

THE Servant of India

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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

THE political situation in Germany continues to be obscure, and from such information as we receive about what is happening in that country, it is difficult to make a forecast of the immediate future. One thing which is, however, fairly clear is that there are forces in Germany which are working to upset the political arrangements which were devised to meet the tremendously serious issue which the victory of the Allies over the Central powers raised more than a year and a half ago. Sudden revolutions are, as a rule, followed by periods of uncertainty, disorder and civil war. The examples of France in the last century and recent experiences in Russia point a valuable moral in this regard. The old militarist party in Germany, though discredited and beaten, entertains hopes of a restoration of the Imperial regime, while supporters of the revolution are anxious to maintain the gain secured and to make the most of a hard situation. The crushing terms of the treaty of peace seem to have made certain sections of the German population desperate and the confusion is rendered worse by the insidious influence of Bolshevism which is spreading far and wide. The longer this state of things lasts, the more difficult will it be for Germany to recover from the efforts of the war, and the only hope of salvation lies in the combined action of moderate and thoughtful men from among those parties that are anxious to prevent their suffering country from going headlong into worse disasters.

THE letter written by the Hon'ble Mr. Patel to the Reforms Commissioner makes milder reading than might have been expected. It dwells, as any one can guess, on the exclusion of the Nationalist party from the Advisory Committee. We do not approve of this exclusion. In fact, a gentleman of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's experience could give valuable assistance in con-

sidering the variety of matters which are likely to come before that Committee. In his case, there need be no suspicion of reluctance to give co-operation to Government or of disbelief in the virtue or utility of the Government of India Act, 1919. The Reforms Commissioner and his Assistants are working against time. The members of the Advisory Committee, according to our information, do not get longer notice of the subject matter to be discussed at a meeting than Mr. Patel himself. If on each section of the rules, Mr. Patel wishes to consult the Congress Committee, it would be impossible to send the rules to England in time. They have to be considered there by more than one authority, and the final promulgation in India must take place in July or August at the latest to allow of the preparation and publication of electoral rolls. We understand that the draft rules will be published for general criticism at the same time they are transmitted to England. The example of the Madras Government may, with advantage, be followed by other Governments in publishing the proposed constitution of the local legislature.

As we apprehended, the non-Brahmans of Madras have vowed a vendetta against the Brahmans. In any case, they would have used every means in their power to keep the hated caste out of the new Council; and despite what they say, they have every means of doing so. Lord Meston's award, however defensible from an abstract point of view, is calculated to infuriate them and envenom their hatred. Very few Brahmans will be able to overcome the united opposition of the South Indian Liberal Federation and the Madras Presidency Association. This community will probably find that in the result it has lost rather than gained by the arbitrator's award. The incensed majority swear that they will compel the hated minority to sue for communal representation. This, however, is a possibility foreseen from the beginning. We hope that, however thorough their defeat, the Brahmans will not ask for special protection. When the bitterness has worked itself out, a reaction will set in and their value will be recognised. Let us trust that in the trying circumstances, the Brahmin will exhibit one of the characteristics of his caste,—*kshamā* or forgiveness.

THE reason given by the Secretary of State for not extending amnesty to Mr. Horniman is very

curious. His Majesty's Proclamation, he says, applies only to India. Does not Mr. Horniman's case arise out of his connexion with India? or is royal clemency to be denied to him merely because he happened at the time of the Proclamation to be out of India? Such a quibble, the Government must know, cannot be convincing. Mr. Montagu made definite charges against Mr. Horniman in defending his deportation, and he further stated that they could easily be proved in a court of law. Ordinary justice requires that he should now make good his word. Mr. Horniman is prepared to meet the charges levelled against him. In these circumstances for Mr. Montagu to say that the Royal Proclamation could not apply to him and that his freedom would continue to be restricted till the Government of Bombay thought otherwise is preposterous.

IN a portion of the Puri District (Orissa) comprising about 142 square miles and 289 villages, the condition of people seems to be very bad, about 10,000 of them being in the grip of starvation. On the top of the famine of last year came floods carrying away the whole of what would otherwise have been a good crop. The distress, though confined to a small area, is acute. Mr. L. Sahu, a member of the Servants of India Society, is busy visiting the affected part and trying to relieve distress in co-operation with the leading public workers of Puri. The Hon. Mr. Gopa Bandhu Das who has travelled extensively in the affected villages moved a resolution in the Bihar Legislative Council on March 13 asking for the increase of the provincial share of the provision for famine relief from Rs. 19,000 to 50,000. In his speech on the motion he said: "People have become absolutely destitute. I could find nothing on which they can lay their hands for their maintenance. Lands they have sold or mortgaged, utensils and ornaments they have already parted with. Cattle they have lost. If they have still anything left, it is because they could not find buyers."

HE read an extract from papers describing the horrible condition prevailing in the unfortunate district which ran thus: "The mother is snatching away the morsel of food from the child. People under the pang of hunger have eaten fruits, roots and leaves which were never used as food. These too have become scarce now. Distressed people are moving about everywhere in mere skeletons, appearing every moment to fall down. They look like fearful spectres. Some of them are falling down dead. Such dead bodies are to be found along the roadside. . . . The mother has left her child and the husband his wife. Many have fled away no body knows where. Every one is for himself. Little orphans are seen here and there under the grip of death. The terrible scenes of the great Orissa Famine of 1866 have been repeated in several places."

THE Hon'ble Mr. Das showed to members of the Council samples of food he got from villages

visited by him, and a photograph showing a group of famished people. The Commissioner of the division said in an indefinite way that the picture was overdrawn. He asserted that the affected area was very small, the population numbering only 2000. The Government member explained that money would be found if necessity arose for relieving famine, meaning thereby that the necessity has not arisen so far. Public opinion is not very vocal in the backward province of Orissa distributed in three administrations, and non-official relief is not what it ought to be. We request our readers to render what help they can by sending contributions to Mr. Jagbandhu Sing, Pleader, Puri, who is in charge of one of the centres of relief.

IN the last session of the Bombay Legislative Council, the Hon. Principal Paranjpye moved a resolution asking Government to consider if it was advisable and practicable to appoint honorary visitors to factories to assist regular factory Inspectors in the work of seeing that the Factory Act is not violated in any respect. This proposition excited the wrath of several members connected with commerce and cotton mill industry, led by the Hon. Mr. Purshottamdas and Sir Dinshaw Petit. The former said such men, if appointed would be "a continued source of annoyance" to factory owners and threw a challenge to the mover if he could point out any citizen who had the leisure to undertake that sort of honorary work. Sir D. Petit considered the motion "a mischievous proposition" and had a fling at the political agitators who, he believed, excited the labourers and who were to a considerable extent responsible for the recent mill strikes in Bombay. The Hon. Mr. H. D. Desai and R. B. Sathe supported the proposition. The former could say from his personal experience that there were several evasions of law and that they could not be permitted in the interest of all concerned. Mr. Sathe pointed out that the honorary Inspectors should be asked to attend to those clauses of the Act which related to employment of women and children and concerning sanitary arrangements needed and provided in factories, and which governed the appointment of paid factory inspectors. The Hon. Sir Ibrahim on behalf of Government said that they had already consulted their officers and that they had come to the conclusion that the appointment asked for by the mover was neither advisable nor practicable. He said that unless some people came forward and produced direct evidence of breaches of law, Government could not take any action.

NOW it is a well-known fact that there are continued breaches of regulations regarding employment of child labour or half-timers in Bombay and Ahmedabad mills, and remarks made in the annual factory reports published by the Government are proof positive of the same. There are various other breaches of law, occasionally, such as work-

ing by night without a second shift, insufficient sanitary conveniences and improper guarding of machinery and betting. It is very difficult, almost impossible, to produce direct evidence by any citizen to prove such evasion of law unless the man who attempts to do so has access, howsoever restricted it be, to the defaulting factory. It is an undoubted fact that the number of factory inspectors—five for the whole presidency—is very inadequate, and moreover they cannot come into contact with labour, being ignorant of languages of the province. Whether the remedy for detection of factory offences lies in the appointment of honorary visitors or a large paid inspectorial staff, consisting of men having Indian mill experience and knowing labour first-hand, we are not in a position to affirm. But we can assert that the whole question of factory supervision needs to be seriously looked into. The present arrangement of non-Indian inspectors is antiquated one and needs to be brought up-to-date. The social conscience of the public is awakening, slowly but surely; labour is learning to assert its own rights; and at such a juncture Government must adopt a new policy.

LAST week at the Satara District Conference, again, peasant delegates were refused free admission by the Nationalists in authority, as happened at the Poona and Belgaum Conferences, and the rayats had to hold a counter-demonstration outside the pandal. The outer gathering, however, far exceeded the gathering inside in numerical strength, the proportion being something like 300 to 1500. The resolutions passed at the respective gatherings also differed characteristically in tone and substance, the rayats' conference adopting the more progressive attitude. Till the Nationalists shed their obscurantism and embrace a bold programme of social reform and social reconstruction it will become necessary to offer them strenuous opposition and expose the unrepresentative character of their gatherings.

THE Nationalists have decided to admit a few free delegates to the Bombay Provincial Conference to be held at Sholapur from the outlying districts, the total number being restricted to 128. Such a restriction is entirely opposed to the practice of the Congress, for there is no foundation for the *Mahratta's* allegation that a limit was put upon the number of tenant delegates at Delhi or Amritsar. There is nothing in the Congress proceedings to sanction such an arbitrary restriction. It has been explained that this figure was arrived at on the supposition that the number of paying delegates would be some 500, which would mean that the free delegates would be nearly one-fifth of the total number. Is it at all possible to preserve the proportion intended by the organisers of the conference unless they impose a similar limit upon the maximum number of paying delegates as well? But the latter course is ruled out as inconceivable, while the number of peasant delegates is sought to

to be narrowly limited. Such a proceeding on the part of the Nationalists shows that they do not at all understand the principle underlying the free admission of peasant delegates.

WHAT is, however, most objectionable is the taking of all necessary measures so that none but those of the extremist persuasion should be admitted free from among the peasant delegates. The Nationalists have carefully taken into their own hands the power of selecting free delegates, and there is not the least doubt that this power will be used in a partisan spirit. Thus, in Poona the power of electing paying delegates was entrusted by the Congress Committee to two secretaries, one of whom happens to be a Liberal and the other a Nationalist; for the election of free delegates, however, another extremist was added to the appointing committee, and the majority was to select the delegates! There is thus complete provision here that all the peasants to be admitted free would be political extremists and social reactionaries. What appears, therefore, on the face of it as a partial concession to those who demanded the free admission of peasant delegates is thus sought to be perverted by the Nationalists as a means ready to their hand to take in their followers without fee, simply because they are in possession of the Congress organisation. Such an invidiousness of selection added to the arbitrariness of the restriction must be severely condemned, and meetings have been held to protest against the unjust and high-handed action of the Reception Committee. It is possible that the Liberals and the non-Brahmans will be driven to hold a conference of their own.

IN the Assam Legislative Council the Hon'ble Mr. Barua raised an important debate as to the best method of eradicating the opium habit prevalent in the province. In the Assam Valley alone there are nearly a lakh of consumers of opium, every seven adults among a hundred being addicted to the vice. In 1918-19 as many as 1,480 maunds were consumed in this tract, while the consumption for the whole of the province was 1,571 maunds. The reduction in the number of shops and increase in the treasury price which are the methods most in favour of checking the vice have proved ineffective in this province. Mr. Barua therefore suggested that all existing consumers should be registered and no new consumer should be added to the list except on medical certificate. Further, the registered consumers should be rationed, no one being allowed to purchase a larger quantity than the one that may be allotted to him on a careful inquiry. The Government is willing to try a scheme of registration if one be formulated by the non-official members of council. The further discussion of this problem was, therefore, deferred to the next meeting. Anyway, the Government is alive to the necessity of adopting a drastic remedy.

THE PUNJAB ATROCITIES.

THE Commissioners appointed by the Punjab Sub-Committee of the National Congress have issued their report on the disorders in the Punjab and the measures taken by the authorities, civil and military, to cope with them. The report is signed by Messrs. Gandhi, Jayakar, C. R. Das, and Abbas Tyabji; Mr. Gandhi's signature alone furnishes a sufficient guarantee that the investigation was conducted and the conclusions reached with meticulous care and a conscientious regard for all that could be said on behalf of the officials. It were to be wished that the valuable material collected by the Congress Sub-Committee was used in the inquiry made by Lord Hunter's Committee, so that the *ex parte* character which now attaches to the evidence would have disappeared. Short of this drawback, which in the circumstances is inevitable, every precaution was undoubtedly taken to make the work thorough and strictly impartial. Over 1700 statements were examined by the Commissioners, and of them only 650 were admitted, one of the reasons which led the Commissioners to exclude the rest being that the charges made therein against the authorities were of too serious a character. The utmost care was taken to verify the statements that were admitted and to cross-examine their authors on them. Those who made allegations against the executive were warned of the consequences which would be incurred and it was only when they adhered to their statements that the latter were at all admitted. The same scrupulous care was exercised in drawing conclusions from the evidence collected as in sifting the evidence itself. It will be difficult to pick out a single adjective used in the report in regard to the action of the officials which one feels was not abundantly justified by the evidence placed before the Sub-Committee. The moderation of language and the charity of judgment displayed in the report are beyond praise. Of course nothing less could be expected of any work associated with Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Jayakar. These qualities will, we dare say, gain for the report a ready credence in England, where we understand an effort is to be made to obtain the modest reparation demanded by the Commissioners.

In regard to the atrocities committed by the authorities, the main facts have already been disclosed in the inquiry of the Hunter Committee and the white paper issued by the Punjab Government. Not many are added to them by the statements submitted to the Congress Sub-Committee. The enormity of the acts was known; the report simply narrates the tragic events with a little more particularity which only increases one's detestation of them. For instance, it has been shown that not only no medical assistance of any kind was provided by the military, but that, in some cases, those who wanted to render aid in their individual capacity were forbidden to do so.—Some policemen have recently been apprehended for being in pos-

session of the property stolen from the banks in Amritsar, which raises a doubt that the hooligan element in the crowd may have been stirred to the dastardly deed by some policemen themselves.—General Dyer had an idea of bombarding the city of Amritsar. He gave it up, it would appear, only to carry out the Jalleanwalla Bagh massacre.—As to this incident, a strong suspicion arises in the mind of the reader whether the meeting at which this butchery took place was not in fact a trap set by the C. I. D. The meeting was announced by Hans Raj who subsequently turned approver. In order to attract a large crowd it was falsely given out that Lala Kanhya Lal, a respectable pleader of the place, was to preside. Hans Raj was thick with C. I. D. men and held conversations with them at the meeting itself. When an aeroplane appeared, and people began to disperse from fear, he held them there, asking that they must not be afraid. General Dyer who came to hear of the meeting nearly four hours before time, took no steps to prevent it. When he got definite information at 4 that the meeting was to commence half an hour later, he walked leisurely to the place of the meeting and reached there at 5 or 5.15 p.m. No attempt was made to disperse the crowd. In the words of Punjab Government's account, "he did not order the crowd to disperse, but proceeded to take action to disperse it at once by fire." From time to time he "checked his fire and directed it upon places where the crowd was thickest," and that he did, not because they were not going fast, but because he "had made up his mind to punish them for having assembled." Firing, again, "was directed towards the gates through which the people were running out." The Commissioners say: "Evidence has been led before us to show that soldiers were posted at points outside the Bagh to guard approaches, and men were shot whilst they were effecting their escape through these approaches. There can be no doubt, (they add) that General Dyer's plan was to kill the largest number." Was it also the plan hatched by some mischief-makers to get the largest number in at the meeting? The Commissioners have not made such a finding, but the evidence published raises such a doubt in the mind of the reader, which the Government will do well to dispel if the facts are otherwise. The public will await the Hunter Committee's finding in this matter.

The facts which have not yet been revealed relate to the "indescribable torture" practised by the police upon respectable people for the purpose of extorting confessions or evidence. Mr. Maqbool Mahmood, High Court Vakil, was prompted to say that he would identify the murders of Robinson and Rowland. He says: "I informed the police that I had already sent a written statement to them and that I had stated that I could not recognise anybody. This statement was then brought to me, and I was then asked to tear it off with my own hands and to submit a fresh statement giving the names of those whom they had found out as cul-

prits. I refused to comply with the demand and some threats were flung at me." Mrs. Nolley Benjamin says: "When the inquiry was going on, I was taken to the *Kotwali* on two occasions; I was asked to say that I had seen Mohammad Amin in the crowd. As I said it was not the truth, Mr. Plomer threatened to send me to gaol. I told them whatever I knew, but I refused to give false evidence. They also tempted me with a reward from the Government if I supported the story of Mrs. Easdon regarding the presence of Mohammad Amin. I refused again." These persons, however, escaped lightly. Others suffered terribly, *vide* Gholam Jilani's case (p. 71). The Commissioners rightly say: "The paragraphs we have devoted to indiscriminate arrests and tortures for the purpose of extorting evidence furnish perhaps the blackest chapter in the whole story of the cruelties perpetrated in the name of martial law. The tragedy of Jalleanwalla Bagh was staggering for its dramatic effect. But the slow torture of the arrests was felt not only by those who suffered, but by those also who were always in fear of being arrested." They add: "We were incredulous when we entered upon the inquiry, but as statement after statement came under our notice, we were driven to accept the general charge. The most damaging statements are so fully supported that, in our opinion, they will stand the test of investigation in any court of law." The evidence of torture challenges inquiry, as the report says, and we hope the Government will make a searching inquiry into the matter. The Hunter Committee's report will soon be out, and the final views on the matters investigated into by the Congress Sub-Committee must be suspended till the former Committee's conclusions are before the public. Still we have no doubt that the popular verdict on the martial law administration of officers like General Dyer, Col. Johnson and others will be fully sustained, based as it is on their own admissions. The only possible remedy to allay public discontent is prompt and exemplary punishment to those who may be found to have been guilty. The slightest leniency shown to these people will cost Government dear.

THE UNIVERSITY AND EXAMINATIONS.

(Concluded from last issue.)

WHAT is the school leaving certificate scheme as a substitute for the old matriculation examination? Is it not an attempt to estimate the real progress of the students in the High School classes by the record of the work done throughout the last year or two or three of the secondary course? The estimate of the progress must, from the very nature of the case, be the estimate of the teachers themselves. And if they know their work and can be trusted to make honest estimate of the progress of the pupils, the record of the pupils must be a valuable document. The sum and substance of the criticism of the school

record as a reliable estimate of the pupil's progress is that either the teachers are incompetent or that they are dishonest. According to the 'certificate scheme,' the school record should have also the results of the public examination at the end of the course embodied in it. The Board of Examiners, as we know them in Madras, are people holding responsible positions as either Inspectors of schools, teachers in secondary schools or professors in colleges. They are presumably men who know their work and men who may be trusted to do their work honestly. If the results of the public examination are impeached, it must be due to the incompetency or unfairness of the members of the Board. The original plan in Madras was to juxtapose the public examination results and the school record and to trust to the discrimination of the college Principals in the matter of selecting qualified pupils for the University course.

Public examination results on the valuation of pupils' script by external examiners as well as school examination results forming the school record are even in the best cases liable to variation. The blue pencil of the examiner, external or internal, is not held as steadily as the abstraction Justice is supposed to hold the scales. There are different examiners, assistants under a chief. There are different conditions under which the work has to be done. And the examiners have been trained to attach an undue importance to the results of the examinations in general and to the results of the external examinations in particular. Hence the chances of the pupils not doing themselves justice. And if our readers will recall what has been said about the different subjects of the school course and how far, in cases where there is not the organising of intellectual or practical habits, memorising of an unhealthy kind may ape real knowledge, the still further chances of examination results not being a correct indication of true school work are multiplied.

And above it all is the grotesqueness of the discrete arithmetical quantities, fixing the values of the stages of mental development of a growing lad subject to all the instability of conditions of adolescence.

The attempts now and then made to revive the old matriculation examination, the popularity enjoyed by external examinations in general can be easily explained. There is the prestige of long-established authority. For half a century we have been brought up under the belief that public examination results are things to swear by. Slow rises other merit oppressed by heap of prejudices when not vouchsafed for by the safe and only accepted test of public examinations. There is this saving grace about the examinations. The stranger examiners valuing the work of pupils not easily made out as belonging to this or that school can be expected to be impartial. They cannot have one measure for this candidate and another measure for that candidate. They are men selected

because of their proficiency in their subjects and because of their standing in their profession. They are all, like the pattern Cæsar's wife, above suspicion. And there is—a finality about the results. If a candidate has crossed the border, however unsatisfactory the nature of the border may be, he is past saving. The stroke may be single, but it is final. And if the victim is not grateful, his relatives or his friends in the senate are.

And the much harassed college authorities can leave the admission to the head clerk or some deputy, and counting is easier than weighing. Hence the reviving popularity of the earlier matriculation examination and the sedulous attempts made to shape the new scheme of S. L. C. so as to make it approach the older pattern of the dear departed.

5. We would sum up what has been said so far thus: duly graduated progress in studies, healthful assimilation of knowledge, organisation of intellectual habits and the relation in all practicable cases of school studies to life work and every day reality must be insisted on. Considering the limitations of examinations as tests of school or college work, no exaggerated importance ought to be attached to it. A Macaulay might come to grief in a Tripos examination. A Newman might take a low class in the humanities. Do not make a fetish of examinations or of classes of degrees. The larger and more searching test of life makes us all find our level. Crammed blockheads are found out a little later than the empty ones.

Still examinations as rough and ready tests for candidates for particular appointments, for various services, seem the least invidious way of opening careers to talents. If after earlier studies in schools and colleges, there should be a competitive test to choose the number required for vacancies and if there be safeguards of physical competency and moral worth, there can be no objection.

As supplementary to and as a check of the school and college estimates of progress, we must have examinations. If the school and college estimates are not to be relied on, the blame is of those that are entrusted with such work. And if the tests of external examinations are not to be relied on, if they show extraordinary variations, there is something wrong with regard to those entrusted with the task. All wolves in sheep's clothing must be driven out. It will not do to say we shall rely only on school or college estimates, or we shall rely on the estimates of external examiners.

Even in the best conducted universities there is scope for improvement and progress. Examinations can be better conducted. The chapter on Examination reform in Chapter XL. (Vol V.)* is profitable reading. And in this connection we wish the training schools and colleges would devote a

* In the Report of the Calcutta University Commission, of which this article purports to be a review. Previous articles by the writer on the Report appeared in the issues of September 18, October 2 and 30, and December 18 and 25 last year.

little more attention than hitherto to the theory and practice of examinations. Of course there are heaven-born teachers who do not need training and heaven-born examiners who set about the task as unerringly as ducklings take to water. We would not minimise the advantages of these. We refer to ordinary teachers and ordinary examiners. These would do the work better after an express course of training. Examinations of some kind or other all school masters have to conduct. The sooner they set about the task with understanding the better. There is a fair amount of literature on the subject. The curious may start with Messrs. Latham and Hartog, and they would go on to other authorities. What is contained in the Calcutta Commission Report in the Chapter expressly devoted to the subject and elsewhere is not the least helpful or the least authoritative.

K. B. RAMANATHAN.

INDIA AND THE LABOUR CONFERENCE.

IN accordance with the Labour part of the Peace Treaty the first International Labour Conference was held at Washington at the end of October, 1919. The Conference lasted for a month. Forty countries were represented by 120 delegates and 160 advisers. India was represented by four delegates, Mr. L. J. Kershaw and Mr. A. C. Chatterjee representing the Government, Mr. A. K. Murray representing the employers, and myself representing the working-classes. Mr. Engel attended as an adviser to the Government delegates, and Mr. B. P. Wadia very generously accepted the invitation to attend the Conference as an adviser to the delegate of the working-classes appointed by the Government.

The agenda contained the following questions: (1) hours of work; (2) unemployment; (3) employment of women before and after child-birth, and at night; (4) employment of children at night and the age of employment of children; (5) unhealthy processes.

The conventions and recommendations passed by the Conference do not apply to seamen or to agricultural labourers. The case of the former will be considered by a special Conference to be held in June next, and that of the latter by the next annual Conference which may be held in the spring of 1921.

After a general discussion of about a week the Conference appointed committees to consider the agenda in detail and to make reports and draft conventions and recommendations. The three groups of delegates also met several times to consider these questions from their respective standpoints, and to elect their respective representatives on the different committees. I attended meetings of the committee which considered the question of hours of work in tropical countries, as well as the meetings of the committee which considered the question of the age of employment of children. Mr. Wadia attended the meetings of the committee

which considered the questions relating to women. Mr. Kershaw represented the Government and Mr. Murray the employers on the committee for hours of work. Messrs. Chatterjee and Murray represented their respective sides on the children's committee, and the former also represented the Government on the women's employment committee.

The Conference has adopted a convention accepting the principle of forty-eight hours a week and eight hours a day. Modifications of this convention have been adopted in the case of India, Japan, Greece, and Roumania. The case of China, Siam and Persia as regards this question will be considered by the next year's Conference. Article 10 of the convention which deals with India is as follows:—"In British India the principle of a sixty-hour week shall be adopted for all workers in the industries at present covered by the Factory Acts administered by the Government of India, in mines and in such branches of railway work as shall be specified for this purpose by the competent authority. . . . Further provision limiting hours of work in India will be considered at a future meeting of the General Conference."

When this question was considered by the Conference, I submitted a statement expressing my personal opinion that no harm would be done to Indian industry even if the general convention of forty-eight hours a week were applied immediately to India, but I provisionally accepted the modified convention on the ground of the Government, the employers, as well as public opinion of the country not being prepared for more. In the same statement I also pleaded for broadening the definition of a factory by including in it all undertakings where mechanical or some other power is used, and where not less than ten persons (in the place of 50 as provided for by the present Factory Act) are employed. I also pleaded for extending the modified convention to the dock labour. Unfortunately, the question could not be fully discussed at the Conference for want of time.

The convention regarding unemployment as adopted by the Conference provides for the establishment of free public employment agencies. On the same question a recommendation was adopted prohibiting the establishment of employment agencies which charge fees or which carry on their business for profit. The second recommendation on the question stated that the recruiting of bodies of workers in one country with a view to their employment in another country should be permitted only by mutual agreement between the countries concerned, and after consultation with employers and workers in each country in the industries concerned. The third recommendation provides for an effective system of unemployment insurance. A recommendation concerning reciprocity of treatment of foreign workers was also adopted. No modifications either in the convention or the recommendations were suggested in the case of India or of any other country.

Regarding the employment of women before and after child-birth, a convention was adopted prohibiting the employment of women six weeks after confinement, and permitting women to leave work six weeks before confinement, and making provision for the payment of benefits during the period of absence. No modifications of this convention have been suggested for any special countries. The second convention regarding the employment of women prohibits night-work for women. But in the case of India the Government is authorised to suspend the application of this convention except in the case of factories as defined by the national law (where the convention will be applicable).

As regards the age of employment of children, a general convention has been adopted prohibiting the employment of children under the age of fourteen years. But in the case of India a modified convention has been adopted prohibiting employment of children under twelve years of age (a) in factories working with power and employing more than ten persons, (b) in mines, and (c) in the transport of passengers or goods or mails, by rail, or in the handling of goods at docks, but excluding transport by hand. A convention prohibiting night work for persons under eighteen years of age was also adopted, but in the case of India this will apply to "factories" and to the children under fourteen only.

Regarding the unhealthy processes, recommendations have been adopted for taking certain measures for the prevention of anthrax and for the protection of women and children against lead poisoning. A recommendation has also been adopted recommending that not only an efficient system of factory inspection shall be established, but also in addition thereto Government service shall be established, specially charged with the duty of safeguarding the health of the workers. No country has been excluded from the application of these recommendations.

The above summary of the conventions and recommendations passed by the Conference briefly describes the work of the Conference and India's part in it. Personally I believe it is a pity that no suitable modifications as applied to India have been suggested in the case of some conventions and recommendations. It is too much to expect the Government of India, the employers, and the public opinion of the country to accept at present all the conventions and recommendations in their entirety, and in the absence of any definite suggestions for modified application some of these will, I am afraid, be thrown out when placed before the Imperial Legislative Council. Unfortunately, as the different committees used to sit, in many cases, simultaneously, it was not possible for two men (Mr. Wadia and myself) to attend all the meetings, to represent the interests of the working classes of India on them. I, therefore, hope that at the next year's Conference a sufficient number

of advisers will accompany the delegates selected to represent the three interests.

But, on the whole, I am pleased so far as the work of the Conference goes. Its ultimate results can only be judged after the conventions and the recommendations have been considered by the Imperial Legislative Council, and its attitude towards them has been seen. I hope the Government of India, the employers and the educated people in my country will rightly judge the labour situation in the world, and its effect upon India, as well as the labour situation in India at present and as it is likely to develop in future, and that they will give to this subject full and sympathetic consideration. (From "United India.")

N. M. JOSHI.

A LETTER FROM LONDON.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

LONDON, FEBRUARY 26.

BRITISH PARTY POLITICS.

IN the struggle for supremacy between Labour and a middle party, as to who shall step into the shoes of the Coalition, Labour has twice lost severely within a few days. Both at Paisley and in the Wrekin division, Labour has come second, and the electorates have declared that, whilst they are more than tired of the Coalition, they are not prepared to admit that there is not some third alternative, rather than Labour, which is still suffering from political and economic indigestion. At Paisley the successful candidate is Mr. Asquith, the leader of the independent Liberals. In the Wrekin division, the successful candidate was an Independent, without being a Liberal. Indeed, he is a follower and close associate of Mr. Horatio Bottomley. It does not follow that he is tarred with the same brush, but the significance of the two elections lies in the fact that the representative of something that is not Coalition or Labour came in first, Labour came next, but some way after; and Coalition came last, and, especially at Paisley, where Mr. MacKean failed to secure the statutory minimum of votes and thus lost his deposit, a very bad last. Lord Selborne, in the House of Lords, last Tuesday, raised the whole question of the Government's supposed relations with the Labour leaders, and the secret negotiations that took place from time to time in matters of the utmost public importance from an industrial and social point of view. Lord Haldane, who immediately followed him, took occasion to express the view that it would be a long time before the Labour Party came into power. The problems to be thought out were so enormous that a new party required time before it could take its place adequately in the political arena. That those problems have not yet been digested by the Labour Party, that the Party has not yet reached the height of a genuine National Party, is clearly the opinion of the electorates in so far as they have had anything like a fair opportunity of expressing their views

on so plain an issue. There is evidently room for some sort of middle party. In spite of Mr. Asquith's success, I am confident that it cannot be merely a re-edition of the old Liberal Party. That, like the old Tory Party, is gone for ever. But the public looks for a real Opposition in Parliament. Anything that makes for that is welcome, as Lord Robert Cecil and Lord Chaplin, in their letters to Mr. Asquith, were at pains to show. And a middle party, if it has any life in it, will probably attract not only the middle Liberals, but a good proportion of the more advanced Tories as well as quite a number of "middle class" people who until recently saw no escape from the Coalition except by voting Labour. Besides, the Labour Party has played its cards very badly so far. In foreign policy, it has quite failed to make its mark in the House. In leadership, owing largely to the absence from Commons of some of its most distinguished leaders, it has also failed to a great extent. And on the industrial side, it has both disgusted and frightened the saner and more cautious elements of the population. The selfish attempts of some of the trades unions to prevent demobilised soldiers from being trained to take their part in the work of national reconstruction, on all kinds of flimsy economic pretexts, has done great harm to the cause of Labour, and the Party spokesmen's defence in Parliament the other night was very far from convincing. On the other hand, the public sees that Labour policy is being largely directed either by selfish sectional interests, as in the case of the miners, who, as Mr. McCurdy pointed out recently, are claiming the mines, not for the nation, but for the miners, in their demand for nationalisation, or by the ambitions of a number of irresponsible and theoretical intellectuals, or by the exponents of direct action. The result is that, though Mr. Asquith, and still less Mr. Palmer, of the Wrekin division, are not a highly inspiring force, yet to the majority of average men in the country, they represent a very welcome third alternative. In the circumstances, there are signs that Labour is beginning to realise that the time has not yet come for it to sweep the board. If it learns the lesson that sooner or later those suffering from swelled head have to learn from the logic of facts, so much the better. At any rate, some of its most respected leaders, such as Mr. William Brace and Mr. Thomas Richards, two of the miners' leading representatives in Parliament, are now at pains to tell the workers some very effective home-truths, which will not make for the popularity of these leaders. Their courage, however, might well be imitated by some of your own leaders in somewhat analogous circumstances.

THE TURKISH SETTLEMENT.

The great controversy raging to-day is that relating to Constantinople and the Turkish settlement. This evening, in the Commons, the Government's policy on the subject is being seriously challenged by a very formidable opposition from all parties. The Church and Nonconformity, as

well as some of the best known of the intellectual leaders of the country, have ranged themselves against the Government, and are demanding the enforcement of the pure spirit of Gladstone's "bag and baggage" policy. If they could, most of them would not leave Turkey a shred of national territory. That would be all very well if it were not for Turks—but the Turks are there and so are the Bolsheviks, and one of the problems before statesmen is how to prevent their making common cause. That problem is not yet solved, and it certainly will not be by the anti-Turk extremists, who add political purism to ecclesiastical—I will not say "religious"—fanaticism. The controversy is not a straight and easy one of whether or not the Turks should be allowed to retain a foothold in Europe. Probably, on the intrinsic merits and the logic of the case, there is a great deal to be said for such a solution, if one leaves out Mussulman sentiment. But, of course, that cannot be done, whether it be in India or in Tripoli or in Algeria. Both France and Italy are great Mussulman powers and are opposed to the Gladstonian policy. Russia is today out of the discussion, but there can be no doubt that the aforesaid Russian Mussulmans are not likely to be glad at the prospect of the elimination of the Turks from Europe and their immurement in the fastnesses of Asia Minor.

The "Times" has this week been making a series of ferocious attacks upon the Government for the announcement at all, and especially at Constantinople and in India, that, conditionally upon good behaviour, Constantinople would be allowed to remain to Turkey. Mr. Montagu comes in for a good deal of castigation, not only from the "Morning Post," which, of course, is glad of the opportunity of tilting at him, but also by the "Times," which is not unfriendly usually, the "Westminster," and even by the "Observer," whose editor, Mr. J. L. Garvin, has been such a whole-hearted admirer of his. However, to-day will show the strength of the extreme anti-Turks and Mr. Lloyd George will have his work cut out to pacify them and the House at large. It is certain that the controversy has cut deep across ordinary party lines, and, contrary to expectation, the Labour Party are not any too sympathetic to the Indian Mussulman point of view. Mr. Roden Buxton is probably responsible for that, as well as Mr. J. H. Harris. In its reply to the Indian Moslems, which is a lengthy and reasoned document, it is pointed out that the Caliphate of the Osmanli Turks is not acknowledged by other sections of the Mussulman world, that the question is a religious one, and concerns Moslems alone, and by Moslems should be resolved. The reply distinguishes between the various races formerly under the rule of the Turk. It urges that the principle of self-determination should be applied wherever possible, and that the mandatory principle should be resorted to in other cases. It declares for the internationalisation of the Dardanelles and the

Bosphorus, but considers that Constantinople might remain under Turkish sovereignty if such retention be not incompatible with the internationalisation of the two Straits. This will be rather cold comfort to the deputation that is on the point of arriving here.

French support of Turkey is pretty general, and is expressed particularly emphatically by the "Temps" as follows on the programme for the maintenance of an independent and self-sufficing Turkey:

It consists simply in respecting the existence of a nation which has the right to live. The Turkey of to-morrow should comprise all territories, where the majority of the population is composed either of Turks or of inhabitants whose belief or vital needs compel them to live in comradeship with the Turks.

Such a State must have Constantinople for its capital. Without it, it would be neither self-sufficing nor even conceivable. These plans are in no wise incompatible with the international control of the Straits or with international assistance which will permit Turkey to be administered in a civilized manner and pay her debts. Nay, more; if one wants the control of the Straits to remain really international and Turkey to be open to all the Western influences of which she is in need in order to progress, the most certain means is the adoption of the disinterested programme which French opinion adheres to.

If the Sultan is exiled to Brussa or Konia, he still remains the spiritual head of the Mussulmans, all Mussulmans who continue to obey him will be unhappy and scandalized, and will know that he is in exile. As for "the centre of intrigue and corruption," which Lord Robert Cecil and his friends no longer wish to permit to remain at Constantinople, every one knows it has been principally maintained by international rivalries. Does one really believe these rivalries would cease as if by enchantment under the *regime* of the League of Nations? The men would remain the same, as Mr. Balfour has philosophically observed.

The article ends by demanding that in no case shall France be compelled to defend with French blood the state of things which might be created in Thrace and in Western Asia Minor. No more adventures of the kind for France, at any rate. And there are always Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco for her to reckon with.

MR. N. M. JOSHI.

Mr. N. M. Joshi is busy travelling about studying matters of industrial interest to his countrymen. That he created an excellent impression among his colleagues at Washington is beyond dispute and was expected by all who knew him. Here his work is of an even more useful character, if quieter and more unobtrusive. An occasional lecture helps to break the monotony, but otherwise it is all hard grind behind the scenes.

I hear from South Africa the greatest disappointment expressed at the inability of Mr. Sastri to accompany Sir Benjamin Robertson. So much had been built upon his visit, and I can fully enter into the feelings of the Indian community. Knowing him as I do, however, I am sure that only the most important and urgent public business would have prevented his departure on so vital and necessary a mission. But how is it that

no-one else among all the public men of India has been nominated by the Government of India to take his place?

LONDON, MARCH 11.

THE KHILAFAT QUESTION.

THE Khilafat Delegation having arrived, it has set to work, first, by getting into touch with the Government, and, secondly, of course, by placing itself in contact with the Press. It is to be feared that, in journalistic quarters, its reception will not be of the most cordial. Whatever Mr. Lloyd George may eventually agree to, in conjunction with his colleagues of the Supreme Council will be the result of purely political considerations of international consequence and not because public opinion in this country is favourable to the Mussulman claim. The recent massacres of Armenians have had the effect of putting up the backs of orthodox and unorthodox Christianity against Moslem aspirations. I do not think it is altogether honest to quote against them the British Christian attitude towards Tsarist Russia at the time of the Jewish pogroms. In the first place, it was not Christian lives and fortunes that were at stake in Russia, and, in the second place, it was not at all easy to interfere, as the United States discovered, with the internal affairs of a Great Power, as Russia then was. It is notorious that Great Britain has endeavoured to prevent pogroms of like character in that part of Russia known as non-Soviet, during the recent dispensation. And I suppose that it is considered to be an opportune occasion, when the settlement of the Turkish question, and of the terms of the Peace Treaty, comes up for discussion that an attempt should be made to solve a difficulty that has not become easier since the Russians began to use the Armenians as a pawn in their game of Balkan politics. Incidentally, it may be remarked that Soviet Russia is not at all exempt from the vices of Tsarist Imperialism, for the notorious Bolshevik paper, "Vperiod," as well as other papers similarly inspired is publishing violently anti-British articles based on Mr. Lloyd George's utterances, which are treated as evidences of perfidy. The paper is most bitter about "the betrayal" of Russian interests in the Dardanelles. Meanwhile, Mr. Mahomed Ali and his colleagues have adopted the argument of Mr. Ameer Ali, that there may be two sides to the Armenian massacre question, and are asking that an independent Commission of Inquiry, upon which there should be Indian Mussulman representation, should be sent to Cilicia to investigate the situation and report, until when judgment should be held in suspense. This is practically what the Turkish Government have suggested though they are reported to have invited America to make an investigation.

Lieut.-Colonel James, M. P., does not at all like the composition of the Khilafat Deputation. Yesterday, being "India" day in the House of Commons, he asked the Secretary of State for

India whether the leader of the deputation was not the individual who, on account of his revolutionary tendencies and his intimate association with the Committee of Union and Progress, was, together with his brother, interned by the Government of India, whether the inclusion of a man of such tendencies was approved by the Government of India, and whether the Minister would consider the possible prejudice to the cause of millions of loyal Islamic subjects of the Crown of the inclusion of an avowed revolutionary on a mission of this kind. Mr. Fisher, who is only a substitute Secretary of State, answered the first two parts of the question affirmatively, and as to the third and fourth, he replied that the Government of India had no hand in selecting the personnel of the delegation, and that he himself accepted no responsibility in the matter. Colonel James, however, was by no means appeased by this gentle reply, for he turned fiercely upon Mr. Fisher with the demand to be informed whether it was not a fact that the members of the delegation had been officially received by the representatives of the Indian Government in this country, whether such a reception did not constitute an act of approval of the constitution of the delegation, and whether it was a fact that the Government of India, quite properly, had no hand in selecting the personnel of the delegation. Mr. Fisher was saved the necessity of entering upon a highly philosophical disquisition on the exact relations on this and other subjects between the Secretary of State for India and the Government of India by the intervention of the Speaker, who courteously suggested to the honorable and gallant member that he might put the question down, which was equally Col. Wedgwood's fate when he inquired delicately whether such a visit was not of the utmost advantage to the relations between the British people and the Indian Mussulmans, besides being advantageous to the Empire for such men as Mr. Mahomed Ali to come here.

SOUTH AND EAST AFRICA.

Besides the Khilafat delegation, there are two others in this country on missions of the deepest interest to India. Mr. Cassim Adam Kala, a Memon merchant from the Transvaal, is here to represent the views of the Transvaal Indian community, in co-operation with the Indians Overseas Association and its Hon. Secretary, Mr. Polak. He has already seen some of the chiefs at the India Office and is interviewing others there and at the Colonial Office, as well as members of Parliament. He is presently going to India on the same mission, and will probably guide himself by the advice of Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Cassim Adam is a man of considerable personality, and, in his own vernacular, can put up a very strong case for his compatriots in the Transvaal, whose disabilities he shares. Messrs. Achariar and Thakore, of Mombasa and Nairobi, respectively, have also reached here, and Mr. Allibhai Mulla Jeevanjee, well-known alike in Mombasa, Bombay, and Kara-

chi, is expected here on Sunday night. They intend to make a big fight to save the situation in East Africa. They come here with full credentials from the whole of the Eastern Africa territories, and possess expert knowledge. As General Sir Edward Northy, the Governor of British East Africa, is now here, there will be considerable opportunities for pressing the claims of the Indians of East Africa upon Lord Milner upon his return here from Egypt and Palestine, after the end of this month. Mr. T. J. Bennett, who is keenly interested in the problems raised by these deputations, regards them as being the keynote of British citizenship for Indians, in the light of the new status conferred by the Reforms Act. There are quite a number of other prominent members of Parliament who may be counted upon to keep these matters before the attention of the Government. The currency question in East Africa is still acute, but there are no signs that the recent decisions, adverse to the interests of the Indian settlers, will be reversed in their favour. Unless public opinion in India is brought to bear on the question, I doubt whether anything effective will be done, and India will have to labour under a fresh defeat to her interests abroad. Mr. Bennet has not left alone the question of the South African Commission, and the determination of Mr. Srinivasa Sastri to remain in India, for yesterday he put another question to the Secretary of State for India, based, I believe, upon a statement appearing in the "Indian Social Reformer," inquiring whether the South African Government, while expressing their willingness to receive an Indian delegate in association with Sir Benjamin Robertson to represent Indian interests before the Commission that is now sitting, coupled their offer with impossible conditions, and whether the absence of an Indian delegate from the inquiry would be due to this circumstance. Mr. Fisher's reply was highly circumspect. He said that the South African Government, in agreeing to this arrangement, had laid down no conditions which the gentleman in question was not prepared to accept. There were, however, other conditions, not within the control of the South African Government, which had led him, to their common regret, to refuse the invitation at a very late stage. It was inadvisable to delay indefinitely the setting up of the Commission, and the circumstances made it impracticable for the Government of India to replace him. Those who know Mr. Sastri will be able to read between the lines of Mr. Fisher's reply without difficulty, and will realise that, where he felt obliged to refuse, no other patriotic and self-respecting Indian would have felt inclined to accept. South Africa has thus one more sin to answer for.

THE FIJI RIOTS.

The Fiji riots have not escaped the observation of Labour Members of Parliament. Messrs. Spoor, Lawson and Richardson yesterday put a whole series of questions on the subject based

upon information received from the Imperial Indian Association of Suva, Fiji, by the Indians Overseas Association, and communicated to the press by Mr. Polak. On the causes that led up to the strike the official answers are satisfactory, referring, as they do, to the appointment of a local Commission, including two Indian members, the Hon. Badri Maharaj, member of the Fiji Legislative Council, and Mr. S. Chowla, who was nominated by the strike leaders. But the answers were not anything like so satisfactory on the subject of the strike riots. The Colonial Office refused an inquiry into the allegations from Fiji on the ground that they are unconfirmed. By whom, however, could they be confirmed except by the local authorities or an independent investigation? and if they were confirmed there would be no need for an inquiry. It is understood that Members of Parliament are being asked to press the matter further.

THE AMRITSAR TRAGEDY.

On Tuesday a meeting of protest was held in Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, against the Amritsar massacre. Whilst such a meeting held at the right time would probably do a great deal of good, it is more than doubtful whether this particular one was worth the trouble of organizing. It was either too late or too early—too late to take advantage of the wave of indignation in this country a few months ago; too soon to take advantage of the force of public opinion that will be generated upon the publication of the Hunter Committee's Report. There is another disadvantage in holding meetings of this kind at a moment that cannot be regarded as psychological. They do not attract any considerable numbers of Englishmen, and the Indians who gather at them are not in need of conversion.

TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

MR. FISHER'S defence of the exclusion of all Nationalists from the Reforms Committee is by no means convincing. If all the Nationalists were either for declining to have anything to do with the reforms or for producing a deadlock, the Government's plea would have force, but the fact is otherwise. There are among the Nationalists some who, "while criticising certain features of the reform, promise sincere co-operation in working out the Act," and honestly try to make the best of the constitutional advance now made. Their exclusion is entirely unjustifiable, and the complaint of the Nationalists is just. In a backward province like Assam the Reforms Committee is formed by election. The Government of India could surely have adopted this or some other equally unexceptionable method.

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