

THE Servant of India

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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

Visualisation in
oracles.

THE violent swaying of a drunken man from one side of the road to the other is still a familiar sight—and this mental picture seems to arise spontaneously when one tries to visualize the zigzag course of our present English "statesmen." One day we have the Milner Report that Egypt is to have its everlastingly promised independence; the next day we are told that the Milner report should not be taken as being endorsed by the Cabinet; the day after the Egyptian Premier is asked to discuss in London the details of the grant of sovereignty; immediately after we hear that the War Office insists on keeping an Army of Occupation anywhere it jolly well pleases in Egypt and Allenby is told off to be insolent to the Sultan; to-day—hey presto—Allenby is being recalled and Egypt assured that it is to have nothing less than real sovereignty and that no British troops are ever to be stationed outside the Canal Zone. So much for Egyptian "policy." Ireland is still fresh in everybody's memory: one day bloodcurdling Black-and-Tannery with much righteous indignation about "shaking hands with murder"—within a few months a Treaty with an Irish Free State and evacuation of Dublin Castle. So, after all, why should we expect anything different in East Africa? The Great Ones of Downing Street start with a White Kenya policy; they follow it up with an Imperial Conference where the equality of status as regards European and Indian is solemnly affirmed; whereupon the Kenya Government proceeds to lay down a policy based on the inherent inequality of status of the two; immediately followed by a new policy of compromise which is to lead gradually to equal status. Now comes

the report of Churchillian oratory at the East Africa dinner, where through a haze of after-dinner liqueurs and "Coronas" the future of Kenya appears as white and nothing but white, and to blaze with all niggers, for he is a jolly good fellow—hic. . . . It would not matter so much, if only these eminent people were solitary pedestrians: the trouble is that they are driving big state-coaches and if they land in the ditch, it is the passengers that suffer most. How much longer is the public to endure these incompetents?

Democratic
Parties.

THE constitution of a "Democratic Party" in the Legislative Assembly does not mean, we are now told, that its members necessarily are *democrats*, nor that they form a *party* in any real sense of the word. Dr. Gour's humour is, to-be-sure, of the heavy kind! To people, however, who really wish to band themselves together for constitutional political action on a basis of clear principles held in common we earnestly recommend the following platform of the German Democratic Party, as recently formulated by its new chairman, Herr Erkelenz:

"1. We refuse to destroy Germany by any act of heroic folly. Consciously and determinedly we enter upon a wandering in the wilderness which is to purify us of mere phrases and of all superficiality. We accept freely the workadayera of German history which fate has now decreed, a day of hard work, of rejuvenation, of trust in the future.

"2. We maintain to the last the ideal of the Nation and of the State as against the egotism and cupidity of the individual.

"3. Class warfare, whether on the part of the Upper or of the Lower classes, can only be overcome by unity, and this unity of Nation and State cannot be achieved without a mental re-focussing and a re-arrangement of all classes of the people.

"4. We repudiate the authoritarian creed; the slave mentality of the old Class-State and of the old monarchy. We equally repudiate the apotheosis of the mob, the subjection of the country to the clamour of every fool! Our goal is a free and responsible people, which will follow its chosen leaders and by trusting them, will afford them an opportunity of productive work."

"Destroying India by an act of heroic folly"—what better description of the threatened Civil Disobedience? The coming era of Swaraj not a matter for windy "phrases and superficiality," but the resolute facing of a new, and hard, work-a-day world which demands a "rearrangement and rejuvenation of all classes" and a bold policy against "the egotism and the cupidity of the individual"—to rid India of the old slave-mentality towards the ancient régime without letting it fall a prey to the demago-

gues who place the applause of the populace before the real interests of the people: there indeed we have the guiding principles of a true democratic party, equally applicable—*mutatis mutandis*—to Germany, to India, to every country.

When Autocrats meet Autocrat.

SIR GEORGE LLOYD is engaged on his first visit to the Ruling Princes of the Province of Kathiawad—an important function being a dinner at Rajkot on the 31st ultimo, which was marked by a speech of his of no small political significance. He began by extolling the services of his hosts during the Great War (which if our memory is not entirely at fault was waged to make the world safe for democracy, was it not, Sir George?) and regretted that they had not received the reward due to them,—O. B. E.'s? an old German gun or two? no—"the honour of entertaining His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales." We therefore presume that it was mainly as a *solatium* for having missed that honour, that H. E. the Governor bravely threw himself into the breach and bestowed upon them at least the honour of entertaining him. But His Excellency did even more; he gave the assembled chiefs the benefit of a little homily, which, whilst addressed to them, was at least as much intended for those of their subjects who—somehow—seem incapable of appreciating to the full the delights and benefits of that benevolent autoeracy, which, *pace* Sir G. Lloyd, "in the East can show some excellent government."

Benevolent Sir Janus.

ABSTRACTING for a moment from Kathiawad and Feudatory India in general, we would compliment Sir George on the possession of so multiple a personality, which enables him Jekyll-like to be a conscientious First Magistrate of a great democracy, such as Bombay Presidency is, without detracting from his Hyde-like manifestation as an autocrat amongst fellow-autocrats, once he has crossed the boundary from British India into the territory of a Feudatory Chief. Such double personality however is rare, not to say abnormal, and one cannot but feel that what British India to-day is entitled to is Governors who are democratic heads of a democracy—not for a time or for an occasion, but always and on principle, because they believe that democracy is the best form of government available to-day, whether in the West or in the East, whether in Bombay or in Kathiawad. If autoeracy is good in itself, how does it become bad?—for Sir George admits that there are two kinds. If uncontrolled power (*i.e.* autoeracy) is good, how can it ever be good to control it—"by some sort of intervention", as Sir George puts it? If benevolent autoeracy is right, is it not of the principle of autoeracy that the decision as to the benevolence or malevolence of a specific act must be left to the decision of the autocrat himself? There are a number of other questions which puzzle us not a little, but these three will do for a start: will His Excellency deign

to enlighten us on these points and remove our doubts?

The Malevolence of Autoeracy.

FOR ourselves we confess that we have not the slightest use for autoeracy in any shape or form, because we have found it always and everywhere true that, as Sir W. Harcourt put it, "Power corrupts and Absolute Power corrupts absolutely." Sir George Lloyd and the quondam autoerats of the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy who are so wont to expatiate on the virtues of a benevolent autoeracy have never lived under one. All autoerats think autoeracy a good thing. But would they still think so if they were the autoeratically ruled instead of the autoeratically ruling? When the Prince of Wales "rewards" Indian Princes by a visit: what is the reward of the hundreds and thousands of beaters, cart-drivers, porters, of a whole countryside mobilized under *begar* to make a Royal holiday? One anna a day, Your Excellency; O-N-E anna. How would Sir George feel, we wonder, if he were commandeered away from home for days, with his only draught animals and cart, having to interrupt his daily labour on which his and his whole family's daily food depends; and having to pay for his own and his animals' upkeep all the time that he is kept on another's business? How would he feel if, as an educated man, he was denied every form of initiative, responsibility and criticism? How would he like to live under a system which stunts a man's intellect, saps his conscience and breaks his will? How would he relish being the under-dog in a society built on Arrogance, Brutality and Servility? If such a system is bad, is intolerable, it is so not merely for Englishmen but for every single human being *qua* human being. We protest with all our heart against the policy embodied in this Rajkot speech of a British-Indian Governor, who promises support to autoerats against any and every constitutional move of their subjects for greater self-determination. If such an one does not himself believe in Constitutionalism, let him resign his post: there is no further room for him in British India. If, however, he does believe in Constitutional Monarchy and Democracy, then let him say so to the Feudatory Chiefs, who need telling it badly; let him make it clear to them that he cannot countenance on their part repression of a policy which he, his superiors, Parliament, the whole Empire, have endorsed as the best and only right one for the rest of India.

Paper Napoleonic.

HIS Pomposity Alfred Harmsworth, first Viscount Northcliffe, still engaged on his Imperial Mission round the world of telling all the world's grandmothers how to suck eggs, has also come to India's fortunate shores and has delivered himself, in an audience granted to the Associated Press, of the usual Napoleonic message wherewith in turn he rewards the hospitality of every country graced by his visit. The megaphoned interview tells the world that for nearly a quarter of a century India

had to languish without setting eyes on the Giant of Printing House Square—unfortunately it does not add that since then Alfred the Greatest has neither learnt nor forgotten anything. When he talks of India, he can only talk of Moslems—the existence of the few Hindus who are said also to be found somewhere in India is passed over by him with the silence of contempt. “The traditional friendship of the Mahomedans” is trotted out of its 19th century limbo and its decay much lamented: and there you have the sum total of the “wisdom” ladled out with all the customary solemnity and megalomania of this self-appointed Saviour of the Empire. In Ceylon he tried to start a scare about German Wireless News, swamping the East—the regular sensational stunt of Harmsworthian journalism, which may go down in England—but why, my Lord, make yourself ridiculous out here? Where in India are the private Wireless Stations ready to receive and distribute the dangerous news from Nauap? Where the military wireless, who generously pass on the news to Indian papers? What is this news emanating from a crushed Germany which shakes the foundations of the greatest Empire the world has ever seen? Where—but why continue? On the other hand we should like to draw the noble Viscount's attention to the special Times cable service which never lets a day pass without cabling at so many shillings a precious word to the people of the Empire news of some new crime committed, of the latest adultery and the last word in murders; news which tried to sabotage the Russian Famine Relief; news which keeps international hatreds alive and panders to sensationalism, however silly, as long as it succeeds to tickle the debased taste of its readers. Can this poisonous stuff not be kept out of India? Believe us, my Lord, the real danger to our people is not the German, but the Harmsworthian propaganda!

Tax on Luxury Building.

WHEN new sources of taxation are being looked for everywhere, it is somewhat surprising that luxury in house building has, as far as we know, escaped the attention it deserves. Whilst it is clearly in the public interest that people should live in well-built houses with sufficient air space, it is equally clearly against public interest that some few people should be allowed to waste lakhs and (in the aggregate) crores of money on palaces, without on that score having to pay a pie of luxury-tax. During the last few years the rationing of house room has been adopted by many a European Municipality, to equalize somewhat the enormous waste of space in the Westends and the appalling overcrowding in the slums of the Eastends. In Berlin, for instance, every household is allowed a maximum of rooms calculated at so much cubic air space per person: the rest is compulsorily let to people lacking adequate housing accommodation. One would not advocate in this country such semi-confiscation: but why not at least tax heavily each cubic yard of

airspace over and above a reasonable maximum allowed free of tax per individual? How much compulsory education could not be started out of such taxation of Malabar Hill alone! Of course there will be the cry of such luxury building being “good for trade.” The January number of *Commonwealth* (the organ of the Christian Social Movement, London) has a good answer to these parrot cries:

“The question which needs to be asked about any expenditure is not whether it is made by public authority or private company or individual person, but whether it is a wise or proper expenditure of our resources. Thus to say we cannot afford expenditure on workers' houses or education, because such expenditure involves taxation, but that we can afford expenditure on motor cars, balls, palaces, or any luxury that may appeal to income-tax payers, because these are “good for trade,” is pure economic fallacy. The building and equipping of schools and houses for the masses would be equally good for trade and far more profitable for the nation, than palaces for the classes.

* * *

Wanted a Guild Instructor.

IN this best of all capitalistic worlds we have the spectacle of idle house-builders on the one hand and an overcrowded slum population crying out for better housing on the other. According to official figures, the number in England of men in the building trades registered as unemployed in October was:—

Carpenters	... 7,324	Painters	... 19,310
Bricklayers	... 2,688	Plumbers	... 2,841
Masons	... 1,901	Other skilled	
Slaters	... 317	workers	... 5,087
Plasterers	... 292	Labourers	... 70,817

How many of these men could have been profitably employed, if the Fisher Education Act of 1918 was carried out! As it is, not only are none of the urgently needed new school buildings being erected, which would have afforded employment to now-a-days unemployed men; but youths who under the Act ought to be in school are now increasing the general unemployment, by competing through their cheap juvenile labour with the standard rates of their very fathers and elder brothers! How great the demand for houses is in England, notwithstanding the present depression, is shown by a report of the National Building Guild which tells us that it has got over two million pounds' worth of work in hand, although the Ministry of Health—solicitous of the precious profits of the contractors—has refused to sanction any more Guild contracts, as far as the power of that Government Department goes. The Guild is now raising a loan of £1,50,000 at only 3¾ per cent. to cope with the rapidly expanding demand for its work from private persons. One wonders, whether it is altogether out of the question to make a similar—however small and humble—beginning of a Building Guild, say in Bombay? With all the new development schemes there, does it really pass the wit of man to find a suitable piece of building work where all people necessary for its execution could be got together and taught production on guild lines, i.e. for the sake of production and service, instead of for profits and competition?

THE GOVERNMENT'S REPLY.

THE Government of India's *communiqué* in answer to Mahatma Gandhi's manifesto mentions some of the grounds on which they felt themselves unable to agree to the proposal for a round table conference. The first ground is that while the Viceroy in his reply to the Malaviya deputation insisted on the discontinuance of the illegal activities of non-co-operation as "a condition precedent to the discussion of any question of a conference," this condition, it is contended, is not satisfied. The Viceroy's speech on that occasion seems to be interpreted to imply that the non-co-operators were first to suspend all their activities and then they or any others on their behalf were to request Government to convene a conference, the Government being free either to convene it or to decline to do so. If such a construction is attempted to be put upon the Viceroy's observations, we must say that it is entirely inadmissible. His words are not susceptible of this meaning. Undoubtedly he meant that both the Government and the non-co-operators were to put a stop, temporarily, to their operations, and, having thus produced an atmosphere favourable for negotiations, to proceed to take part in a conference convened on an agreed plan. The only question is, does the Viceroy hold that the offer made by non-co-operators to suspend hartals, picketing and offensive civil disobedience till the 31st January sufficiently meets the condition laid down by him or not? In regard to this, the Viceroy and the Government of India think that it does not. They require the suspension of all other "illegal activities" besides. It would have been much better if they had specified what other activities they have in mind. Perhaps they mean the propaganda of non-co-operation among policemen and the army, and the preaching of offensive civil disobedience or the non-payment of taxes. It is doubtful if the leader of non-co-operation would agree to a cessation of the latter, but it is not improbable that he will agree to a cessation of the former. It is due to the promoters of the Malaviya Conference that the Government should say precisely in what respects the resolution of that Conference, or rather the Working Committee's resolution in answer thereto, falls short of their requirements. It would perchance yet be possible to come to an agreement on this point.

The second ground disclosed in the *communiqué*, on which the Government of India base their refusal of the proposed round table conference, is that the non-co-operators do not promise to desist from the enrolment of volunteers to be employed later on in organising a movement of mass civil disobedience. Considering the question on its merits, we cannot help saying that it seems only reasonable that if there is to be a "truce" preparatory to the discussion of "peace terms" not only should the inauguration of civil disobedience be postponed, but also all steps leading immediately to it. We do not believe that the position of the

non-co-operators will be seriously worsened by their agreeing to do so. It is not intended that the "warlike preparations" should be suspended indefinitely; if no settlement is reached at the round table conference acceptable to all parties, the non-co-operators will be at perfect liberty to resume them. Mahatma Gandhi no doubt described them as "the breath of his nostrils," but it is not beyond the range of possibility that the Malaviya Conference Committee may yet be able to persuade him to stop the enrolment of volunteers, etc. for some time in the interests of peace.

The Government of India make it a third ground of their refusal of the R. T. C. project that Mr. Gandhi intends that the conference should be called "merely to register his decrees." No doubt at the Malaviya Conference he employed words which lent themselves to such an interpretation, and in fact it could be contended that they were capable of no other interpretation. But, as we said in our issue of January 19, it is possible that Mr. Gandhi was driven by his position to express his readiness to open negotiations with Government in language which on the face of it conveyed a different meaning. From Mr. Gandhi's letter addressed to Pandit Malaviya but meant, it would appear, for the Viceroy, it is to be inferred that Mr. Gandhi does not take the impossibilist position which his previous utterance had led—and we maintain rightly led—people to believe. It is improbable that the Viceroy has not seen this letter; if he has we must confess Mr. Gandhi's attitude on this point is not represented in the Government *communiqué* as it ought to be represented in the light of that letter. These are the only three grounds of which the *communiqué* makes mention. We are sure that this list does not exhaust the objections which the Government feel. Some of the remaining outstanding differences also may prove, on a friendly consultation, capable of adjustment. If the Government disclosed all their objections, not to the terms of "peace" but to those of "truce," one could find out what measure of agreement it would be possible to arrive at. Pandit Malaviya seems hopeful both of getting to know the Viceroy's full mind and also of being able to accommodate the differences that would be discovered. We sincerely hope that it may yet be possible to avert the crisis with which we are face to face.

There are one or two other statements in the *communiqué* which cannot be passed over in silence. The Government of India take strong exception to the statement of Mahatma Gandhi that the Government have now embarked upon a policy of lawless repression. Mr. Gandhi argues that "the looting of property, assaults on innocent people, brutal treatment of prisoners in gaols including flogging," which go on at present and of which specific instances are cited by him, constitute what can only be characterised as lawless repression. Do the Government claim that these things have not happened or are not happening, or that

they are solitary instances not indicative of any settled policy on the part of Government? If the former, why do not the Government contradict the truth of the accounts appearing week after week in *Young India*? If the latter, why do we not hear of the action taken by Government to punish officers who took excessively drastic and in some cases cruel measures to deal with non-co-operation? For our part, we feel that Government is still going on merrily with repression, in spite of the assurances given in the Legislative Assembly. Whether the projected round table conference comes off or not, it is imperatively necessary that all the parties should unitedly insist that the Government shall not use any measures beyond the necessities of the case. In the debate on Munshi Lswar Saran's resolution, Sir William Vincent defined the Government of India's position in regard to it to be that the Local Governments were instructed that "they should, as far as possible, exercise the power of arrest only in the case of volunteers guilty of obstruction, violence and intimidation and leaders of such organisations." This policy is clearly insufficient: it would be wrong, and at all events impolitic, to arrest leaders of volunteer organisations merely because they filled that position. The Government must return to their old policy, from which they have departed. It has not failed as the Government argue, but succeeded. The Government of India's contention, however, is that only those associations were proclaimed under the operation of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, "the majority of the members of which had habitually indulged in violence and intimidation." If they could make good this claim, the objections of all fair-minded critics to the taking of any kind of special action would disappear. It is emphatically not the case that the application of the Act is limited in this wise. On the contrary, it is applied wholesale. The *communiqué* mentions one very serious fact that "in the course of the past year there had been systematic attempts to tamper with the loyalty of the soldiers and the police," but if the Government wish to impress the country with the seriousness of the situation, they had better take the people into their confidence. While we have no desire to minimise the gravity of the Government's difficulties, and while we recognise that an incident reported from Gorakhpur gives a sharp reminder of the possibilities with which the present upheaval is charged, it is perfectly clear that even yet indiscriminate arrests are going on and over-drastring measures are being taken. Whatever may happen in the end to the proposal for a round table conference, the Government must first convince the independent public that no action is taken by them against non-co-operators which is not plainly and demonstrably required by the particular circumstances of the case, and one is therefore doubly disappointed to find that this latest *communiqué* does practically nothing in this respect.

THE MALABAR TRAIN TRAGEDY.

THE publication in England of the findings of the Committee appointed to enquire into the causes of the death of the fifty-six prisoners in the railway luggage van during conveyance between Tirur and Podanur in November last has forced the hands of the Madras Government to issue a hurried press *communiqué* on the same. The Indian public were feeling rather uneasy at the undue delay in the publication of the results of the enquiry into this gruesome tragedy. And one wonders, but for the inexplicable leakage of it in the English Press, how much longer we should have had to wait for it. The *communiqué* says that there was no idea that publication in England was contemplated in advance of publication in India. It cannot, however, be denied that public opinion in England, both in the Press and in Parliament, was much more exercised on this question than it has been in this country. We suspect that one of the causes, if not the only cause, of this comparative indifference has been the Martial Law régime in Malabar, which has made it impossible, even dangerous, for any one to study on the spot and express opinions on the several problems arising out of the rebellion. The findings of the Committee are:—(1) That death was due to asphyxia caused by confinement in an insufficiently ventilated van. (2) That vans of similar pattern had been used for conveyance of over twenty-five hundred prisoners on thirty-two different journeys without mishap. But these vans, though similar in pattern, differed in ventilation. The van in which the tragedy occurred had the gauze covering of windows choked with paint and allowed insufficient ventilation for the number of prisoners carried in it. (3) That the vans used were ventilated waggons and not closed trucks, and their use was not objectionable and implied no inhumanity to prisoners. The main responsibility for the catastrophe has been laid on the Railway Company, that is, its local representative—the Traffic Inspector, in failing to supply a luggage van fit for the purposes intended. The subordinate officials are declared innocent inasmuch as they merely obeyed a practice which had been sanctioned by the higher authorities and had been followed for a long time and on the ground that their acceptance of what proved in the end to be an unsuitable van was accidental and not due to their negligence. The Special Civil Officer, Mr. Evans, who has been decorated with a C. S. I. on the last New Year's Day, is criticised by the Committee that he should have brought the system of transport under better regulation. Sergeant Andrews has been found guilty of negligence in failing to note the condition of prisoners on the journey. If he had done it, the Committee believes that it would have averted the disaster or at least its consequences would have been mitigated. It is doubtful how far the Sergeant with a small escort could have dared to use his discretion to note the condition of prisoners at way-side stations during night time by opening the trucks when the higher

authorities had specially decided upon close vans in preference to open trucks for their conveyance. In the absence of the complete report and also owing to the fact that the inquiry at certain stages of it was held in camera, it is not possible at present to examine the findings of the Committee in detail, but one cannot help confessing to a sense of indignation at the apology for the use of the luggage van as in circumstances of emergency "undoubtedly justifiable." One could understand the plea of emergency if this mode of transport had been resorted to once or at the most twice when no other alternative was available, but when it is said that as many as thirty-two journeys had been made—and we believe an equal number were in contemplation in the future—this plea falls to the ground. Does the repetition of wrong convert it into a right? But it has always been the rule with the Indian bureaucracy to oppose any reform of the old order of things. Was it not the duty of the authorities responsible for the ordering of such luggage vans as those that were used for the prisoners to have consulted a medical man on the advisability or otherwise of using them for that purpose? If they had done so, as indeed they ought to have, of course they would have received the same opinion which Dr. O'Connor and Capt. Mathai pronounced after the tragedy was over that the vans were not suitable for the transport of human beings, even if the meshes of the wire gauge were not blocked by the paint. It would seem as if the Government authorities in Malabar were altogether unmindful and callously careless of rebel Moplah prisoners who, with all that might be said against them, were after all human beings. In spite of the certificate of the Madras Government exculpating him from all responsibility in this matter, we feel that the Special Commissioner of Malabar did not do his duty properly by the rebel prisoners, for whose transport and accommodation in jail we believe he was responsible. He had nothing to do at the time with relief work which was and has been done entirely by non-official agencies. It was also then too early for him to think of and devise schemes of reconstruction. He ought to have therefore attended to what was by no means an unimportant problem of the time, *viz.* the manner in which the rebel prisoners were treated, especially when he knew that scores of them were being either captured or arrested daily. We learn that the public in Malabar were aware of the extremely pitiable condition under which these prisoners were being transported, but under Martial Law they could express their horror of it only in hushed whispers! How far did the Special Commissioner strive to learn of the actual condition of things attendant on the rebellion in Malabar by meeting people of all communities and of all parties? We also remember that at least one communication appeared in one of the Madras papers some time before the tragedy, describing the highly unsatisfactory condition in which the rebel prisoners were conveyed

by railway. Under these circumstances it was an unpardonable neglect of duty on the part of Mr. Knapp not to have given his attention to this question as soon as he came to Malabar. The blame which was assigned to him by the several members of the Madras Legislative Council during the debate on the tragedy does not seem to be altogether undeserved, and the Madras Government have flouted public opinion in clearing him of all responsibility and appointing him to preside over the enquiry. The public were not quite satisfied with the personnel of the Committee and the unanimous report that is now published will not, we fear, in any way help them to change their opinion. The Madras Government have not come out of this gruesome business untarnished in their reputation, and what is more regrettable is that the impression will be strengthened that has been widely created among the masses about the callousness of Government to Indian lives and the conviction that all enquiries in such matters result only in whitewashing documents.

KOLHAPUR ADMINISTRATION.

IN my review of the educational policy of the Kolhapur State (*vide* the SERVANT OF INDIA of December 8, 1921) down to the year 1918-19, I remarked that the figures of revenue and expenditure went to show that the Durbar not only did not spend a single pie from its ordinary revenue on the primary education of its subjects, but spent some thirty thousand rupees out of its proceeds from special taxes imposed for primary education on other objects. I added, however, that "it may possibly be argued that the primary education cess was levied for the first time that year (1918), and that, although it yielded nearly Rs. 70,000, the money could not be expended during the year on opening more schools. The validity of this contention can be tested when the report of the following year is received." The next two years' reports are now available to me and it is but right that I should tell the reader what my final conclusion is as to this seeming misappropriation. His Highness the Maharaja promulgated a Compulsory Education Act on July 13, 1918, with a view to making primary education free and compulsory throughout his State, and, in order to meet the heavy additional expenditure that this measure would necessarily entail, devised the following ways and means:—First, he completely resumed some Devasthan lands and imposed on the others a tax assessed at $1\frac{1}{2}$ times that which would have been due from them had they been liable to a land tax. Secondly, he subjected all households in the State to an annual tax of one rupee, irrespective of the financial condition of the family, after the manner of the poll tax. Thirdly, he increased the portion of the income which the holders of inam villages paid to the State in the way of service commutation from 10 or 15 per cent. to 20 per cent., the increased receipts to be earmarked for free and compulsory education. And, fourthly, he levied an education cess of from

six pies to one anna on every rupee of the income of pleaders, doctors, money-lenders, etc. Now, what was the yield of these four sources of revenue in the year 1920-21? The income from the Devasthan lands seems to have been about a lakh of rupees every year, for the figure under the heading "Devasthan deposits" has for the past two years increased by that much amount. The annual produce from the house tax would also appear to be nearly a lakh of rupees, though it is impossible to get any information on that point from the report itself. The only possible explanation of this omission can be that the receipts from this source are still deposited in the taluka treasuries and have not yet been credited to the State treasury. If such a thing can happen successively for three years—if for all this period a tax is being collected without its yield being entered in the accounts, this fact itself is an indication of the way in which the State is being administered. What the levy on the holders of inam villages brought I have not been able to find out from the report or from any other source. The primary education cess yielded Rs. 93,915 in 1920-21. The produce of the last three taxes was hypothecated for compulsory education, and that of the first, namely, Devasthan lands was to be devoted to all local works, among which primary education would naturally claim a very high position. Thus out of the three lakhs or so, received from the Devasthan lands, house tax and primary education cess (I leave the third item out of account, not knowing how much it added to the State coffers), nearly 2½ lakhs of rupees must have been available exclusively for compulsory education. How much of it was in fact applied to that object? In 1920-21, it would appear, only Rs. 24,702 was expended on compulsory education. This means that while the Maharaja took as much as Rs. 2½ lakhs for a particular object, really he devoted only Rs. ¼ lakh to it. It is doubtful if in fact compulsion is at all enforced, but even supposing it is, not more than Rs. 24,702 was spent on what are styled "free and compulsory schools last year." Now, let us compare the expenditure on primary education in general, whether it be given in "compulsory" or "non-compulsory schools," with the receipts earmarked for it. The expenditure in 1920-21 was only Rs. 93,971, while the receipts were as follows:—

	Rs.
One-third of one anna Local Cess ...	46,611
Primary Education Cess ...	93,915
Devasthan lands ...	1,00,000
House Tax ...	1,00,000

Total Rs. 3,40,556

At least three lakhs of this amount are pledged for primary education and yet over two lakhs of rupees are spent on heaven knows what. It would be interesting to see what the financial position of the State is with regard to the whole field of education. On secondary and university education the State expended in 1920-21 no more than Rs. 14,836, and

Rs. 14,866 respectively from its treasury. Thus on all this transaction of primary, secondary and higher education the State makes a net gain of some 1¼ or 2 lakhs of rupees. Is it possible to conceive of any other State where, in the name of shepherding the backward classes, they are being fleeced in this manner? (I have taken all possible care in making these calculations, but as the administration reports are obscure I should like the officials concerned to point out if the calculations are at fault in any respect.)

If the Maharaja stints in education, he is extraordinarily generous in allowing his people to have a drink. The total consumption was 85,144 gallons in 1918-19 in his State; it became 98,364 gallons in 1920-21. In the Satara district, however, it is decreasing every year. The average rate of consumption per head of population in the Kolhapur State was 4·8 drams against 1 dram in Satara. While in the Kolhapur State (population 8,33,726) there are as many as 166 liquor shops, in the Satara district (population 10,26,470) there are only 55; and while in the Kolhapur town with a population of 55,000 there are 25 shops, in the Satara town with 22,000 population there are only 2 shops. That is, in the capital town and in the district, the number of shops in Kolhapur is from 3½ to 5 times what it is in Satara, the population in both being assumed to be equal. In the Kolhapur town and in an area of five miles round it there are no less than 42 shops.

The department which absorbs the largest proportion of revenue in the State is of course the Khasgi department, or the Maharaja's civil list, the department which claims the next largest appropriation, viz. the P. W. D., having to its share no more than one-third the amount allotted to the Khasgi department. The total expenditure on the Khasgi was, as we saw, Rs. 8 lakhs in 1918-19; it rose to Rs. 12½ lakhs in 1920-21, an increase of more than 50 p. c. in two years. Practically the whole of the receipts from land revenue are taken up by this department, which thus corresponds in its costliness to the military department of the Government of India, the only difference being that while the army is maintained for internal peace and external security, the Khasgi department is maintained only to keep the Maharaja in comfort. Probably no Indian State is noted for its frugality so far as the personal expenses of the ruling Prince go, but I believe no State could be found among the larger States which devotes 42 per cent. of its revenue to the Khasgi department, as the Kolhapur State does. It must not be supposed however that the Maharaja has no more to spend than what is thus debited to the Khasgi, huge as that figure is: he has other sources of income which are not included in the Rs. 12½ lakhs mentioned above. For instance, the income from the Sheri lands which was Rs. 1,27,411 in 1920-21 is not included in the State receipts at all. There are two other ways in which the Maharaja adds indirectly to the civil list: his personal expenditure is often defrayed from money debited to other accounts than Khasgi, and the income which really belongs to the State is often not credited to the State treasury. I will cite a few instances. (1) The Palace Theatre (worth nearly 2 lakhs of rupees) was built

at the cost of the State, to which the municipality contributed Rs. 40,000, and yet the property, as the name indicates, belongs to the Maharaja personally. (2) The Maharaja is engaged in a civil suit in regard to inam lands in Tanjore; it is a purely private affair, and yet the Maharaja is using the State revenue for the purpose. At least some Rs. 75,000 have been spent on this affair, apart from the salaries and the travelling expenses of the State officials who have been employed on this business. (3) The Kuran (pasture) lands, which brought Rs. 30,768 and Rs. 31,135 in 1916-17 and 1917-18 respectively into the State treasury, have now been annexed to the Maharaja's private property, the receipts from them not being entered into the published State accounts at all. (4) Servants in the Khasgi department are given inams or grants of land, and generally their salary is reduced by the amount of assessment of these newly created service inams. In this way the land belonging to the State is encroached upon, only in order that it may be possible to show a reduced figure under the expenditure head of the Khasgi department, when really the expenditure is not reduced in any way. (5) The sale proceeds of lands belonging to persons who die heirless and of lands lying fallow, worth some 15 lakhs of rupees, have been entered in the name of Prince Shivaji, now dead, and they still bring in an income of half a lakh. This will now go to swell the privy purse of the Maharaja. (6) Lands are acquired from private owners for the purpose of turning them into parks. Compensation is paid to the owners out of the State revenues, but the parks then become the Maharaja's property; e. g., in 1918 alone, some 700 acres of land were acquired (*vide* the Kolhapur State Gazette for that year, pp. 107-8, 130 and 132, part I), and recently 400 acres of land in Vadgaon were similarly acquired. These instances could be multiplied, but I have just given a few in order to make my point clear. It is difficult to say what the personal expense of the Maharaja will amount to if we add to Rs. 12½ lakhs the income from all such items. The addition will bear quite a respectable ratio to the acknowledged expenditure of the Khasgi department.

The points which stand out from this short study are the following:—

The Kolhapur State takes from its subjects 2½ lakhs of rupees exclusively for the purpose of compulsory education, but spends out of that amount no more than a quarter of a lakh on education, which it is said is only by courtesy called compulsory.

Taking the whole field of education, we find that the State retains in its treasury at least 1¾ lakhs of rupees every year from what it takes specifically for education.

The Maharaja's civil list absorbs 42 per cent. of the total revenue of the State and the Maharaja often has recourse to various other devices for adding substantially to this sum.

A. V. PATVARDHAN,
Secretary, Daxini Sansthan
Hitavardhak Sabha.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE.

French Militarism.

THE madness of the present French Government has alienated the sympathies of the whole world and has brought an openly hostile conflict with England perilously near... All the more need to remember that this Government and the Chamber of Deputies it represents are the outcome of an election which, as in England, was dominated by a war-hysteria, which, thank God, has since subsided in France as elsewhere. But the sanity to which the bulk of the French people are returning is still unrepresented in the parliamentary "representatives" of the people. Witness the military budget for 1922 which provides for the maintenance of a standing army of seven lakhs of soldiers, distributed as follows:

France	...	...	398,917
Algeria, Tunis, China	...	...	63,533
Morocco	...	...	85,951
Constantinople	...	...	6,926
Near East	...	...	50,000
Military Missions	...	...	450
Saar District	...	...	7,765
Rhine...	...	...	86,959
Plebiscite Districts	...	...	760
Inspectorate	...	...	465
			701,726

23 million francs are to be spent on artillery, 4 millions for new sites for manœuvres, 16 millions for munitions, 29 millions for new aviation hangars, 10 millions for military missions, and so forth and so forth. Money is never of any account when the army is concerned. Contrast the sum total voted for all the French Universities—which is just under one million francs (£20,000)!

WITH such a mentality of the official France it is pleasant to compare the unofficial opinions of such as, for instance, the readers of the *Progres Civique* which in its issues of December 17th and January 7th has some shrewd things to say about the Washington Conference. It analyzes the complete failure of this much boomed affair and finds in the end that not one nation, but all the world is to blame for this non-success. "For everywhere we meet with the same narrow outlook, the same cupidity, the same hypocrisy, the same egoism. Every single Government went to Washington with the idea of gaining an advantage for itself over the others, and naturally, all of them have failed, all of them are irritable, all of them see the bad faith of the others. Is humanity really condemned to go round for ever in this hellish circle? Not at all—but only on the condition that the men attending such a conference, as at Washington (and at a dozen conferences before or after) should go there in the spirit of peace. If only, instead of delegating financiers, merchants, generals; manufacturers, political leaders, one had sent there the fathers and mothers of those youths who will be called upon to

pay the price of 'the next war'!" All this is excellently said and one only hopes that it really represents the conviction of the great mass of the French people. The change from Briand to Poincaré as French Premier is unfortunately a distinct change from bad to worse—as Poincaré has always stood for reaction at its worst, for the uttermost farthing of the Versailles Treaty, for the old diplomacy and the old militarism, for "no truck with bolshevism," for a France battenning on the misery of a balkanized Europe, the exploitation of its African Empire, the agonies of a distracted China. ... Oh, for the people of France, the France of the Great Revolution, to rise and to make a clean sweep of all these Poincaré's and their accomplices, these enemies of mankind!

Catholics and Politics.

THE death of the Pope has raised the question whether in the choice of a successor the rigid age-long rule would be broken through, according to which none but an Italian is eligible for the occupancy of St. Peter's chair. Without its hitherto most powerful backer in the person of the Emperor of Austria, the Curia might well have determined on the necessity of a new orientation. What if an American was elected? But the old rule has prevailed after all: once more it is an Italian who is reigning at the Vatican as Pío Undecimo. For all that, one feels that the old policy of Pío Nono is sure to be superseded soon. Already signs have not been lacking that the old enmity between the Vatican and the Quirinal was about to be composed—the Papacy recognizing the Italian Monarchy and the latter in return granting some further substantial extraterritorial rights to the *quondam* "prisoner of the Vatican". Already, since the close of the war, the Catholics of Italy have as such taken once more part in Italian politics which hitherto had been officially boycotted by them—and with such good effect too that this new party, the *Partito Popolare*, has been returned at the last elections in great strength and in the present Cabinet of Signor Bonomi holds no less than seven portfolios! Germany, of course, is ruled by the Catholic Party too, the present Chancellor, Herr Wirth, being the leader of what is there called the "Centre" Party. And now comes news of the last Belgian elections—the first held on the principle of Proportional Representation—where again the Catholic Party, although not in an absolute majority, is in the position of determining every policy by giving or withholding its votes. After the flood of anti-clericalism which swept the Continent in the closing years of the last and the opening years of the present century, it is significant to observe how completely the pendulum has swung back. The secularist millenium which was promised, once the obscurantism of religion was swept aside, has very amply been tried—but apparently been found wanting.

Labour in Chile.

To most Anglo-Saxons South Americans are *dagoes* of a particularly debased type (are they not a mixed lot descended of Negroes, Indians and Spaniards?) utterly useless for any contribution to the world's progress and only fit for *opéra bouffe*. All the more reason that Indians should not fall into that trap and take such prejudices for sober judgments. We are glad therefore to be able to give the outline of a "Working Code" just introduced in the Chilean Chamber of Deputies.

This code fixes an eight-hour day, with time-and-a-half for overtime, which is limited to four hours and not more than two consecutive days, nor more than two days in any single month.

Employers are obliged to give a minimum holiday of fifteen days on full salary annually.

When employees are ill, full salary must be paid for the first month of absence, 75 per cent. for the second, 50 per cent. for the third, and 25 per cent. for the fourth.

Where no agreement between employer and employee exists, employers are required to give two months' notice or pay before dismissal. An employee must give one month's notice.

Employers are to be responsible for life, sickness and old age insurance for their employees, the latter contributing a fixed percentage of their salaries towards the premia.

The Bill further guarantees to employees the right of meeting and discussion, without fear of dismissal during working hours.

How does this compare with the labour legislation of the U. S. A., even of England? Not so bad for mere *dagoes*, is it not?

Labour Papers.

The *Daily Herald*, the only British Labour daily paper, has been hard hit by the present vast amount of unemployment and under-employment: for clearly the workers of England are now-a-days not in a position to spend two pence daily on their newspaper. As the discontinuance of the *Daily Herald* would be a real calamity, the official Labour Party and Trade Union Executive have come forward and taken the paper over, to enable it not only to carry on, but to reduce its price to one penny. Such move was clearly inevitable, if the Labour Party was not to forego its best weapon for the approaching General Election. In Australia too the Trade Unions are busy to establish their organs, to counteract the often vicious and always prejudicial propaganda of the capitalistic press. A chain of Labour dailies in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth are to be started and linked up with the existing ones in Brisbane, Adelaide, Hobart, Broken Hill and Ballarat. 10s. a head is levied for members of every Australian trade union and £350,000 have already been raised towards the formation of a company, "Labour Papers Ltd." This reminds one that the *Daily Herald* is still proscribed in India: but seeing that it has now ceased to be privately owned and has become the property and official organ of one of the three great constitutional parties in Britain, is this not the time for some member in the Legislative Assembly to press for the rescission of the order prohibiting its entry into India?

The Spirit of Christ. CHRISTIANS in India, as elsewhere, are busy trying to bring about a "reunion" of all the denominations into which they are divided, and many are the committees and schemes which are at work to bring about that desirable result. To all this we, as outsiders, have nothing to say: but our readers will be glad to hear the point of view of the Bishop of Zanzibar, who has some universally applicable and eminently wise things to say on this subject. In a statement published in the *Church Times* of Dec. 16th the right reverend gentleman shows that the Spirit of Unity will not descend on the Churches until they have done their best to co-operate with God's will by striving, not merely after ecclesiastical fellowship amongst themselves, but after social and racial fellowship within each Church.

"Until then," continues Bishop Weston, "until we have done our utmost to attain such fellowship as is in our own power, we dare not expect religious fellowship in the visible Catholic Church of Christ. We of the English Church sin heavily every day against the spirit of fellowship. Not we alone, of course; but in Lambeth we attended only to our own sins. We are guilty, every hour, of sins against love in respect of self-assertion, class-assertion, colour-assertion, and race-assertion. In these things in which we are our own masters, we are guilty almost beyond measure. As I said in the Conference, it is of more vital importance to bring some of the so-called masses to our episcopal dining tables than to admit some Free Churchman, of our own school and University, to the Church's Lord's Table. Of our sins in respect of class-pride, money-pride, sweated labour, usury, and the like we are in no sense ignorant. They are sins in just the same essence as murder, theft, and adultery. And we will not face them! How, then, can we accept the spirit of fellowship to grant us peace in one visible Catholic Church? We are so little desirous of fellowship that we prefer to it the present sinful world system! Ecclesiastical disunion must not be treated as a thing apart from social or racial disunion. And in our preaching we must give the remedies for our disease in the right order. For example, what use is it America organising a World Conference on Faith and Order while faithful parish priests who believe in Christ's fellowship are liable to be tarred and feathered, and the American negro lynched? Is not a Conference of American leaders of thought on Brotherhood between White and Black the first need? Or, again, what is the use of the Lambeth Conference Committee on Reunion as long as some members of it can speak of Africans as, inevitably, a servant race?"

These are noble words indeed and such, as might have been spoken by the Bishop's own Master Himself.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A PLEA FOR A ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—It is stated of Mill, whom perhaps his most eminent disciples described as "the great and benignant lamp of humanity and wisdom, where he and others kindled their modest rushlights" that he always deprecated the unseemly contest between the blind protagonists of change and the equally blind opponents of change. "The future of mankind," he used to say, "will be gravely imperilled if great questions

are left to be fought out between ignorant change, and ignorant opposition to change." The occasion of Mill's remarks was probably the French Revolution; the people in France thought that if they could only break up the power of the Church and the State, all would go well, while the Bourbons fancied that the progress of the country was bound up with the feudal system.

It seems that a situation not altogether dissimilar to that of France in the 18th century is upon us to-day. The non-co-operators think that the panacea for all the ills that the country is heir to is to be found in the pure milk of the aggressive civil disobedience wold. The bureaucracy firmly holds that India must go through a prolonged period of pupillage before she is fit for responsible government. The contest is now going on with grim and terrible earnestness on both sides; the bureaucracy is bent on exerting the full measure of its strength, and has been filling the jails over all the country with non-co-operators, among whom there are men who would be an honour to any country, and crushing the free press in Northern India by the rigorous application of a press legislation, which should have been repealed by this time. The non-co-operators in despair are leaning on the extremely dubious reed of mass civil disobedience. The former has altogether forgotten that repression leads nowhere and does not scruple to send even women to jail (e. g. Sabitri Devi of Silliguri, Darjiling), while the latter has quite forgotten that the example of aggressive civil disobedience is highly infectious and may spread, in spite of Mahatma Gandhi's cautions, to quarters, which do but lip-homage to non-violence. In this welter of opposing ideas and methods of work, we vainly look for a direction, sign post or a way-out.

Far be it from me to describe Mahatma Gandhi or his distinguished associates as protagonists of ignorant change. It is probable that so far as the Bardoli taluqa is concerned Mr. Gandhi knows full well what he is about, particularly after the lesson of Bombay. But how could he restrain forces that would be let loose elsewhere by his experiment of offensive civil disobedience? Equally far be it from me to characterise the Viceroy and members of the Executive Council as apostles of ignorant opposition to change. But unfortunately His Excellency and his Council do not seem to realise that the country is being rushed headlong by the subordinate officials and the police into the abyss of retrogression and repression, almost beyond the hope of resurrection. Both parties are taking wrong turns at the critical cross-way with possible results, dismal to contemplate. A Round Table Conference at Delhi called under the ægis of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales would have given the much-needed direction and light. Neither the Viceroy nor Mahatma Gandhi has slammed the door against it. Pandit Malaviya is still trying heart and soul for it. The opportunity is fleeting. The psychological hour will soon over. Let us both, Government and people, set about it betimes.—Yours, etc.

S. K. MUKERJI.

Lahore, February 3.

THE BOMBAY CONFERENCE.

SIR,—In your issue of 26th January it is stated that in as much as Mr. Gandhi declared that he had no open mind in regard to the so-called "peace" terms; and that they were his "irreducible" demands, Mr. Kunzru and others were justified in thinking that the calling of a Round Table Conference could serve no useful purpose and in seceding from the Bombay Committee. These are not your exact words but they convey your meaning quite accurately, I think. I wish to know whether parties proceeding to bargain ever declare themselves otherwise than as Mr. Gandhi did at Bombay, or for the matter of that, Lord Reading at Calcutta. Is it sense to lay down terms and declare at the same time and in the same breath that they are liable to discount? Wont it lead the other party to lower the scale of their offer? Is not the very fact of one's agreeing to go to a conference proof that one would be willing to abate, though certainly not unlimitedly? Suppose Mr. Gandhi had said that his terms were open to revision; many would have

asked him to state how far and that would have brought us back to another level of the "irreducible minimum" and its concomitant, a mind not open any further; which, according to you, would nullify the idea of a Round Table Conference.

I am as firm a constitutionalist as any Moderate or Liberal but regret my inability to accept your reasoning as sound. I am almost tempted to think that there is something wrong with the head or heart of those who blame Mr. Gandhi for doing what every sensible man would have done under like circumstances.

Let me add that I personally do not believe his terms, national or international, to be feasible in their entirety; and that in fact the great agitator has shown himself to be a poor statesman. If they were pressed, it would justify the breaking up of the Round Table Conference, but that is no reason why a conference for discussing possibilities of general or maximum agreement, should not be called, especially as it would include other parties also who would act, as a counter-weight and help to secure a balanced judgment. I see that Sir Sankaran Nair and the Moderates are for a smaller Round Table of their own. Well, even the materialisation of this would be a big enough achievement and I gladly welcome the enterprise. But unless Government state their terms of truce, in the spirit of Lord Reading's reply to the Malaviya deputation, and leave it to Mr. Gandhi to bear the onus of refusing to participate, a conference so united, supposing it to eventuate, may lead to an annihilation of bitterness between the Congress and the other parties and create bad internal schism, the blame for which will be laid at the door of the constitutionalists.

I understand that Government have refused to hold a conference of any kind. It is true that they keep the door open, but they won't allow anybody including themselves, to enter. Since the situation has not undergone any change since last Christmas, I do not see how this *volte face* on the part of Government could be justified. Only one explanation is possible viz. that they are not prepared to be frank about their future policy; are not willing to disclose whether they have anything to offer to the nation or not. Those who hold that the Bombay Conference has done good service in getting Mr. Gandhi to show his hand must on the same premises, hold also that those who thwarted the project of the Round Table Conference did a great dis-service to the country by enabling the Government to keep its policy a profound secret; and from this point of view the conduct of the seceders has to be condemned as one of the biggest blunders of our times. Had the Round Table Conference been convened, Government would have been obliged to disclose their constructive policy; and hence their reluctance to take, on further thought, a step which, in a moment of panic, they welcomed just three weeks before the Bombay Conference met. And to think that some of our leaders actually aided them, however unwittingly, in this evasion and retraction! I expect we shall hear a great deal about Law and Order from the side of Government, which, in plainer terms, means little else than maintaining the *status quo*. But will this be regarded as sufficient by any party in our country? If not, what is the course to be adopted in order to make Government disclose their further intentions?—Yours, etc.

Chittoor, February 1.

C. R. REDDY.

[It is not disputed by Mr. Reddy that Mahatma Gandhi as a matter of fact said what we reported him to have said; but it is claimed that no sensible man would have said anything else. On the contrary, we should think that no sensible man who wished to participate in a conference invited expressly for the purpose of endeavouring to find a solution of the questions at issue, would declare beforehand that his mind was closed to considerations other than those which he had put forward; that it was open to the conference only to consider how effect could be given to the demands he had made but not how much of them it was reasonable or practicable to concede—when the professed object of the conference is just to discuss these very questions. Mr. Reddy says—and quite rightly—that the fact that Mr. Gandhi agrees to go to such a

conference should itself be regarded as sufficient evidence of his willingness to revise his terms, if need be. Certainly, that was exactly what everyone did; but when, after expressing his readiness to join the conference, Mr. Gandhi thought it necessary to wind up his speech by uttering a plain warning to those who might go away with the contrary impression, that he had not an open mind on matters which were to form the subject-matter for discussion at the conference, and when he emphasised this warning by using similar other expressions, some of us began to think that possibly we were wrong in drawing the inference we had drawn from his willingness to take part in the conference. Mr. Reddy says, if Mr. Gandhi had declared himself ready to revise his terms, he would have been naturally asked to tell how far, and that would again have landed him and the conference on another level of an irreducible minimum. No one wished Mr. Gandhi to declare that his terms were liable to revision; that was assumed by every one. All that was desired of him was that he should abstain from making a declaration which would negative the idea of the conference. Nor was Mr. Gandhi called upon to say in advance how far he could reduce his demands. That was precisely the work of the conference, and no one could reasonably have put that question to him at that stage. Mr. Reddy seems to imply that the presumption raised by Mr. Gandhi's consent to attend the conference must be taken to outweigh the express statement made by him in respect of his willingness to reconsider his position in the light of what may be said at the round table. Perhaps so; but there cannot be anything seriously wrong either with the head or with the heart of those who attached more weight to the spoken word of the Mahatma than those who, without the slightest hesitation in their mind, said to themselves: "Let Mr. Gandhi say what he pleases, he means just the opposite of what he says." And if, between Mr. Gandhi's own declaration that he has not an open mind on the peace terms and the inference to the contrary to be drawn from the fact that he is willing to discuss these terms, the latter must be regarded as having a superior claim upon our credence; so much so that anyone who ventures to express any doubt on the point is to be summarily put out of court as of unsound mind; we wonder where lies the tactical advantage in the protestations that the terms are not open to negotiation?

But there need be no discussion now on this point. In a letter presumably intended for the Viceroy, Mahatma Gandhi actually says what would place him, according to Mr. Reddy, outside the category of sensible men: "They (the Government) must try to appeal to our (non-co-operators') intellect just as we must appeal to theirs. If the Government or somebody therefore shows that any particular demand is unreasonable or untenable, I would certainly give in." This letter shows, in the words of Mr. Seshagiri Ayyar, that "in going to the conference, he (Mr. Gandhi) would not argue that certain demands are irreducible, demands from which he would not recede. He is willing to sit with other people, to consider their opinions, and then come to a conclusion as to whether he should give way or not." Mahatma Gandhi has already given this assurance to the Viceroy, regardless of the consideration urged by Mr. Reddy that it would instantly cause a lowering of the scale of the Government's offer. Perhaps the assurance will only go to confirm Mr. Reddy in his opinion that Mahatma Gandhi is a poor statesman. So far as those who were led by Mr. Gandhi's utterance to withdraw from the committee of the conference are concerned, they required no such assurance; they merely wanted that he should make no declaration which would militate against the proposal for a round table conference. The Viceroy being now assured that Mr. Gandhi has an open mind in regard to the terms, there is no reason why the previous utterance of his which pointed in the opposite direction should stand in the way of the Government agreeing to such a conference. For the moment we are concerned here only to point out that those who felt constrained to withdraw from the committee charged with the duty of bringing about a round table conference were not without justification

at the time in taking the step they did. That being our position, we need not refer to the last paragraph in the above letter in which Mr. Reddy speaks of the indirect consequences of their withdrawal. But one thing we may be permitted to point out. It was no very great achievement for the Malaviya Conference to have made Mr. Gandhi "show his hand." The demands which he made at the conference were by no means unknown before; they were being reiterated every day for the past year and more. If this is claimed as an achievement by the Malaviya Conference, the Malaviya Deputation might as well claim it as a proud achievement that it elicited from the Viceroy a statement of his views as to how far he is prepared to meet the demands of the non-co-operation party...the Government's maximum concessions. But no one was much the wiser for this latter statement, its value consisting chiefly in the fact that he indicated that he had still an open mind on the matters in dispute. We wish to brush aside both these "minimum demands" and "maximum concessions" as something not pertinent to the question in hand, but it cannot be fairly argued that the one party has been forced into the open while the other party has gone into hiding. We have not heard of the plan of a smaller round table conference said to be promoted by Sir Sankaran Nair and the Moderates, by which latter expression is perhaps meant the conveners of the Malaviya Conference.—Ed.]

WITHOUT COMMENT.

MR. SASTRI AT WASHINGTON.

MR. SRINIVASA SASTRI has been winning golden opinions everywhere. His speech at a meeting of the Assembly of the League of Nations at Geneva where he attended as a representative of India came as a complete surprise to all the delegates assembled and was regarded as one of the most finished products of oratory heard at the Assembly. His public appearances at Washington have come as a similar agreeable surprise to people in the United States. He is the recipient of a graceful tribute by Mr. Elmer Davis in the columns of the *New York Times*. "There is another British delegate," says Mr. Elmer Davis, "who has made an excellent impression on his few public appearances. A man unknown to America before this conference, but who may be heard of in future, Srinivasa Sastri of India. He has spoken for India twice and those who predicted that he would present a purely official view, still more purely a British official view, have been badly mistaken. That he wants Indian self-government he does not conceal, nor that he takes the Indian national culture and character, and the Hindu religion seriously. But when he talks of Indian aspirations he talks as a sane man, who knows that every thing cannot be done in a day, and that it is much easier to tear down something fairly good than to build something a little better. A good upstanding man, this Sastri, in the opinion of those who have heard him here. Incidentally, he speaks English a shade better, if anything, than any other member of the British delegation—or the American, for that matter. Not an exaggerated estimate of India's worthy representative, says *New India*, and we agree.—*The Leader*."

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