant only to illegitimatisate international traffic in opium for eating but did not show that such traffic existed; and admitted, with the Opium Committee, that opium-eating was a domestic concern for India and other Oriental countries, and that it had no desire to prohibit it in India; and knew that the other opium-eating countries were unaffected by the League's decisions, as they had not ratified the Hague Convention; there was hardly any need to discuss opium-eating in the Committee or in the League. And yet this purely academic discussion was very heated and prolonged, resulting in constant deadlocks.

It was entirely due to difference of opinion as to the interpretation of the Hague Convention and to the difficulty experienced in drafting the resolution so as to say no more than what was actually meant. While it was agreed that opium-eating in India was not to be put under a ban, differences arose as to whether it was a new and humiliating concession that was being offered to India or if it was a right that India derived from the Hague Convention itself. Mr. Campbell put forward the latter view, and challenged the Committee to refer the matter to the International Court of Justice, or to a conference as provided for in Article 24 of the Hague Convention. The next difficulty was whether it was desirable to mention opium-eating in the new resolution, and thereby sanction it or avoid all mention of it, as the Hague Convention did. The next one was how to word the resolution so as to legitimatise opium-eating only in India but not in other countries. Draft

after draft was hotly discussed and rejected and finally a separate drafting committee drew up the final draft approved by the Committee. In this draft was inserted the following reservation on behalf of India. "The use of raw opium, according to the established practice in India, and its production for such use are not illegitimate under the Convention."

The fact that, though opium is eaten in Persia, Turkey, Afghanistan and other Oriental countries, India alone made this reservation is due entirely to the singular position of India in the League and in respect of the Hague Convention. None of the other countries had ratified the Hague Convention or accepted the other consequent obligations proposed by the League and so were not bound by its decisions. And yet, the Opium Committee was at great, almost quixotic, pains to illegitimize opium-eating in Turkey, Persia and other Oriental countries! India was the only country which had accepted all international obligations in respect of opium and carried them out with the efficiency and honesty for which its administration, apart from its political outlook and wisdom, is deservedly noted. Consequently the illegitimization of opium-eating would affect India and India only. That explains why India was alone in making this reservation and there is no occasion to be uneasy about it. In a matter which adversely affected a number of countries; as, for instance the American proposal to illegitimize opium-smoking at once, France, Germany, Great Britain, Japan, the Netherlands, Portugal and Siam, made a reservation! The real matter for concern, therefore, is not that India was *wone* in making a reservation in favour of opium-eating in India, nor even that such eating is legitimate under the *Convention*, but whether it was or should be *legitimate* at all. And this question Indian public opinion alone is competent to decide.

In concluding this we may remark on the peculiar misfortune of India in the way its opium policy has been attacked, particularly by foreigners. We have seen how the export policy of India has been characterised as "perfectly justified" by Sir John Jordan and "admirable" by Mrs. Hamilton Wright. We have also seen how opium-eating in India has been admitted by the American delegation itself as a domestic concern of India against which there is hardly any opinion in India. It seems to us hardly fair for foreign critics and their echoes in India to go about tarring the Government of India for its opium policy, when they seem to have so little reason for it. A more rational and profitable course for them would be to create public opinion in India.

P. KODANDA RAO.

OUR PUNJAB LETTER.

LAHORE, 2ND JULY.

SINCE I wrote last the Ahmedabad Swarajist-Gandhi compromise has had to make its results manifest in the Punjab as elsewhere. It became

early apparent that the Swarajists here would not take the compromise lying down. It has resulted in the resignation of L. Dunichand, M. L. A., of Ambala, who is the leader of the Party here. This has been followed by the resignation of L. Ram Parshad, late editor the *Bande Matram*, Lahore; but this may be more due to Mahatma Gandhi's animadversions upon the Arya Samaj. It is rumoured that L. Lajpat Rai is also likely to resign his seat on the various bodies connected with the Congress. When this is done, I believe little would be left of the Congress and its work in the province. There is very little evidence of its activities in the province just now; but when the duel between the Swarajists and the No-changers commences even that will have disappeared. I wonder if the so-called No-changers would now be as ready to listen to the advice of L. Lajpat Rai as they were when the Council campaign was to be won. The Lala himself may now be less ready to offer the same, but the position of the No-changers would not be very enviable.

At last the election petition against Chaudhari Lalchand has been disposed of. Mr. Bhide, the presiding officer, along with his colleagues went into the matter very fully and the result has been that the Commission has found him guilty of corrupt practices in two or three cases and his agents in even more cases. They have unanimously recommended that the election be declared void and that Chaudhari Lalchand be, as guilty of corrupt practices, disqualified from standing for the next five years. Attempts are being made in some quarters to get the Governor to condone this disqualification, but it would not be wise on the part of the Governor to come between the Minister and the findings of the Commission and thus set at naught the basic principle underlying all such questions. I wonder how people can be found tolerant enough to overlook such a scandal and can bring themselves to the point of publicly supporting an election abuse of such a nature as false personation. If he were to condone this offence, it would ill behove the Governor ever to take action against less important persons when their offences are less flagrant. Anyhow, on the presumption that the Governor would accept the findings, people have been busy in naming a successor to the Minister. Sir Malcolm's task is not a pleasant one in that matter either. To find a colleague to Mian Fasal Hussain is not an easy job and therefore, to postpone the evil day, it has been decided that he should be in charge of all the Ministerial portfolios till after the end of the August session of the local Legislative Council. Perhaps this is done to get breathing time as well as to ascertain the wishes of the members of the Council during the session.

As the next session of the Council approaches, the formation of a new party in the Punjab Legislature has been announced. These 'National Unionists'—though we do not yet know how many of them are in the Council—seem to be, to judge

from the manifesto issued by one of them, the old Conservative Communalists dressed up anew. It is easy to find names for things, but the truth of the matter seems to be that they wish to exploit the anti-urban feelings that are being created in plenty in the province. Anyhow one would be able to judge of them when the Council session commences the day after tomorrow at Simla.

The Sikhs and the Government are once again coming to grips. A petition has been filed at Amritsar to appoint an official receiver for the properties administered by the S. G. P. C. A Gurdwar Sudhar Committee has been formed, to act as a counterblast to the S. G. P. C. it seems. The Guru-ka-Bagh incident has been revived by the decree granted to the Mahant to oust the Prabandhak Committee and Sir Ganga Ram from the possession of the land in dispute. Let us see how this new phase of the problem ends.]

REVIEW.

ABOLISH THE PERMANENT SETTLEMENT

DATTA, PROF. DVIJDAS: PEASANT PROPRIETORSHIP IN INDIA. (Comilla, Bengal.) Pp. 262, 1924. Rs. 3.

IN the Glossary to the Fifth Report of the East India Company (1813) we find the following:

Zemindar—Land holder, land keeper. An officer who under the Mahomedan government, was charged with the superintendence of the lands of a district, financially considered, the protection of the cultivators and the realization of the government's share of its produce, either in money or in kind; out of which he was allowed a commission, amounting to about ten per cent. and occasionally a special grant of the government's share of the produce of a certain number of villages for his subsistence called *Nauncar*. The appointment was occasionally renewed and as it was generally continued in the same person so long as he conducted himself to the satisfaction of the ruling power, and even continued to his heirs; so in process of time and through the decay of power, and the confusion which ensued, hereditary right (at best prescriptive) was claimed and tacitly acknowledged; till, at length, the Zemindars of Bengal in particular, *from being the mere superintendents of the land have been declared the hereditary proprietors of the soil*, and the before fluctuating dues of the government have under a permanent settlement, been unalterably fixed in perpetuity.

The above quotation is not made to supply any deficiency in Mr. Datta's arguments to prove the utter hollowness of the claim put forward by the Zemindars to proprietary right in the land. It is quoted only to show what responsible officers of the Company thought of the 'right' of the Zemindars, the same Company which created these 'proprietors of the soil'.

Mr. Datta has shown by extensive quotation from Hindu law that land in India belongs to the people. The Mahomedan rulers never claimed proprietary rights in the land and what they claimed was not rent, but a share of the produce in exchange of the services rendered, which share varied according to the yield of the land in differ-

ent years. When the Dewani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa was transferred to the East India Company the only consideration that weighed with them was the realization of the revenue. A Company of merchants suddenly found themselves to be the practical rulers of the land and were faced with an extraordinary situation. Without waiting for enquiring into the laws and customs of the country as Mr. Shore advised, Lord Cornwallis, pressed for ways and means, superimposed on the ryots a system which had no precedent in India. He declared the Zemindars, who were 'mere superintendents of land', to be the 'proprietors of the soil'. The Company gave away to the Zemindars the proprietary right on land, a right which did not belong to the Company itself.

Mr. Seton-Karr in his life of Lord Cornwallis says, in defence of the system: 'It is not easy to overestimate the advantage of a wealthy and privileged class who have everything to lose and nothing to gain by revolution' (p. 69) and again, 'It has political advantages which compensate or at any rate balance its defects' (p. 71). Whatever the immediate political advantages, robbing other people's rights to create 'a wealthy and privileged class' is a doubtful antidote against revolution. Perhaps Lord Cornwallis thought that by fixing the Zemindars' dues to the Government, the permanent settlement would act as an incentive to the Zemindars to improve their estates. Subsequent history completely falsified this hope and the Zemindars, instead of increasing the wealth of the land and the prosperity of the peoples became engines of oppression. Subletting became a profitable profession, and between the Zemindar and the actual cultivator of the soil middlemen in varying numbers intervened, making their living by adding to the original rent one illegal due after another while the whole weight of them all fell on the not too broad shoulders of the ryot. The three F's, fixity of tenure, fair rent and free sale, being denied to the ryot the consciousness has grown on him that no amount of skill, industry or economy can make his position better, while idleness or prodigality can hardly make it worse. Mr. Datta points out that by making the Zemindar's due independent of the produce of the land, the system has taken away the only incentive to the Zemindar of improving his estate and has accelerated the progress of subinfeudation. Further by making a rise in the prices a ground for increasing the rent, the system makes a state of scarcity desirable for the Zemindar whose interest is better served by less and not by greater production.

The intricate of tenure which subdivision and subinfeudation have produced have made the people very litigious. The effect of this litigiousness on the people is reflected in the enormous outturn of lawyers, the Universities thus giving a wrong bias to the educational system. The whole army of lawyers is dependent to a very large extent on land suits. It is interesting to note here that while the Bengal Tenancy Bill was being dis-

discussed in the Bengal Council some lawyers of Calcutta held a private meeting and decided against the Bill because the Bill, if passed, would be prejudicial to their profession.

The root of many an evil in Bengal and other places where the Zemindari system prevails can be ultimately traced to this system. So long as the peasant is not the proprietor of the land he cultivates, no great mass improvement is possible. The permanent settlement must go, and the peasant must come into his own. It is usual for Zemindars to condemn all land reform movements as Bolshevik. The following quotation from the *New Statesman* of May 31, 1924, may be helpful to them:

"Change in the agrarian sphere when it operates in favour of the mass of the rural population, is almost always permanent in its result. If this be true—and modern history provides many examples in support of it—then we may reckon as probably the most enduring consequences of the War that wave of agrarian reform which has swept over the eastern half of Europe since the Russian Revolution. Red republicanism and White reaction may battle for political supremacy; but the effects of the Green Rising remain, and 'the coming of the peasant to his own has destroyed for ever the very basis of the old social order in Eastern Europe.' Everywhere with few exceptions over that vast area, where formerly the large landowners predominated in the organisation of society, wholesale expropriation has drastically changed the centre of social gravity by the establishment of peasant proprietorship on a large scale. From the Baltic to the Black Sea the tendency, with local variations, is everywhere in the same direction."

Everywhere in the world the change from feudal land system to peasant proprietorship has been attended with remarkable prosperity of the people. In 1870 the government of Great Britain sent a circular to the British representatives in the several countries of Europe asking for information regarding the laws and customs affecting the tenure of land with a view to usefully adopt them in the settlement of land tenure in Ireland. The reports submitted by the representatives unanimously praise the system of peasant proprietorship wherever it obtained and declare that prosperity of the people had always followed the transition from feudal system to peasant proprietorship.

Mr. Datta's book is a powerful and passionate plea for justice towards the ryots of the Zemindari lands. His Sanskrit scholarship enables him to present the Hindu land system with great detail supported by original authorities of the Hindu law. As a professor of agriculture he is competent to speak on a subject which sundry politicians make their hobby during the election season. His book is an effective reply to those who, having robbed the people of their rights in the land, indulge in dull mockery and twit them as having no 'stake in the land' and as such unworthy of a hearing, forgetting that their much-vaunted 'stake in the land,

besides being false, is never worthy of greater consideration than the peoples' stake in life.

J. B. SEN.

MISCELLANEA.

* THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT.

The following letter was published in the last issue of the *Indian Social Reformer* over the signature of Mr. N. M. Joshi, M. L. A.

In your issue of 2nd August, you have given me advice not to attempt to organise Indian labour into an exclusive body, but try to evolve some organisation in which the employers and the employees may work together harmoniously. I can assure you that your aim and my aim are the same. We are both anxious to see the employers and the employees working together as brothers and equal partners. But I feel that the best method of achieving this object is to organise them both. If it were possible to bring both the parties in one organisation on terms of equality at least, I would not attempt to organise the workers into an exclusive organisation. But the employers have formed themselves into exclusive organisations and to the best of my knowledge you have not yet taken objection to that. Moreover I do not think even if you advise the employers to throw open the doors of their associations to the workmen, they are likely to listen to your advice. Under such circumstances, if the interests of workmen are to be protected, they must organise themselves into separate organisations.

I also agree with you that this is not an up-to-date method of dealing with the problem. Unfortunately, no up-to-date method seems to-day available. The Bolsheviks in Russia tried to get rid of the class conflicts by Revolution; but even there separate labour organisations have still remained in existence. Neither has Mahatma Gandhi succeeded by his doctrine of love to make the two parties realize their common brotherhood. The mill-owners and the mill-hands of Ahmedabad have still their separate organisations.

Somehow you seem to think that some other way is practicable. I assure you that if you or those who take your view can succeed in starting an organisation where the employers and the employees will meet as brothers, you can always count upon my sympathy and my humble support of it. But till you or we succeed in doing so, you and I, at least I, must go on organising the workers in the only way which is feasible unless we desire them to be crushed by their exploiters. I do not assume that all employers are moved solely by the object of exploiting labour. But the case for separate labour organisation is, in my opinion, sufficiently proved if it is admitted that there are some employers who will not mind exploiting labour. You are sadly mistaken if you hold that you will achieve that larger solidarity which you think we so much need at present, by winking at the difficulties of labour or by assuming an attitude of benevolent neutrality towards the unequal fight between the powerful employers assisted by Government on the one side and helpless workers on the other. On the contrary, an attitude like yours which sees no objection to the employers forming their own Associations but will discourage only the organisation of labour, will surely make Indian labour keep aloof from the general movement for progress in despair of getting justice done to them even by those who at least ought to be strictly impartial.

Bombay, 4th August.

N. M. JOSHI.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

- GOVIND DAS: HINDUISM. (G. A. Natesan, Madras.) 7½×5. pp. 445. 1924. Rs. 3.
 WEDGWOOD, COL. JOSIAH: ESSAYS AND ADVENTURES OF A LABOURER M. P. (George Allen and Unwin.) 7½×5. pp. 363. 1924. 75. 6d.
 OLDRIEVE, FRANK: INDIA'S LEFEBRE. (Marshall Bros. London.) 7×4½. pp. 144. 1924.

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