

# THE Servant of India

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## TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

ONE is altogether glad to hear of the appointment of a "Geddes Axe" Committee for India: for it does prove that Whitehall at last has come to realize that no repetition of the last budget is possible and that the last but one straw has already been piled on the camel. We also believe that the selection of Lord Inchoape as Chairman of such a Committee is a good one, seeing that he has been a prominent member of the English Geddes Committee, that his commercial interests lie in the direction of a financially sound India and that he combines qualities of a very high order, both in business and in public life. At the same time all these qualifications must not blind one to the fact that it is very necessary that Lord Inchoape's Committee should include equally strong and sound men whose natural angle of vision is not that of a "Profit and Loss a/c". The elimination of "waste" is admirable and no Indian need be told that of all such waste that on military and civil service "prestige" is the worst—, but the mere elimination of all expenditure which does not produce immediate profits, is the very reverse of admirable. For instance, no public money spent fruitfully on education or on social welfare work is "waste"; but the temptation to cut down grants for research work or for extension of primary education or for improvements of slum areas is overwhelming to men who are above all "business" men. We want such business men, certainly, but we do not want them alone, and it is not too early for public opinion to be aroused on this point, so as to press for inclusion in this Committee of men who realize that mere mechanical curtailment of

expenditure may be far worse for a country than prodigality on schemes of a nationally productive character.

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THE active participation in the Bombay Liberal Conference of those leaders of the Liberal Party who have at present accepted office under Government has evoked much criticism. The *Indian Social Reformer* appears to be even more angry at the Ministers dominating the Conference than the Executive councillors. It is true that the part which the former took in the proceedings of the Conference was far more substantial than the part which the latter took, but neither could be said in truth to have controlled the Conference. The Executive Councillors spoke only to formal resolutions; the Ministers were in charge of some of the most important resolutions adopted by the Conference, all criticising the action of the Central Government in one particular or another; and the universal feeling was that the criticism which they levelled at the Government of India, while it certainly gained in weight from the official positions which the critics occupied, could not have been excelled in independence and forcefulness even had it proceeded from one untrammelled by official ties. To read the *Reformer*, one would derive the impression that the Ministers exerted a very sinister influence on the Conference; on the contrary, it was of the most wholesome character, and anyway it was such that they had every right to exert. In fact, they would have given legitimate ground for complaint if they had not identified themselves with the Conference on matters in which they are free to do so. Perhaps the real objection is to the inclusion of the Executive Councillors in the Subjects Committee; for no conceivable objection can be taken to the inclusion of the Ministers *qua* Ministers. But all those who now urge this objection had an opportunity of taking exception to the personnel of the Committee, when the proposal was duly put to the members of the Conference. But the critics, who are now so vocal, maintained silence at the time. If they did so in the belief that the Executive Councillors would not take an overwhelming part in the deliberations of the Subjects Committee, all we can say is that their anticipations were not falsified by the event, though we can fully realize that Mr. Natarajan had cause to be keenly dissatisfied with the part that Sir Chimanlal Setalvad took.

An Unfounded  
Accusation.

THE *Reformer's* criticism of the throwing out by the Subjects Committee of the resolution expressing regret at Mr. Gandhi's arrest is likely to give rise to a misconception of the attitude of the Conference in regard to that event. The resolution consisted of two parts: the substantive part asked for differential treatment for Mr. Gandhi in the gaol, and the adjectival part deplored the circumstances in which it should have been thought necessary by Government to arrest the Mahatma. In regard to the first part, Mr. Natarajan himself who moved the resolution acknowledged that the information that had been given to the Conference went a long way in meeting the request that he wished the Conference to make in regard to the relaxation of gaol regulations in Mr. Gandhi's case. The substantive part of the resolution being thus rendered superfluous, it is nothing strange if the majority of the Subjects Committee felt that there was not much point in passing a resolution, of which only the adjectival part would continue to have a meaning. It is not our view that the resolution should not have been passed; we feel that it should have been adopted, if only to avert the unreasoned criticism that is being made. But it would be monstrous to infer from the rejection of Mr. Natarajan's resolution that the Liberal Conference was not prepared even to express regret that Government should have felt it necessary to throw into prison so great-souled a person as Mr. Gandhi. The resolution did not imply any censure of Government's action—Mr. Natarajan made that point absolutely clear; the regret which he wished the Conference to express was such as even the official signing the order of Mr. Gandhi's arrest might with a clear conscience have expressed. If, in these circumstances, the Conference did not adopt the particular resolution proposed by Mr. Natarajan, it was merely because the substantive part of it, as it had been framed, had, in the opinion of the majority, been rendered unnecessary.

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Financial  
Independence.

IN a speech which Sir Sankaran Nair made the other day under the auspices of the South Indian Liberal Federation he outlined a scheme of advance in accordance with which our first efforts should be directed towards making the Government of India independent of the control of the Secretary of State and his Council. Whether Sir Sankaran Nair wants this result to be achieved by convention or statute is not quite clear, but it is evident that as an essential preliminary to all further progress towards full responsible government he would first like to see the Executive Government and the Central Legislature co-operating towards the attainment of this end. In so far as this is done, the constant fear of India's financial and economic interests being made subservient to those of powerful interests in the United Kingdom will tend to disappear. Next comes the question of provincial

autonomy in which case also Sir Sankaran Nair would like to see the financial independence of the Provincial Governments secured even before full popular control of Government in the provinces is established.

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## Naval Prestige.

REUTER has cabled out particulars of a speech delivered last week by the First Lord of the Admiralty at the Colonial Institute—a speech, in which Lord Lee complained bitterly of Great Britain having "to shoulder the whole responsibility for the protection of the commerce and liberties of the Empire." We think we may safely leave out the liberties and restrict ourselves to the commerce. The latter (total of Imports and Exports) in crores of sterling is as follows according to Whitaker:—

United Kingdom	£367 crores	61%
India	43 "	7
Canada	48 "	8
Anzac	32 "	5
South Africa	10 "	2
Other Dependencies	100 "	17

Total British Empire £600 " 100%

From these figures it is evident that India should contribute rather less than whatever Canada's share might amount to. As a matter of fact India pays annually a lump sum of £100,000 down, plus cost of any "services" rendered, such as cost of gun-running in the Persian Gulf, &c., &c.; whilst Canada contributes just at present—nothing. And Lord Lee's wail about a "state of affairs so little conducive to the prestige and safety of the Empire" leaves us cold. India, in any case, has singularly little money to spare for "prestige": let them pay for it that want it and benefit by it.

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Maharashtra's  
Programme.

LAST month a Conference was held under the Congress organization in Yeotmal District (Berars) under the presidency of Dr. Moonje, which passed the following resolution:—

This conference further resolves that inasmuch as failure to obtain success in the struggle for Swarajya at an early date is detrimental to the best interests of the country and that an exclusive concentration on the afore said constructive programme is calculated neither to effectively curtail the power of the Indian bureaucracy nor to properly instil in the people the spirit of sacrifice born of a consciousness for their own birth-rights urgently needed for the attainment of the same; it is emphatically of the opinion that certain items of the N. C. O. programme which the experience of the past year and a half has indisputably proved to be ineffective and impracticable and which hinder the effective adoption of certain recognised methods of political agitation require to be rejected and the following items stand in need of being immediately taken up in hand, in addition to those mentioned and emphasised in the constructive programme of Bardoli:—

(1) Capturing of representative bodies, such as Legislative Councils, Local bodies etc. with a view to make them predominantly Nationalistic in personnel and spirit

## MALABAR.

## RELIEF AND RECONSTRUCTION.

THE Government of Madras have published Mr. Knapp's note on the account of his stewardship of Malabar as Special Commissioner. This document is in no way remarkable as either indicating a thorough grasp of the situation in Malabar or in its suggestion of any statesmanlike policy to be adopted in meeting the same. It is of the usual type of an official report which betrays in so glaring a manner the wooden and unimaginative character of the bureaucracy in India. It is more a record of what Mr. Knapp and the Government have failed to do for Malabar in the most critical time of her history than of any single achievement worthy of mention in the sense that it is the best to solve the difficulties and therefore of permanent value. In fact Mr. Knapp himself confesses in his report that so long as martial law prevailed in the district he could not do much and that when martial law was removed there was the Special Commissioner no more to lay down and work at his grand plans of reconstruction. In other words the office of Special Commissioner in Malabar, which began and ended with Mr. Knapp, appears to have been a comfortable sinecure.

Next in importance to the quelling of the rebellion which we are amazed to learn still continues in some parts of Calicut taluk, the duty of Government through the Special Commissioner was to attend to the relief of all sufferers in the rebellion and help them in restarting their life. So far as the actual relief itself was concerned, Mr. Knapp is frank enough to admit that that was done entirely by purely non-official agencies, the chief of whom of course is the Malabar Central Relief Committee. But it does not appear that he even realised that philanthropic agencies suffer from great limitations both in money and in men and that therefore they can best be utilised only to supplement the work which the Government rightly ought to have undertaken. Especially when the Central Relief Committee and other organisations had stopped their old method of relief after giving notice of the same clearly a month before they did so, stating that it was the paucity of funds and not the change in the condition of things that obliged them to do this, the Special Commissioner or the Government have simply continued their old policy of keeping quiet and watching the situation. Mr. Knapp himself admits that in several important places the *jenmis* have not come back. The homes, the paddy stores and all the belongings of these poor people have been either looted or destroyed along with those of their masters. The feeling of security has not yet been completely restored; there is lack of employment everywhere as responsible Government officials themselves have admitted time and again. Under these circumstances thousands of people disbanded from several concentration relief camps have not yet returned to their villages, but are floating about

the towns living in the most precarious condition. The Government have done and are doing nothing for these people and if the relief agencies had not resumed their work of charity to these people the suffering, great as it is, would have been appallingly greater. The rains have almost begun and agricultural operations which ought to have begun weeks ago have not yet commenced. The people of Malabar, therefore, naturally fear severe famine this year.

Mr. Knapp no doubt speaks with irritating self-complacency of his reconstruction officers being actively engaged in granting loans to the sufferers for the restoration of buildings and advances being made for the purchase of seed and implements and also for the maintenance of himself and his family until the next harvest. But from more than one source we are obliged to believe that this system is working most unsatisfactorily. Mr. Knapp had thoroughly convinced himself that all was well in Malabar, that there was plenty though there was no peace but a rebellion of the most devastating character. Any slight deficiency that might have been disclosed was right by him as Special Commissioner. The subordinate officials, if they ventured to suggest the advisability of timely buying of seed or whispered of hard conditions, must have been told not to say such foolish things officially. Relief workers who out of pure motives of securing the sympathy of the Government and support of the public gave public expression to the actual condition of things in the affected areas are making political capital out of a really simple thing and must therefore be snubbed and bullied into silence. As for the several distinguished visitors from outside, well, they are, according to Mr. Knapp, either complete ignoramuses or political agitators. As a matter of fact, the granting of loans has really been of no use whatever in the economic reconstruction of the affected area. Indeed they do not go far enough even for the maintenance of the people during the present time and the black months soon to follow lasting till September next, the harvesting month. These loans, small as they are, in their amounts, do not reach the poor people at all, who form the majority of those in distress. There seems to prevail a great doubt whether the advance for maintenance is a free gift or a loan. The officials in charge of the business give out that they hate the latter which frightens away a large number of people, while those who make up their minds to go in for this loan naturally are not satisfied with amounts like rupees ten, twenty and thirty for big families for four months. Another complaint which we hear from Malabar is that no non-official assistance whatever has been utilised in the distribution of loans. In fact, the very suggestion has been much resented. The average citizens in Malabar is quite in the dark about these loans and free grants. Why is the Madras Publicity Bureau, which is engaged in vigilant and prompt contradiction of words and sentences in the daily newspapers and other simi-

lar useful propaganda, not utilised for this purpose? Another favourite argument of the Government is that this is usually a period of unemployment and of hard conditions in Malabar. Admitting it were so for argument's sake, it must be remembered this year is one of abnormal conditions, when not only have the people nothing to eat because their stores of grain have been destroyed, but when they must strain every nerve of theirs in supplying afresh every item of their ruined homesteads. One is amazed at the perverse and cynical optimism of the Government which was given expression to only recently at Ootacamund through the head of the province, Lord Willingdon, that any talk of hard times in Malabar was loose and ill-informed. It may suit the Government to lay the flattering unction to their souls that there is nothing for them to do, but it is highly detrimental in the real interests of the people in that the public outside Malabar gets altogether a false description of the picture, thereby placing the relief agencies also in a false position. The situation as reported by actual visitors to the afflicted area is very gloomy indeed, and the appeals from the people themselves of Malabar to Mr. Devadhar and others to continue relief works confirm the fact.

#### EQUAL STATUS: THE NEXT STEP.

ALL thinking people recognize that the only questions with which Indians of all shades of opinion are preoccupied are those relative to status. What is to be the status of an Indian in his own country, in the Empire, in the foreign countries? Is it to be one of equality or inferiority? Every other consideration is subordinate to this one thing and all other things depend upon the answer given. Now status must be regarded as a whole. It may be discussed from different points of view, but essentially it is one and indivisible. If an Indian is not the equal of any one else in his own country, this fact must obviously react upon him when abroad, either within or outside the Empire. If he be subjected to humiliation when abroad, it must necessarily react upon his position as home. It seems to me, therefore, that it is no sufficient answer to the plea of those who ask for intelligent and organized support of the claims of Indians overseas to-day that until Indians at home have established for themselves a status of freedom and equality, they cannot usefully help their compatriots overseas or divert their energies from the pressing emergency of their own affairs. That is only partially true and it is very far from being an accurate statement of facts. Japan, for example, is absolutely independent. Japanese in Japan are not merely the equals of, but are legally superior to non-Japanese in the country. But this fact does not enable Japan to insist upon free entry for her nationals into the United States or some of the British Dominions, nor does it permit her, at the present time, to protect effectively her nationals resident in those Dominions from the operation of

differential racial legislation. On the other hand, we do know, in practice, that, even without equality, we may be able nevertheless to exact a recognition of our rights from others, if only to a certain extent, varying with a belief in ourselves, our capacity to organize and assert those rights, and the moral response that we thereby elicit from our opponents. The history of the Transvaal Passive Resistance struggle, as I can vouch from personal knowledge, bears overwhelming testimony to the correctness of this statement. If conditions have since altered to the disadvantage of the Indian community in South Africa, that community cannot escape from a considerable share of the responsibility, as Mr. Gandhi warned it when he left the country upon the conclusion of the 1914 agreement.

In my opinion, since the question of status is one and indivisible, every possible legitimate path should be pursued vigorously and simultaneously, with a view to the establishment of the principle of equality of individual and racial status, and it is impossible to ignore any avenue by which that principle may be realized and established, for advancement along any path implies eventually progress all along the line. The admission of India to a quasi-Dominion status is a long step in the direction of full Dominion status. That is why I, for one, refuse to minimise the advantage to India of her participation, even under present conditions, in international and imperial conferences. It is quite true that she cannot and does not pull her full weight; but it is absurd, in the face of known facts, to contend that she does not pull any weight at all. On the contrary, depending upon the occasion and the manner in which it is seized, she sometimes pulls a very heavy weight, sufficient, in fact, to decide an issue in her favour even against opposing interests of great importance.

Take, by way of illustration, the resolution passed at the last Imperial Conference, in June, 1921. It was made clear from the commencement that this question of status was at the heart of the whole Indian problem. Was the principle of racial equality within the Empire to be generally recognized or not? If not, were the various members of the Commonwealth prepared to suppress by sheer military force 320 millions of people determined to remain within the Commonwealth only upon the condition of the recognition of the principle? They gave their answer almost unanimously for the assertion of the principle, and I regard the passing of the resolution as of the most vital importance to India. A standard has been set, a principle has been established, to which in the future, and as speedily as the human factor permits, practice must be made to conform, if for no other reason than to avoid the otherwise inevitable dissolution of the Empire.

The parties to the resolution were India, on the one hand, and Great Britain and all the Dominions save South Africa, on the other. In what

way has public vigilance in India sought to ensure that effect should be given to the new policy? So far as the majority of the Dominions is concerned, their Prime Ministers were prompt to implement their agreement and they extended an invitation to Mr. Sastri to come to help them to do so in detail. This invitation has now been accepted, and with all the influence of the Government of India behind him, aided by his personality and technical equipment, Mr. Sastri is about to undertake a tour that is likely to have large consequences for India in a number of important respects. His visit to these Dominions can only result in closer relations between them and India, in quickening an understanding and an appreciation of India's fight for self-government, and in effecting the moral isolation of South Africa and the other reactionary elements in the Empire which still refuse to recognize that the day of submission to the doctrine of racial supremacy of racial privilege, has gone for ever.

But there is another feature of the case for equal citizenship that ought in no circumstances to be lost sight of. Hitherto, the Imperial Government, whilst expressing sympathy with the Indian complaint of racial disability and discrimination in the self-governing Dominions, has always been careful to deny its own direct responsibility and to declare its inability to interfere in matters for which the offending Dominions are alone constitutionally responsible. An answer that has always seemed to be valid is that Great Britain and India are just as much entitled to intervene diplomatically with all possible energy where action is taken by one part of the Commonwealth detrimental to the rights and interests of the nationals of another as they would be entitled to do were the offender a foreign country. Indeed, one might expect, for obvious reasons of Imperial unity, such diplomatic intervention would be more effective in the former than in the latter case, and this has been impliedly admitted by the Imperial Conference. But taking the Imperial Government's argument for what it is worth, it cannot escape from immediate responsibility in respect of similar racial disqualification and inequality in those parts of the Empire where it exercises direct jurisdiction. The case of Kenya is a striking instance of this responsibility, and Mr. Churchill's recent calculated indiscretion, whereby he sought, unsuccessfully, thanks to Mr. Montagu, to involve the British Cabinet, was, in substance, if not in form, not merely a denial of his signature at the Imperial Conference and a repudiation of his own writings when in a position of comparative irresponsibility. It was a formal challenge to India as to the basic principle upon which the new British Commonwealth has to be founded, if the total collapse of the Imperial structure is to be averted.

Indian public opinion must, therefore, be active and vigilant. His Majesty's Government must be held strictly and persistently to the funda-

mentals of its contract with India. It is now nearly a year since the resolution was passed by the Imperial Conference. The Dominions (omitting South Africa) have made a beginning in the direction of giving practical effect to it. What, it may be asked, has the British Government done? Has it circularised the Crown Colonies, Dependencies, Protectorates, and other areas under its jurisdiction and demanded a categorical statement of the enactments and administrative practices and regulations whose existence imposes a special disability upon Indians from which they would not suffer were they white British subjects? Has it called upon the Governments and Administrations of those territories to take immediate steps to give legislative or administrative effect to the principle of equal citizenship for His Majesty's Indian subjects resident or intending to take up their residence therein? Has it formulated any detailed policy requiring these subordinate Administrations to give effect to the principle in substance and in detail? What has been done, either spontaneously or under the stimulus of the Colonial Office speeding up, in, say, British Guiana, Trinidad, Fiji, Mauritius and East Africa to extend to Indians the same rights as are enjoyed by white British subjects? It seems to me that it is in these directions that the pressure of Indian public opinion should be exerted, and the first step should be to urge the Government of India to put the necessary questions to the Secretary of State without delay.

HY. S. L. POLAK.

### THE C. P. LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

#### LAST BUDGET SESSION.—I.

FROM amidst a mass of questions, resolutions and motions for reduction of demands made by members of Government under various heads of expenditure, it is not an easy matter to disentangle the few main principles or the tendencies of political thought and aspiration that may be underlying them all. It is the object of the present article, however, to try to accomplish this task and the printed proceedings of the Council are the only material which are relied upon in the fulfilment of this undertaking.

#### RECRUITMENT IN INDIA ALONE.

The session opened with the presentation of the Budget, but it will perhaps be more convenient to deal first with the debates on the resolutions for which three out of the twelve working days of the session were allotted. Of all the debates that were raised by means of resolutions, the one that seems to be of the most general interest is the one advocating stoppage of recruitment overseas for the all-India services and recruitment of Indians for these services on a lower scale of salary. Almost since the early eighties of the last century when the Congress first gave organised expression to public feeling in the matter, the cry has been raised that entire recruitment overseas for all the

higher branches of administration was unfair to Indians, politically unwise, economically unsound and morally indefensible. The inauguration of reforms has if anything made the anomalous nature of the present arrangements clearer still. Most of the Imperial Services Officers are working in the provinces, but their recruitment, organization, control and emoluments are regulated by an outside authority, the Secretary of State and his Council. Apart from the administrative inconvenience which results from the present arrangement it is an arrangement which pleases neither the Indians in the Provincial Services nor the Europeans, nor the politicians; and a mass of prejudice is the only result which works injustice all round and infects every question with which Councils have to deal with an amount of racial bias sometimes making an impartial consideration of the important issues involved almost impossible. All the officials without exception supported this resolution in the C. P. Council, and the news came upon the Indian public somewhat as a surprise at the time when it was given out in the press. There is a good deal of complaint on the part of many European officials about the unfair treatment to which they are subjected. Mr. Turner, the Commissioner of Berar, thus gave expression to the strong, nay even poignant, feeling which exists on this subject:—

I urge the acceptance of this motion, as it is the wish of the services in this province themselves, as I gather from their representative Association that the majority of the members of the Imperial Services in this province would support the motion. The constant misrepresentations, falsehood, nagging, and fault-finding which have really been the lot of Government servants all over India, has entirely taken the heart out of those of the Imperial Services. The Imperial Servants are ready to give and have given a wholehearted support to the reformed Government, and their efforts have, in the large majority of cases, simply been met with contumely.

What Mr. Turner said seems to have created some flutter in the Council and some resentment also amongst the Indian members, for though some there may be who look at this question of recruitment entirely from the racial point of view, there are many others who advocate the measure on economic grounds, as well as under the prompting of a natural desire on the part of Indians to occupy a portion in the services consistent with their self-respect. Mr. Standen, the Finance Member, brought out the European official point of view more clearly when he rose to dispel some of the wrong impressions which had been created by Mr. Turner's remarks. He said:—

I merely wish to say a word on the subject of Mr. Turner's speech. I myself see nothing in what he said, which is not in accord with the excellent advice given by His Excellency the Governor when this new Government was established. That advice was that we should do all we can to insure the establishment of the reform Government on a firm basis, and we are all of us doing our best to carry it out. But what we find is that a certain section of Indian opinion meets us, as Mr. Turner said, with contumely, slander, and an absolute refusal to recognize that we are trying to carry out the wishes of

Parliament. This is what Mr. Turner meant. He did not refer, I am sure, to any opinion, expressed or otherwise, of the members of this council to which we are duly grateful for the recognition of our work to which they have given expression. It is the slanderous attitude of a large section of opinion in India to which we take exception.

But the matter seems to have been presented in the most correct perspective by Mr. Mitchell. The view which he expressed about the scale of salaries paid to the Home Civil Service officers in the United Kingdom as compared with those paid to his *confreres* here in India is no doubt contrary to the general impression which prevails here even in quarters which are generally presumed to be well-informed on a subject like this. Mr. Mitchell said:—

On the subject of the joint examination for the Home, Indian and Colonial Civil Services I may say that, ever since I have had knowledge of these examinations that is from the year 1900, the top men of the open list have invariably—with perhaps one or two exceptions—taken the Home Service. The middle block take the Indian service. Those who are unable to take the Indian service take up Colonial posts. Now, if the Indian Civil Service is vastly overpaid, why is it that the best candidates in this examination practically invariably take the Home Civil Service? ... The picture that Mr. Pande drew was the picture of the rapacious Englishman paying his own Civil Service a beggarly wage, while paying to those in India princely salaries. It is quite inaccurate.

Leaving aside, however, these considerations which arise only incidentally out of the present discussion, Mr. Mitchell grappled with the main consideration, viz. economic, which has brought this matter to an issue just now. Indians feel that the simultaneous recruitment of Indians and Europeans inevitably leads to the fixation of a scale of salaries which is necessary to attract the proper type of a European recruit and this leads to overpayment to the ranks of Indian officials as well; for otherwise the cry of invidious and unfair treatment is immediately raised. It is in this view of the case that the entire stoppage of recruitment, except for certain highly technical offices, becomes a matter of sheer necessity. The general financial stringency, bordering on bankruptcy, with which the provinces as well as the central Government are threatened, unless some drastic measures are immediately adopted to restore financial equilibrium, has made, this question peculiarly urgent, and everyone will welcome the view which Mr. Mitchell has so cogently put forward:—

On the main question ( he said ) I agree with the mover that at the present juncture all recruitment from Europe should be stopped. With the recent rise in the cost of living and the consequent rise in salaries, and the total inability of the provincial Governments to expand their revenues, such a situation has now been created that the provinces cannot afford these high-priced officials. There is not the money to meet their salaries. India is now faced with a revision of its revenue systems or a very severe cutting down in her establishments. The only way to do this is for the present to stop recruitment of these officers and to declare at once a new scale of pay for the officers who will be recruited in the future, and to confine the recruitment to India. I make this last statement because I am perfectly certain that, at the present scale of wages which can be paid in India, you will not be able to

## PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH

BY THE RIGHT HON'BLE

V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI, P. C.

THE following is the text of the opening speech which the Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri delivered as President of the First Provincial Liberal Conference in Bombay on May 7:—

SIR DINSHAW WACHA, BROTHER DELGEATES,  
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—

It is a great privilege, for which I cannot be too thankful, to preside over the proceedings of this Conference. I am under a great debt to my friend Sir C. Setalvad for the generous terms in which he has referred to me and to my qualifications for this office. As to Mr. Pheroze Sethna, I really do not know what to say. I had never realized that to his many accomplishments he added the faculty of unmitigated adulation, and I have no doubt an intelligent audience like you will know how to discount the praise, which he has so generously bestowed on me, as proceeding from the gross partiality of friendship.

Ladies and gentlemen, I must begin with a word of apology both to the Conference and to the press for the fact that I am unable to read a written address, not from lack of will, but altogether, believe me, from lack of time. It would have been so convenient to everybody. It would have saved you the strain of attention and to me it would have been much saving of time as well. But it has not been possible and no one can regret it more than I do.

Then I have a word to say about the subject on which I am about to address you. I could have wished that it were possible for me to speak to you on those various details of administration in Bombay upon which, doubtless, your deepest feelings are engaged. But in the first place I am not equipped sufficiently well with the necessary knowledge, and in the second place I am afraid I should render myself open to very serious criticism if I avoided deliberately the one topic which, I take it, is in the minds of the whole of the people of this country, namely, the present situation, and what to do in the immediate future to relieve it.

There is just another word of preliminary interest which I must utter. I have not had the time to consult friends of the Liberal party all over the country. I have not therefore the moral authority of the Liberal party in the views that I shall express and must ask you to remember that these views are my own and I do not commit you to them at all. On the contrary you will see perhaps that in more than one matter my views conflict with those that may result from your deliberations and it will be my pleasure, as it will be my duty to adjust myself to those views that come out

of your deliberations so far as it is compatible with my conscience.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, it will not be an exaggerated way of putting the question if I ask you just to consider whether there is peace amongst us to-day, peace not from the circumstance of war, but peace from the circumstance of civil disturbance. Perhaps you will at once think of the distinction, natural enough, between outward and inward peace. And while some of you may think that there is the appearance of peace on the surface, there is in reality nothing like that peace of heart, that contentment, that satisfaction which we describe as really the inward peace of the soul. That there is not, but just one preliminary doubt. Is there really any full-blown outward peace amongst us? I remember quite well, while coming on board, just before landing in Bombay, being racked with anxiety as to what might be taking place in this country in consequence of the arrests that were proceeding. It was then a matter of as great relief as of surprise to be told that the peace of the country had not been outwardly disturbed. The thankfulness of my heart at that time knew no bounds, and when I asked the people the reason, they felt equally surprised, in fact they were very divided as to the reason. With the actual reason we are not concerned, but we are all I think profoundly grateful that those days should have passed away without adding to the great troubles with which we had been beset some time ago. But then, one hears now and then, although without much emphasis or conviction, of a possible resumption of a campaign of civil disobedience. I take it that, Liberals as we are, not knowing the secrets of the non-co-operation movement, we still believe that that talk need not be taken altogether seriously; that outward peace is really established is my conviction. And now, if outward peace is established, the next question is, how we of this party should co-operate with others in the country in order to convert this outward peace into an inward and lasting peace. I have no doubt that we have suffered enough by division and should stand to gain enormously if we could promise ourselves a decade or two in advance of perfect contentment and order and progress. Now, it seems to me that in order that we may consider that question with absolute freedom, we should, even at the risk of doing an unpleasant task, consider the nature of the movement of which the outward activity has now ceased and which may be said to lie down to-day under the exhaustion of a great effort. It is not

my purpose at all to stir up dispute or to utter a word which might give rise to an embittered controversy, but certainly we Liberals have to make up our minds as to the character of the movement of which for the moment we see a suspension.

Now, the non-co-operation movement, let me say at the outset (and this word proceeds I need not tell you from my heart), has had the exceptional advantage of having from the very start functioned under the guidance of one whose character is above cavil and whose motives are beyond suspicion. (Cheers.) Such a movement naturally enjoyed a great advantage and I must now proceed to give here again an unaffected tribute to the way in which its great prestige and popularity were lent, although for the time being only, to the great social causes that we all have at heart, the question for example of the elevation of the depressed classes, the removal of untouchability, the question of temperance, including now-a-days that of prohibition, and the all-comprehensive subject, no less dear to our hearts than to those of others, that of Swadeshi. May I yet again proceed to record in equally sincere terms my admiration of the way in which this movement has carried to the remotest parts of the country the gospel of Swaraj, the way in which it has evoked the patriotic sense of our young people and upheld to them the high duty of sacrifice on behalf of the motherland? But, now, ladies and gentlemen, I must mention over against this some of the harm that this movement has caused amidst us and I do it in sorrow rather than in anger or in a spirit of recrimination.

You will pardon me then if I mention these things *seriatim* without making much comment, but just enumerating them as I pass along. This movement has caused the destruction of much valuable property, public and private. It has caused the loss of many a life; it has indirectly been the means of the deprivation of the liberties of nearly 20,000 of our fellow-countrymen; it has strengthened the hands of the executive who now employ the forces of repression almost without restraint; it has increased, rather I would say it has given more than a decent excuse for, the maintenance (and an increase even) of the military burdens of our land; it has caused outbursts of ill-feeling as between races and as between communities almost unparalleled in the history of this sore-stricken land. Strange to say, so far as a part of my own Presidency is concerned, it has not merely imperilled as it might have in other parts of the country, it has torn up by the root such friendly understanding as existed between the Hindu and the Muslim. Then it has been the indirect occasion of manifesting to the world how some of our people, when excited by angry passions, can be guilty of acts of cruelty and barbarity, scarcely compatible with that character for spirituality which we wish to establish amongst the nations of the world, scarcely compatible with the contri-

bution which so many patriotic sons of India desire to make to the story of human civilization. Then again, strange as it may appear, it has enormously increased such slave mentality as existed before it in this country. It has demonstrated that our common people are lacking in the practical sense and political instinct which might protect them against any crude and ill-balanced propaganda. Likewise it has manifested on a scale that I have never seen before the disparity between profession and practice (hear, hear) which one occasionally sees in political matters, but which became palpable in the non-co-operation programme for the first time; witness the boycott of schools and colleges and courts and councils, acclaimed by tens of thousands of people, which was followed, happily enough from my point of view, but unhappily from the point of view of national character, by singularly little performance. Then it has produced amongst the people at large a curious psychology. You now have people, young and old, villagers and townsmen, men and women, falling into the habit of excessive pessimism in their estimate of things; and on every occasion when they wish to show their dissatisfaction they show it by saying that they must boycott, they must withdraw, they must non-co-operate, they must do nothing, in fact a doctrine which cannot be described as anything else than a translation into our political life of the old Buddhist doctrine of perfect negation, to detach yourself from life by doing as little as possible, by doing nothing and getting away and further away from Karma. That is the spirit which is brought amongst us to-day, and I do not think it makes an addition to our national character of promises much vigorous effort for our future. Then it has spread a spirit of revolt and undermined those foundations, which wise people are careful to instil and foster, of obedience to law and order. Above all my complaint against the movement is this that, starting with the idea of undeniable grievances from which the people suffered and for which the Government is responsible, professing to hit the Government and save the people, it has throughout and every time hit the people more and more (applause), much like an ignorant mother who finding her child beaten by her neighbours brings it home and belabours it still more saying, "Why did you move out of your place? Take this and this and this."

That, gentlemen, is putting the balance right, what the non-co-operation movement has brought the people to. If we are to progress safely and surely in the future, it is our duty apart from blaming anybody, it is our duty to see that nothing occurs in the political atmosphere of which the initiative may be with the Government or with you or me or anybody, that nothing occurs, that nothing is done in any quarter which may threaten the revival of an activity of this sort. Our duty then is to see, as I said before, how to deepen and confirm and fortify from all sides that outward



peace which we see established, until it should become real and lasting peace.

Now anybody may see at once you cannot have peace in the country by any means so long as there is any acute grievance. Following the old principle of Bacon, to cure sedition you have to remove the matter of sedition. Now I am sorry to think that this simple prescription is by no means so easy of operation as it appears. I wish it were possible for you and for me by a resolution duly recorded here to dissipate these grievances. But it is not. We are unhappily living in conditions when grievances have a way of fortifying themselves, when vested interests grow around them with the enormous facilities for propaganda for evil as well as for good, and you have the curious spectacle of generations of effort being required before a grievance acknowledged on all sides could be removed.

I will give you one or two instances. What could be a longer or a more real grievance than the exclusion of our capable young lads from office in the military ranks? In our previous history such a thing has not been known. In the history of other empires such a thing is not known but in the history of the British Empire it is a sore rankling, a festering evil. How often have we protested against it? How often have authorities admitted that it was a grievance, that it was a grievance that must be removed and that it would sooner or later be removed? It is now five years since a solemn pronouncement was made by Imperial authorities that that grievance shall not be hereafter? Still the first serious step has to be taken towards the removal of it. The fact is, ladies and gentlemen, if you will permit me to remind you of a hard fact, however unpleasant it may be, that there are such things as vested interests and when they grow round an evil, whether it is in India or elsewhere, they take long to remove. They cause so much tribulation, they make us pass for long periods through the valley of humiliation and bitterness, but to lose heart is not the way of vigorous people. We believe at last that this great grievance is now really on the eve of removal. It will take time to accomplish; but surely, as I am speaking to you from this platform, even this grievance, which has baffled our efforts for a generation, is at last on the way to redress.

Then take such a simple matter in our own society as widow-remarriage. How much effort have we put into it? How many hearts have suffered and probably been broken? How many lives have been marred? How often have audiences been moved to tears and to solemn promises for removing it in the future and yet those enthusiastic audiences have gone back to their usual environments and felt that the callousness that was in the air overpowered them. The anguish of the heart for the moment is there, we feel it for the time and then forget even the great promises that we

made; and yet we must admit that a great deal has been done even in this slow-moving country to remove the widow-remarriage grievance. I know that enthusiastic advocates of this cause who will scarcely consent to be satisfied with the rate of progress. Nevertheless the apostles, whose advocacy has enshrined this cause in our hearts, have not lost hope and they go on from year to year, toiling steadily upward maintained and upheld by the thought that good work in this direction as in any other will never be totally wasted.

I wish it were in our power to compel Government by the force of public opinion not merely to redress the grievance that lacerate our hearts already but to see that in the near future no new grievance, such as the Rowlatt Act, is manufactured afresh. The worst of this state of things is that when repression puts down a great movement like non-co-operation, it employs a weapon naturally called terrorism, makes use of all the repressive weapons in the armoury of the law and creates in the innocent as well as guilty hearts, amongst honest and patriotic workers as amongst the reverse, it plants in hearts of every body, the feeling that the time is not opportune for good or well-sustained effort in the public cause. Public life falls below its usual level, everyone seems to be seized with a fit which looks like apathy but really amounts to complete and entire hatred of things as they are. The Government and its agents, having for the moment accomplished their task, are likely to mistake this apathy and indifference and to construe it into feelings of gratification or contentment or satisfaction. Too often have district officers and others, whose duty it is to watch things, reported that on such occasions the movement of rebellion has been got under, people are satisfied once more and that the district is on its even way of progress. The truth however is that there is no real satisfaction, people are embittered and soured, the memory of things, of wasted efforts, of bitter humiliation, of indignities undeservedly suffered, rankles in their hearts. For a year or five years or ten years it may be that nothing is visible above, but the undercurrent of dissatisfaction, of a brooding resentment against the powers that be, is constantly at work and when again there comes up such a national movement, it is bound to start at a very high level to draw upon all these, for the moment unobserved, forces of disorder or racial bitterness, until Government will find itself face to face with a task far greater than they ever had of a similar nature. I have never known such profound distrust of Government as there is to-day (hear, hear), such absolute lack of faith in their sincerity, such a rooted tendency to put aside all their pledges and promises and declarations, of intentions as of no value whatever. (A voice: "it is true".) So far as this feeling goes, I know it for a fact and I mention it

with great grief, that very good people (by "good" I mean good-natured, good-hearted people) have gone so far as to say that he who takes tea with an Englishman is a traitor (laughter), that he who maintains social amenities with the foreigner is one whose game is to betray his country at a favourable opportunity. When such is the case and all that people want is proof, no more by word, no more by declaration or resolution on paper, but proof by action that Government really intend to use the Reform Act to the advantages of the people (hear, hear), that they mean to pay every farthing of the bill, when proof of that kind is wanted, a clear duty rests on all who wield authority, from the Viceroy downwards, that night and day they interpret the provisions of the Government of India Act generously and liberally, that they show that they are always moving forward, never keeping the country back, that, for example, if it is a matter of filling appointments, to mention one instance only, they lose no opportunity, for example, of appointing to such posts as Secretaries or Under-Secretaries—posts hitherto reserved mainly for Europeans, Indians of sufficient standing and good reputation. I know of nothing which will so effectively give an indication of the reality of Government's intentions as for example in some of the major provinces, the appointment of an Indian at the next vacancy to the office of Director of Public Instruction. We have a Minister of Education to-day in the person of Mr. Paranjpye here, if I could put him in the witness box (laughter) and ask him to tell me honestly whether he would not feel his hands strengthened by an Indian Director of Public Instruction of his own choice (applause), I know what answer he would give.

Now, I come to a question of the very greatest importance, the road to peace, that peace of the heart to which I referred, the road to peace is by no means easy. It is blocked by such a serious thing as the imprisonment, for various acts and for various terms, of something like 20,000 of our people. Several of them young and immature, led into the ways of disorder, doubtless under a mistaken sense of patriotism, but young people ardent, eager, animated by unselfish ideas. This is causing feelings of acute distress all over the country. No one realizes that more than I do. It is impossible to conceive of people falling into their normal ways in political and other matters, until something is done to reduce this great volume of distress in the whole country. And is it impossible? I do not think by any means. You of Bombay, I understand, have no great complaint to make of the way in which the rebellious forms of non-co-operation were dealt with in your province. I will not therefore ask you from personal experience to endorse the remark that I now make, but I can tell you from the experience of other provinces like the United Provinces and Bengal and, to some

extent, of my own province of Madras. There, it would appear, I have heard such a funny thing as this has taken place that when certain Samitis or volunteer associations had five members marched to prison for belonging to them, others in batches came forward and did nothing but announce that they belonged to these proclaimed associations and without further ado, so I understand, they were put on the lists as belonging to those samitis and removed to jail. (Hear, hear.) Now that kind of thing need not be at all. It is a gratuitous addition to the sufferings of the people. And I think the sooner the people who were marched to gaol merely for technical offences of that kind, for offences which they committed, rather for the fun of it than for anything else, the sooner they are let off the better, I think, for society. And so, a little later, people whose offences might be a little more grave may have their cases considered and so on, until in no long course of time we can reduce very considerably the number of those who for activities of a disorderly nature against the community must continue to be deprived of their liberty.

But the mind of India will refuse to rest satisfied if nothing was done in the constitutional direction almost immediately. Now let me, ladies and gentlemen, beseech your patience a little if I dwell at rather wearisome length on this aspect of the question, namely, further advance of a constitutional character. That such an attempt should be made I am the last person to deny. I recognize the immediate necessity of some such grant of extended power, but, ladies and gentlemen, I lay great emphasis on the necessity of so conducting this effort of ours that we get all the chances in our favour and not leave any against us if possible. Above all things I dread the consequences in the present state of another disappointment, as India cannot have another big defeat in the constitutional direction; everything should be done to make the attempt successful so far as endeavours on this side can be made.

Now there are three ways in which further constitutional advance may be accomplished. They differ somewhat in character and it behoves me to put them to you one after another. The first that I have heard from a high authority indeed—I cannot, however, unfortunately be more particular—the first that I have heard is this, that without the people making a great demand either by deputation or by memorial or in other understood ways, that without the people making any demand the Imperial authorities of Great Britain must be persuaded on their own initiative to bring in a Bill for the grant to India of immediate provincial autonomy. In other words people of India should have an unsolicited boon. Now if such a thing could happen no one of us will rejoice—less than another—Let me put it that way! But, I ask, is that possible? You or I ought to have no part or lot in the manipulation of it, we are

only to wait while things are moving behind the screen, we have only to wait for the fruition of that attempt which is supposed to be made behind the screen, which you do not initiate or advance in any of its stages, but for which you have got to wait right through like a poor helpless young bird waiting for food from the beak of its mother. Is that possible for us? Is it an attitude which we can at all adopt? Now above all it strikes me that there is not within the British Isles any statesman of such a vast and unquestioned authority that if he were of his own accord to propose provincial autonomy or dominion status to India, he could readily persuade either the Cabinet or the Imperial Parliament to sanction it. I know no one with so big a heart in the first place and assuming there was such a person, I do not know that he would command the almost divine authority which is necessary for him to follow it up. Such a superman democracy does not produce.

The next thing is this. Some people say, "Let us by our own efforts try and procure this further advance." I am not aware of anyone who asks for any further stages less advanced than provincial autonomy; all of us, I take it, including the most backward Liberals, are agreed that there should be only one further step in this direction and that we should get provincial autonomy at one stroke. People say, why should not India unite together and make one tremendous effort at once and straightway obtain this consummation? I think a proposal somewhat of that kind was brought forward and passed at the Allahabad meeting of the all-India Liberal Federation a few months ago. Many things have happened since the date of that resolution. I am not sure that a thing of that kind is practicable. Mind you I do not say I am going to wait for further proof of our fitness. I am only asking you to consider the practicability of this proposal. Well, it appears to me that since we passed that resolution at Allahabad, the boycott of the Prince of Wales assumed a sinister aspect, to put it no more offensively, and I can tell you from personal knowledge that that unfortunate move on the part of our non-co-operationist friends has estranged the sympathies of a good section even of our friends in Great Britain. It is not a thing for which I am responsible, it is not a thing for which the Liberal Party are responsible. I am merely bringing you news of a state of things existing there. England herself is on the eve probably of a General Election, the trouble in Ireland seems to be more acute than ever, and Mr. Lloyd George finds Genoa a bigger morsel than he had thought it to be. If in the near future there should be a General Election, the chances of India's constitutional advance being made an issue on the election platform, you know, are very remote. The time therefore is not particularly propitious for the success of a big effort such as we might perhaps be induced to make. It is none of our doing, even Providence can only deal with the

material already before it, the forces are there and we can only manipulate them; and if it is not possible for us to attain success, no blame attaches to us, it only means a slight postponement of our effort.

And now I will mention what may be a somewhat more elaborate method of approaching this problem, a method compatible with the existing constitution, a method the success of which I should say is a little less uncertain (I will not put it higher) than the success of the alternative methods that I have just mentioned. That is the method of working the whole thing up through our electorates and through the legislatures which are the creatures of those electorates. The Englishman is a slave of his political constitution. He may wish to change it, he may wish even to revolutionise it, but his instinct always is to work the change or to bring about the revolution only through that constitution. He will not stand outside, as some of our friends would, and say he will bend, break or demolish it or he will send it to the very Satan from whom it had its origin. That is not his way of doing things. If he understands that we are attempting to use in the regular way the constitution with which the Government of India Act has endowed us, he will then see it is a movement to which he is bound to listen. What takes place when you want a tremendous upheaval of your constitution? You have got first of all to charge your legislatures with a mandate from the electorate. We are not very far from an election. The Councils are in the second year of their existence. Next year by this time the air will ring with the appeals of candidates to their electorates. Then I know nothing more sure than this, that the best way of educating your electorate (upon which our Chairman of the Reception Committee laid such just stress in his address) that there is no surer, no better way of educating your electorate than of going to them and talking about the necessity of our attaining provincial autonomy at one stroke. If people are returned on such a platform, if our legislatures in Bombay and in Madras and in Bengal and the other provinces are filled with candidates whose election had been secured on promises of provincial autonomy, then the legislatures so brought into existence cannot turn their back on duties so solemnly assumed. The legislatures are bound to act so as to get provincial autonomy, and then my plan would be for each such legislature to elect a few people to choose men of ripest experience and most sober judgment and not necessarily those who make the most attractive promises or who give utterance to the most unrestrained sentiments. A convention so formed from the legislatures to which the Imperial legislature also contributed its quota, could then be charged with the duty of framing a new constitution for India on the basis of the present one without the necessity of scrapping it, so that when it did produce a scheme it would represent the best wisdom and

statesmanship available in India. That scheme would then be published for general information and criticism; perhaps the various legislatures will be seized of it and when it came out of this ordeal, it would really be a good scheme, fitting in so admirably with the constitution that we already possess, that it would stand every chance of being accepted as practicable and proper and wise. Suppose further the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State acting together chose a deputation consisting, say, of six men or eight men or ten men, they should be men whose names might command influence in the English Parliament. Suppose they went with a scheme of that kind; I know of no statesman in England, I know of no political body of any importance in England who would treat their representation either lightly or contemptuously. And this process need not take such a long time as some people seem to think. The next Council will come into office in the beginning of 1924. By the end of that year nearly the whole of these arrangements may be completed and our deputation may wait on the Imperial Parliament in 1925. And supposing the bill took six or seven months to get through as a bill generally does, still we should see our new constitution in 1926. Is that such a long time to wait?

Now, ladies and gentlemen, notwithstanding what I say, some of you may be thinking of some better way of reaching our goal, and if in the course of your deliberations to-day and to-morrow you should hit upon some plan which promises speedier success, be assured that I shall have no compunction whatever in abandoning mine and embracing yours.

Then I will refer to what people are sometimes fond of thrusting in our face, the great obstacle produced by the ten-year clause in the Government of India Act. Luckily it has been interpreted in a rather loose way and I have known people of authority maintain in the Imperial Parliament that that does not preclude us at all from taking a further step in the interval. I may tell you that in my various addresses and interviews in England I have pressed that view. I have begged them for the sake of India and for the sake of England not to dwell with pedantic exactitude on that period of ten years. I have told them that to wait longer than is absolutely necessary would be to invite disaster in India, that the wise course would be to anticipate by as many years as possible the consummation of the constitution of which the Government of India Act is the first instalment, and if I may judge at all the signs I can give you hope that you will find a great deal of sympathy and support in your desire to hasten the attainment of this consummation.

Now this matter is not going to be pressed merely as a concession to the impatient people in India. If I understand things aright it is possible to reinforce our demand by many arguments from the side of administrative convenience. You may

all remember that the principle of diarchy was accepted by us under a sense of necessity. The other day Lord Chelmsford actually described the circumstances which made him and Mr. Montagu adopt this device. He spoke the truth without doubt, but then we who represented the people of India before the Select Committee of Parliament took every care that the principle of diarchy should be acceptable only if it was watered down and filtered so much that the harshness of duality was not left, and the machinery would for most purposes function almost as if it was a unitary government. I quite remember the struggle we had. It is not necessary now to review it. But I will only point out that this system of diarchy worked best in those province of India—I am not sure that Bombay would be included amongst them—the system of diarchy worked best in those provinces of India where the safeguards and the correctives upon which we insisted were most scrupulously observed, where the Governor took care on all important matters to summon his executive councils and ministers together, where he took care that the resolutions of the Legislative Council on either reserved or transferred subjects were treated more or less on the same footing of respectful attention as where the Governor before taking action for instance of a drastic character in order to proclaim say a Samiti or an arrest of a person of importance—it is in cases where the Governor summoned the two halves together and made the public understand that every important action was the action of a unified government and not of a Governor acting in two separate compartments—it is where that condition prevailed that diarchy worked with great success. In some places Governors, carried away by consciousness of their own abilities, did not bring the two halves of government together as often as they should have done. The result was, I think, a little discord.

Moreover there was one thing above all which drew the harsh character of this dual government out and exhibited it in most glaring forms, and that was the visit of the Prince of Wales. I do not think that there is anyone here who desired it most enthusiastically at this particular time—not certainly I—I counselled against the visit as long as I could—but the visit came and what happened? When the boycott of that visit was proclaimed by the non-co-operators, the result was that Government, in order to make it a success against this opposition, had to use all the arms in their control, they used all the repressive laws they could think of. I understand section 144 was being illegitimately used for this purpose, but whether or no that was the case, the fact came out that for the exercise of their repressive functions on this large and drastic and very disturbing scale, Government in several provinces relied not on the usual practice of bringing the two halves of government together and taking their

consent, but acted on their own behalf, that is on behalf of the executive part of the administration, with the result that even the Liberal public, even the Moderate party, withheld its co-operation with Government in all that went to maintain law and order (hear, hear) for which they had previously pledged their word; they said "this is not a thing that we can support," thus bringing into prominent relief that dual feature of diarchy against which from the very first we had strenuously protested. I am mentioning this rather elaborately for the purpose of showing that we have a very good argument at our disposal that through the action of Government itself the bad nature of diarchy has been brought out and Government in that respect functioned in complete isolation from every section of opinion in India, co-operationist as well as non-co-operationist. Again it is difficult for our legislatures to maintain two different attitudes, one attitude towards the reserved subjects and one attitude towards the transferred subjects, and I have heard from Ministers—not those that happen to sit here (laughter)—complaints about the imperfect control—to put it euphemistically—that they are able to exercise over their higher officers. Besides, there is one great danger in over-straining this system of diarchy. That danger is this: you all know how in English history the House of Commons obtained more and more power over regions at first kept from its jurisdiction by the exercise of its financial control. When anything not within its precise scope but still grossly repugnant to its sense of propriety occurred, the House of Commons used its financial power in order to extend its jurisdiction. So should we in India. That idea has not yet occurred to our people, but there could not long be many bitter complaints without there being a resort to the common expedient of denying supplies. The constitutional remedy is in our hands. It will produce, if the Government continues this system for a long time, it will produce deadlocks— it will produce denial of budgetary supplies with a dislocation of administrative machinery, from which Government and people alike stand to suffer. Now, it appears to me that a case of that kind, reinforced from the side of those who have an inside knowledge of its working, from those who have taken pension after being executive councillors for example, from those who have held office for the full period of Ministers or have been driven out of them by the constitutional exercise of the legislatures' undoubted powers, it is when people of that kind throw in their wisdom and experience and enable us to construct a case, that that case will really be unanswerable. (Applause.) That takes a little time, we must wait till Mr. Paranjpye (laughter) retires.

Now, I have got a word to say about the Central Government. I am afraid I have not much time in which to elaborate my views about the Central Government. The matter is so important and I happen to hold a certain view which I think I am in duty bound as a member of the Liberal Party to place before this assembled meeting of the Federation. May I have that indulgence? (Voices: Go on, go on) I was one of those who, when in England, pressed with the greatest insistence on the introduction of a certain element of responsibility, and I very much wished at that time that

the Government had yielded to our wishes and placed both the Imperial and the Provincial governments on a more or less parallel footing. Do I press it now with equal persistency? I did until some time ago, and if I do not do so now, you are entitled to know why. It may be I am right, it may be I am wrong, I am still open to conviction in that matter and, as in several others, I will defer to your collective and wiser judgment if you should differ from me. My change of view is of very recent origin and one of its causes I shall presently explain. This responsibility is really what is called the power of the legislature to dismiss a Minister when that Minister forfeits its confidence. We have this element of responsibility in the provinces. Have we used it there? You may say, "We have been in existence only for a year and a half and you do not expect our efficient Ministers to incur displeasure to such an extent that we should dismiss them." (Laughter.) I do not wish it by any means. But I have read of proceedings in which Ministers were defeated by the legislatures. Did they resign? Did the legislatures insist on their undoubted right of asking them to resign? They did not. Whether this took place in every Council or not, I do not know, but it did happen once or twice, at least, in the Madras Council. The fact of the matter is that there is a wise instinct in our people—I applaud it—I do not regret it, I am only putting it as a poser just to perplex you for a minute, to make you fall in with the suggestion I propose to make. People have a wise instinct. They know that the first Ministers have exceptional difficulties to contend with and the success of the Reform Scheme to which the Liberal Party is pledged above all things, depends on the Ministers having every opportunity with their support of doing a good stroke of work or two for their country. Therefore they sustained them in office and gave them extended opportunities, even although in one or two matters they might have incurred their displeasure, that is a healthy instinct with which I do not quarrel in the least, but there is one condition on which alone you can exercise this responsibility, and that is that parties in the legislature should be well formed, so that the Minister may know whom he can rely on at a juncture. Where the Minister does not know that he has a regular trustworthy following consisting of so and so, A, B, C, where the Minister does not feel an obligation to any section or any group in the legislature, the legislature is devoid of the moral authority of asking him to resign (hear, hear). But if it did not render him consistent uniform support it is no business of theirs to ask him to resign. How was he to know the mind of his legislature? So the argument would run backward and forward. I am only mentioning the argument, so that because we have responsibility in a legislature it is not as though we were going to use it in order to dismiss the Minister. It is therefore at present merely an academical question. But I have a further misgiving. At the time that this constitution was started you will please remember that one of the postulates was that while we had responsibility in the provinces, so far as the central Government was concerned, it was still to be paramount, the wishes of the legislature were to count for little. They may be heeded, they may be respected, but they would not be followed. And the Select Committee, before whom we gave evidence, went the length of adding a special paragraph in which they said that they meant the extraordinary power of the Viceroy and the Governor-General and his council to be used for the purpose of every day administration to be

kept in their hands not as reserve power which might come into operation some time but used for everyday purposes. Now in the actual working during these eighteen months, my friends Sir Dinsha Wacha and others will endorse the remark, Government has not been using this as a weapon of every day administration. They have allowed it even in highly provocative conditions to lie dormant. More, the Viceroy made it known, I believe, that he would not use this weapon.

(The Honourable Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas : Except as regards non-votable items.)

That is a matter of legal opinion. The Viceroy has always exercised his discretion in favour of extending the power of the legislature. The system therefore of no responsibility in the Central Government has had this extraordinary result that instead of confining the power of the Legislative Assembly to one item or two as it would have been if we have had responsibility, our powers are the same over the whole range of the functions of the Central Government. Now if we have had a differentiation between certain spheres in which the legislature is supreme with a Minister to control and certain other spheres where the Minister is not to be supreme, then I am afraid we might not have full control except over a department or two. Now this is a development which I have not drawn from my ingenuity. This is an inference which has been drawn in very influential quarters in England where our constitution, young as it is, is being studied with attention and I may add with sympathy. I am not therefore, ladies and gentlemen, so very enthusiastic as I used to be about the demand for a certain element of responsibility in the Central Government. The reason is that I rather fear that we might lose more than we gain by this change. But whether this argument of mine appeals to you or not I am not sure. But for the moment I am only concerned with laying before you candidly my own view. I have already given you the promise at the outset that I should consider myself bound in ordinary cases by your superior wisdom at the end.

Now I am afraid I have kept you much too long. There are one or two matters which I intended to dwell upon, but I think it is not fair to tax your patience any further.

Now let me conclude with one word of earnest appeal. Ladies and gentlemen, we all belong to the Liberal party, or the Moderate, or if you may say so reasonable party in this country. (Hear hear.) We wish to act with the least disturbance anywhere. We want to push along the lines, if possible, of least resistance. We know—do not we?—that there are no angels under the sun—neither in India, nor in England. While we are keenly pursuing our interests compatibly with the interests of the rest of the world, so are they the people of England pursuing their interests compatibly with those of the rest of the world. I do not attribute to them any virtues intrinsically superior to those that we possess. I do not proceed in this matter of political emancipation of India in the faith that we have only to prove our case and our progress will be secured. I have no such faith. I always knew that we should have enormous difficulties from vested interests in England. That every step of our progress will be contested, and contested hotly, and perhaps unfairly too. We are quite prepared for it. Otherwise we should not deserve the name of a party. If we believe that our path would be perfectly smooth and easy we should be like babes newly born into the world.

Why do I mention this elementary fact? In order to ask your sympathetic attention to a phase of the relation between Englishmen and Indians which is apt sometimes to be laid aside in the heat of controversy. Englishmen have duties to us as we have duties to them. Rather let me put it this way, that England in the abstract has duties to India in the abstract, as there are duties proceeding in the contrary direction. Now these duties sometimes cross each other and they have got to be adjusted, they have got to be reconciled. We always ask that our motives should be understood at their best and noblest and we are bound in return to understand the motives on the other side similarly. We ask for confidence and trust; we are bound to return the confidence and trust. We ask that our failings should be overlooked, we ask that our crudities and our inexperience may be tolerated with a sympathetic understanding and we should be enabled to surmount them, to correct them, to grow out of them. Englishmen are not so perfect that they have not similar crudities and selfishnesses and lower aspects of character out of which it is our duty to help them to grow. In some matters they are unwilling to relax their hold in time. They are not willing to let it go one moment sooner than may be absolutely necessary. Sometimes in the enthusiasm of righteousness, when some wave of humanitarian feeling carries them away, their best spokesmen indulge in the finest sentiments of international morality. Parliament, perhaps in the preamble and provisions of its Acts, employs language calculated to produce the impression that Englishmen are, from breakfast till dinner, nothing but angels. (Laughter.) They answer to a high impulse, to a noble impulse which comes to them in rare moments. Well it were for them and for us if these moments were more frequent, if between them instead of continual breaks there were one golden chain unbroken. Can we help in bringing about that state of things? I think we can. By patience, by strenuously fighting our cause, by employing every argument that experience and wisdom can urge, by continually appealing to their higher nature we can make these moments more frequent and more continuous and therefore more benevolently operative for the general benefit of the human race. Is it an impossible task for us? We who propose to teach the rest of the world all that there is in our spiritual treasures; we who propose to revivify the eastern morality and make it overspread the whole earth: we, shall we give up the task? In this we are quite prepared to take a lesson from the non-co-operationist, for what is the gospel of non-co-operation? What is the basis of its activity? By suffering, by inflicting it on himself, by leaving the other side to trample on himself and to use him as chattel, by submitting to this with the divinity of resignation, the non-co-operator says he will convert the tyrant, first into a commiserator, then into a penitent and then into an ameliorator and finally into a loving brother. (Applause.) What is open to the non-co-operator is, I venture to think, also open to us, and this international contact between England and India should be made by conscious efforts on our part to subserve our purpose in the first instance but to subserve also other and more exalted purposes. (Loud applause.)

attract the correct type of European from England or from the United States or from Canada,

This was also the view which many Indian members of the C. P. Council had put forth and the result was that the resolution was passed with only one dissentient voice, and that was the voice of a Mahar member of Council.

SITABALDI.

### BRITISH COMMISSION OR INDIAN CONVENTION ?

To an on-looker the Bombay Conference of Liberals presents some strong contrasts. The speech of the Chairman of the Reception Committee was of the familiar practical type representing the old Congress. Sir Dinsha Edulji Wacha is a staunch constitutionalist who abhors anything in the nature of breakneck speed. The President's address was that of a man who believes in rapid marches and whose whole outlook on life is in tune with the great impulse for quick changes which is throbbing the heart of mankind to-day. The Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri is a robust optimist whose passion for liberty is restrained by the intellectual perception of the realities of the situation. The proceedings of the Conference follow closely the mind of Sir D. E. Wacha rather than that of Mr. Sastri. It is not surprising that Bombay, which is considered as a backwater in Liberal politics by the more forward elements in that party, should have been kept under strict control by the strong man at the helm. The President's central idea and principal suggestion about the Convention for demanding the next constitutional step was perhaps considered by the more forward elements in the Conference as fraught with far-reaching consequences and as requiring further scrutiny. The Conference therefore passed the resolution adopted at the last Allahabad Federation asking for full Provincial autonomy and for responsibility in the Central Government. For myself I am quite dissatisfied with this decision because it appears to me that a section of Liberal leaders does not keep itself abreast of the deep stirrings of humanity in India and does not realise the overwhelming necessity for carrying the people with them. I was talking the other day with a great Liberal, one who has acquired great experience and great reputation as a publicist of eminence, who has by his marvellous capacity for concentration gained the confidence of the Government and the thinking portion of the public alike. He is thoroughly conversant with the working of the new reforms in the Central Government and knows its merits and the loopholes it offers for taking the bureaucratic citadel by successive and persistent assaults. He told me that if only non-co-operators would give the Reform Scheme a trial for four more years, India would have secured for herself the essentials for which all shades of politicians are striving for. He thinks, and there is great force in it, that the serious financial embarrassment and the

advance of political opinion would compel the authorities themselves to introduce changes in the military and civil services which would ease the situation to a great extent. And, according to him, if the fullest opportunities presented by the Act are fearlessly and bravely utilised, our future is asured at an earlier date than is commonly imagined. He thinks further, in the meanwhile the Parliament may send out a Commission to India in order to study the situation and the working of the Act and submit its conclusions and recommendations for public criticism on which public bodies and the legislatures might express their views. The bill framed after taking into consideration all these opinions will be threshed out by a Joint Committee and passed by Parliament in due course. I readily grant that in normal conditions and in ordinary circumstances this plan should have great attractions because the most intellectual and experienced persons in India and in England would have fashioned the scheme. But India is in a passion. She is in a mood when she cannot be trifled with. She is ready for great self-sacrifices. She is unwilling to be judged by England as to her fitness to practise Swaraj. And even a tyro in politics must be aware that no plan of political advance is likely to have any chance of favourable reception in the country if it does not bear on it the impress of self-determination. India will not wait and it is therefore that a scheme has to be evolved which shall satisfy these conditions. The Parliament would not listen to any proposal which is not one made as a result of a mandate by the Indian electorates. Mr. Sastri therefore has suggested the idea of a Convention being elected by the various legislatures as a result of the mandate on the part of the electorates which have to be educated upon it from now. It is scarcely to be expected that, Conservatives like the veteran Wacha would favour this new idea, but it is obvious that Liberals cannot hope to secure any support in the country if they do not produce a plan of action which shall not only strike the imagination of the people but by its very nature shall be calculated to give them a real voice in determining upon their own government, in shaping their political destiny. The four-anna franchise people may at first look askance at this suggestion, but the better mind of the country, if it is convinced that the British Parliament would recognise the validity of the scheme so produced and restore tranquillity in India by releasing the political prisoners now in jail, can be induced to support the idea.

POLITICUS.

### THE BOMBAY LIBERAL CONFERENCE.

I.

THE recently held Conference of Liberals at Bombay was the first of what one hopes will prove a long series. And the very fact that it was the first of its kind explains no doubt a good deal of the bewilderment and irritation, expression of

which is now finding its way into the daily press.

For myself, the root objection to the whole procedure is that it was staged like a performance. A party conference is supposedly called, to enable the rank and file of the party to express their views, to hear the other side of questions and finally to decide what policy the party is to carry out in future. In other words, it is like the Annual General Meeting of the club or of the company—the one occasion in the year when the “mere member” can make his weight felt, either by endorsing what the Committee or the Directors have done supposedly in his interest; or else by instructing them as to what fresh lines he wishes them to adopt in the current year.

In such a case some actual work would be done and all present at the meeting would take a real and active share in it. But at Bombay (as happens in most political gatherings in this country) there was no part cast for the “mere member.” There was the stage with performers on it; there was the auditorium with an audience come to hear the performance. Interference with the ordered progress on the stage seemed as unthinkable, as a theatre-goer’s with the arrangement made by the stage management.

Resolutions, say on untouchability, were proposed and seconded and supported; a tremendous fervour was displayed in these speeches; again and again the speakers would beseech the audience not on any account to fail passing the resolution in question—and all the time the performers knew, and the audience knew and everybody else knew that they knew that there never was even the slightest breath of opposition to the resolution. The result was, that the whole proceedings seemed devoid of all reality. Instead of calling them speeches on resolutions, the programme should have called them what they actually were, viz. orations.

If on the other hand it is expedient that the party should re-affirm its well-known principles and such-like—resolutions such as, for instance, every Labour Congress passes year after year—then it would be enough to put such resolutions from the Chair as “unopposed.” But the real business of a Political Congress surely is, to find out what the members as a whole think of controversial matters; to ventilate differences of opinion and not to register simply their unanimity on uncontroversial questions.

Instead, however, of drawing up a list of speakers, who may best represent opposing points of view, the Subjects Committee functioned for apparently the sole purpose of eliminating the expression of any difference of opinion! Do the party leaders really cherish the fond hope that the interests of the party are served thereby; that on no account must there be allowed any show of dissension, that at all costs there must be exhibited a united front without, however incompatible and conflicting the component parts may be within?

I do not for one moment believe that the leaders consciously set out with any such ideas. On the contrary, they went along as things developed, and they naturally went along the line of least resistance. And that is just the melancholy aspect of the whole business, that at the time there was no resistance. I see that the leaders are now being blamed for leading, for overawing the rank and file. But why blame them for it? It is the rank and file that should be blamed and nobody else. Would they have nincompoops and jelly fish directing the affairs of the party? What blame attaches to men for being competent, of strong personality and great ability? Is it not absurd to reproach them their very virtues? No, the blame is the “mere member’s”: it is his fault to have let himself be overawed, and nobody else’s.

The “mere member” is still satisfied to let other people do things for him and only snarls afterwards because they have not been done differently. The “mere member” still suffers from the mentality common in bureaucratically governed countries, to leave everything to those in authority, instead of realizing that it is the rank and file that is really in authority and that all power is merely delegated from the mass to the executive who are its servants; a mentality which shirks the responsibility of the individual member for the acts of his executive, and which contents itself with the easy alternative of grumbling.

And again, although these points came out right enough at Bombay, I am very far from saying that these characteristics are the monopoly of the Liberal party; for they are not and are as easily discerned amongst all parties, not least in that which is loudest in its denunciation of *mabap*’ism and *aman*-mentality, a party where probably the rank and file counts for less than in any other organization in India.

We are all living in glass houses to-day and therefore it becomes us ill to throw stones: if I have mentioned other parties, it is only to prevent misunderstanding, as if I held the Liberals alone blameworthy. On the contrary: standing for the principles of Liberalism and Democracy, they are bound to overcome the old tendency sooner and more permanently than a party which does not mind very much what means it uses as long as it can get to its objective quickly. But with Liberals too the old tendency still persists of leaving things to those who are in the seats of the mighty: of imagining, that the “mere member’s” only function is to shout “Hear, hear” or “—ki jai”; and that strength consists in pretending to be unanimous.

Not so do I understand the strength of a party; not so do I understand party loyalty.

Unless there is difference of opinion, the party stagnates and no progress is possible. Nor is interest likely to be taken in obvious truisms and watered down generalisations. No, the more living a party, the more lively are its Congresses likely to be; and the greater the share of the “mere member”, the more democratic its temper. And



to work democratic institutions, you want above all things parties which are democratic themselves. The moment a party becomes oligarchic, it cannot rouse much hope in those who would have them transform an existing oligarchic government into a true democracy.

If, however, it is no democratic "party loyalty" to say ditto to anything that a leader may say, such party loyalty does demand that whatever the majority does eventually decide upon, the minority will ungrudgingly accept. That is democracy; that is the democratic faith.

Do we really believe in democracy or do we only mean to substitute one oligarchy for another? That is the heart-searching question; that is the real problem before our party and before all parties in India to-day.

AN UNDISTINGUISHED VISITOR.

## TWO VIEWS.

### II.

THE Liberal Conference recently held in Bombay has evoked some controversy about a matter which cannot be passed over in silence. "Should the members of the Liberal Party, who at present happen to hold important portfolios in Government, take part in the Conferences of the party or should they not?" This is the question pointedly raised, not only by those hostile, malicious critics who have made it the business of their lives to misrepresent the party as desiring nothing so much as winning Government favours and playing second fiddle to the powers that be, but by some of the rank and file of the Liberal Party itself and whose loyalty and zeal for the principles and faith in the methods of the party are beyond question. On the one hand there is the view that as some of the measures of the Government of the day must necessarily form the subject of discussion in the subjects committee as well as open conference, such men of the party as happen to be members of Government must themselves be the first to see that their participation in the proceedings must discount largely, at least in the present circumstances of this country, the efficacy or utility of the decisions which may be reached in case these decisions happen to be favourable to Government. If on the other hand some actions of Government are condemned, the position may become worse, their position as members of Government cannot but be compromised thereby to a certain extent; for whatever their own personal views about particular measures may be, they must collectively share the responsibility or the odium which may attach to unpopular measures. The balance of advantage, in this view of the case, lies in such members not taking part in these proceedings. There is, however, another point of view from which it may be urged that members of the Liberal party do not shed their Liberal principles because they accept office. Why, we may go further and say that they accept office mainly with a view to give effect to those very Liberal

principles to which they have professed adherence. Why should they then be debarred from participating in all the transactions of the party? This seems to be the practice in the United Kingdom also. Leaders of parties do not keep aloof from such transactions, because they happen to be Cabinet Ministers. Far from this, their participation in all the transactions of the party is all the more welcome because they happen to be in a position to give such effect to the principles of the party as may be immediately practicable. In the present circumstances of India, it is further urged, if you want to keep out prominent Liberals merely because they happen to be members of Government, you will not thereby avoid the hostile criticism from your political opponents that the Liberal party has sold its conscience to the devil, if that be at all your object; for those who blame you now for allowing Councillors and Ministers to associate with you in the Conference will do just the same even if you keep them out. For if these Councillors and Ministers can impose their own will on you from within they can do that just as well by remaining outside. If Ministers are blamed by our opponents for joining in the Conference and thus turning the Liberal Party into a Government Department of Propaganda, I am quite sure they would be as fiercely assailed by them, if they stayed out, thereby proving—would it not be said?—that they have lost touch altogether with even their own friends and have altogether been absorbed into the alien (and satanic) bureaucracy. To myself the whole question appears as one not so easy to answer, I frankly confess. As was said in the last issue of this paper, the fearless advocacy of certain important measures by Ministers like Messrs. Mehta and Paranjpye have invested those with an importance and weight which they might otherwise have lacked and to that extent the decisions of the Conference might prove more effective. But it must also be admitted that in the present circumstances of the country when full responsibility has not yet devolved upon the representatives of the people, the situation may often become embarrassing to both the Conference as a whole as well, as such members of the Liberal party as happen also to be members of Government. What part such members should take and how far they should identify themselves with the proceedings must be left to the discretion of party leaders in each case. But allowing the growth of a convention that the Liberal members of Government only take an advisory, if any, part at all in the transactions of the party would, in the present circumstances of the country, probably seem to be the soundest policy.

A DELEGATE.

## INDIA'S PLACE IN THE EMPIRE.

At a banquet given by the Viceroy at Simla, the Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri, responding to the Viceroy's toast, spoke as follows:—

### MR. SAS TRI'S SPEECH.

I feel a proud man to-day in many ways, but I also ask you to see in me a man in uttermost confu-

sion, not able to find words in which to express the feeling with which his heart is charged. I am, as you may expect, in profound gratitude to His Excellency for the way in which he has presented me to this great assembly. I must, in the first instance, ask His Excellency most respectfully to convey to His Majesty's Secretary of State for India my high appreciation of and gratitude for the felicitously phrased message which he has been pleased to send me. Believe me, I did not expect in the least to be the recipient of the eulogy that it has pleased His Excellency the Viceroy to pronounce to-night. I hardly know in what terms suitably to acknowledge my debt. I can only begin by saying that if I have succeeded to any extent in the discharge of the high duties that the Government of India entrusted to me, it is largely due to the fact that everywhere the Government of India is held in high respect and any agent of that Government is bound to receive respectful attention. In spite of what certain people may say, I found on every hand the fullest recognition of the importance of the Indian Government and the great prestige which it commands in the councils not only of the Empire, but of the world. Whether it was so long years ago or not, I do not pretend to be able to say, but at the present moment it is by no means an exaggeration to say that an Indian travelling abroad and charged by the Government of India with any message is assured of a most earnest and respectful hearing.

#### WASHINGTON SERVICES.

I have a word to say to this great assembly in recognition of the services which, at Washington, Mr. Corbett of the Indian Civil Service, Colonel Wigram of His Majesty's Forces and my secretary Mr. Bajpai rendered to the Government of India. My duties were greatly lightened by their assistance. Their devotion to the cause of India and their special knowledge of the subjects that came under review were beyond praise. Lord Chelmsford, in nominating me as the representative of his Government to the Imperial Conference ventured on a great departure from the traditions of our Government. He chose a non-official, although a member of his Legislature, for the first time to represent the Government in Imperial councils. It was not understood at the time, but I take leave to say that that appointment would not have been possible but for the completeness with which the Government of India had during the last few years identified themselves with the best thoughts and aspirations of the people of India as regards their status abroad and in international councils. I remember how a few years ago nothing was more noticeable than the contrast between the violent feeling which agitated the people of India with regard to their status in the Dominions and elsewhere, and the somewhat tepid manner in which on their behalf representations used to be made not only by the Government of India, but by the various local Governments as well. That state of things has long passed away, and now everyone, even though he be a non-co-operator, will feel bound in justice and in truth to acknowledge that if there had been a truly national Government with a national personnel the representations made on behalf of Indians either at the seat of Empire or in international councils could not have been more forcible or more entirely consonant to the wishes of the community.

#### BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S POSITION.

Then, too, some amount of surprise was felt, and I think adverse criticism was passed on the circumstance to which His Excellency referred, that in this delicate matter of the treatment of Indians in our Dominions the Imperial Government has as it were—I am putting it in the way of the critic—washed its hands clean of the business and retired, leaving the Indian Government to fight its case as it might with the various Dominions concerned. It was not indifference on the part of the Imperial Government, I take it, and I hope that my countrymen will come to realise it more and more, that the Imperial Government recognised that perhaps the intercession of a Government that was in a position more or less to lay down, to dictate, to express itself as it were, from a superior pedestal, was not likely to be welcomed by the fully grown Dominions, and it would be a

graceful recognition of the full autonomy of the Dominions on the one hand, and likewise a full admission that India had risen to the Dominion status on the other. It was I think this feeling rather than any other that dictated the policy which has now been responsible for any proceeding as a representative direct of the Government of India to conduct negotiations on these matters with the Government of the various Dominions. I think success is much more assured in this way of approach than it might have been if we had spoken through, and our case had only been transmitted direct by, the Imperial Government themselves. I must acknowledge on my part the very great help and sympathy I received at the deliberations of the Imperial Conference from the Premiers of the various Dominions. With one notable exception, which I daresay is present in the minds of you all, the statement of the case for Indians received the most careful attention. The Premiers were glad to find out our point of view and when they found it out and likewise recognised that it was compatible with their inmost wishes, I received every encouragement from them and promises of support in case a deputation from India were willing to proceed to the various localities to present India's case there.

#### MR. LLOYD GEORGE'S SUPPORT.

It was to me a matter of great pleasure to find that India was so well received by the Premiers. But let me assure you that the success of our cause and the passing of the Resolution at the Imperial Conference would not have been possible were it not for the forceful, enthusiastic, and eloquent advocacy of our cause, by the Premier of Great Britain himself. Mr. Lloyd George found it necessary at the last moment to interpose with his authority and with his great eloquence on behalf of India. More than anything else it was the few words that he said at the end in favour of India's cause that succeeded in bringing about the passing of that Resolution. It is, therefore, primarily at the hands of the Imperial Cabinet that we have to look for the carrying out in full of the terms and purposes of that Resolution. In other words, in no spirit of controversy, but in the spirit of India's best wishes, I put it to you that that Resolution is going to be tested not so much by the results of my mission to the Dominions as by what takes place as regards Kenya and Uganda. I am full of apprehension at what might happen in case an adverse decision should be pronounced rather hastily by the Imperial Cabinet regarding the interests of Indians in these Crown Colonies. I hope nothing will happen in any way to prove that my apprehension is at all well-founded, and I am in the fullest hope that at the last moment when the decision comes to be taken the larger, nobler, and the higher view will be taken, and India's views and ambitions fully satisfied. It will not do for me, however, to hide from you or from myself the possibility that my hands might be weakened in the Dominions when I am speaking on behalf of Indians there by any adverse treatment of Indians in the Colonies of Kenya and Uganda, where not a large local legislature nor an unsympathetic Parliament, but the authorities of Whitehall are themselves concerned.

#### NON-CO-OPERATION EVILS.

His Excellency was also pleased to refer to my critics. I have a great many of them and I rejoice that they should pay so much attention to so obscure an individual. I have tried in more than one place to present the true aspect of my forthcoming tour. I have tried to explain how this Resolution arose and how in consequence of it I am being deputed by the Government of India. Much of the misrepresentation has been dispelled, I am glad to say, but as it happens in all these cases there is a good deal of residue left which it is impossible to clear away. Part of this residue doubtless relates to my personality and that need not concern anybody excepting myself. But I am bound to point out that a good part of his residue is likewise due to that brooding dissatisfaction which the Non-co-operation movement has left behind. I am talking of it as of the past. I hope it is, as one of its most undesirable consequences is

that too many of my friends, too many of my countrymen seem to think that the steps that we have taken in acquiring Dominion status whether at London or at Geneva or at Washington and now in Genoa are, but as so many pebbles thrown at us by a designing bureaucracy, by which our political ineptitude is constantly trapped and betrayed. They seem to think that some of us who belong to what is called the Liberal Party, and who are trying as far as possible to remain on friendly relations with the Government, are victims of a great self-deception; that what is described as equal partnership in the Britannic Commonwealth of Nations usually called by Mr. Lloyd George the Free Commonwealth of Free Nations, is but a delusion and a snare.

#### FAITH IN THE EMPIRE.

You will permit me to take up a few minutes of your time in describing what I consider to be the truth of the matter, which is entirely forgotten by the somewhat hasty and unthinking critic in India. This Britannic Commonwealth of Nations is not always best understood by the Englishman so as to feel its great influence and to feel also its benevolence in full. Somehow or other I have an unquenchable faith in the future of this Commonwealth. I have been criticised every now and then for referring in an excess of enthusiasm to the ideals of the British Empire. But still I remain impenitent. I belong to the Servants of Indian Society, of which the basic article is the belief that the connection of India with England is somehow intended to fulfil some high purposes for the benefit of the world. Belonging to that Society I have never wavered in the faith that I shall presently endeavour to put before you. This British Commonwealth of Nations has done many things in the past. It has great exploits to its credit. It has great achievements in the moral sphere to its credit. Doubtless, like all human institutions, its history is disfigured by many things which Britishers themselves would be the first to wish could be forgotten. Doubtless there are many things which may be pronounced to be serious imperfections and flaws either in the way in which this Commonwealth has been built up or in the way in which it is now held together, but we are studying a great political institution, we are studying a mass of events connected inextricably with human affairs all over the world, and it were a pity to apply to it our petty measures or our small standards.

I take it that this great political organisation stands unique amongst the political institutions of the world for one thing above all others. I wish it were generally recognised. It stands for the reconciliation of the East and the West, the bringing together in happy harmony the people of varied races and varied complexions, the blending together under one law, under one Sovereign, under one Imperial Parliament, people of adverse nationalities, various cultures hitherto felt in many another political organization to be irreconcilable and never under one flag.

#### EAST AND WEST.

There are, as some of you may have seen, people who sit down and think deeply in these busy times. There are great writers, great thinkers, seers of the future, who would in their moments of hesitation as to the future of our civilisation and our humanity, tell us in solemn tones that, perhaps, the world to-day is moving forward at no long period, to a great clash between the East and the West, between the white and the coloured population, and that that clash will be marked by the shedding of more blood, by the destruction of more human property and more human happiness than any clash in the story of our country. Whether that be so or not, it is too much for one connected with the practical affairs of the moment to say, but it does not look impossible. There are many things which seem to point to the hush of the smaller difficulties, but it is not unlikely that we should hear in no long time the rumble of a mighty earthquake whereby this planet may be rudely shaken. But if only the British Commonwealth were wisely guided in its time, if only British statesmanship which has always proved equal to the greatest emergencies, did not fail us at this supreme emergency, if only the British Commonwealth kept its even tenour in spite

of ups and downs, there is no serious risk of this great earthquake submerging this planet. I ask you, where in any Empire, in any political union, there are people of so many diverse ways and complexions and cultures as within the British Empire?

#### GREAT AND HAPPY SOLUTION.

I ask you in all seriousness whether it is not in this Britannic Commonwealth that we see the beginning of a great and happy solution of these discords that those who look into the future frighten us with. And where in this world-wide Empire is the conflict of race with race, of colour with colour, of civilisation with civilisation more marked, more fraught with possibilities of good and evil, more perplexing to the intelligent student of human affairs than in this India? Here there are great administrators, statesmen who, from day to day, are occupied with great affairs, the Viceroy, the Governors, the Commander-in-Chief dealing with the administration of a great continent, Members of Councils and great potentates guiding the destinies of millions, Secretaries of the Government of India who, if the secret be told, are only a little more powerful than their Chiefs, Deputy Secretaries and Under-Secretaries, who, I understand, with the turning of a phrase, may bring into view or turn aside mighty issues, all who, in high spheres or in low, making or marring the destinies of millions.

#### GOVERNMENT'S DUTY.

You all have passed through an exceptionally trying time. You have my profoundest sympathy for the patience and forbearance with which on both sides you seem to have climbed over the difficulties. It is not my business to say one word that will aggravate the difficulties of the situation, for we are passing through a period of transition. Do let me, in the name of this great Britannic Commonwealth of Nations, ask you to remember that if the Britannic Commonwealth has a high mission and a noble destiny, that mission and that destiny cannot be fulfilled except through you, that on each one of you devolves a part of that high mission and that high destiny. Perhaps, some of you, immersed as you are in the daily routine of your work, do not realise how great your responsibility is. It is not for the India of to-day, it is not for the Britain of to-day, but it is for the sake of our great civilization built up through century upon century of heroic effort. I ask you to remember in your daily work that it is not the demands of the hour, it is not the interest that may be immediately vested in you, but if I may venture for one moment to be so impertinent as to state to you, high administrators, that it is not to the reconciliation of vested interests only that your wish and your destiny are to be fulfilled. We never have seen in the country such a wreck of hope and faith in the Government of the day. I say this in all solemnity. We have never seen such a total wreck of faith by the people to-day. It rests with you to rebuild this hope by constantly remembering that you are but the front wheels of the future, that you are, each one individually, the chosen vehicle of the great spirit of benevolence that has always ennobled the British Government in its mission in the world. I venture to think that it would be your purpose, as I have no doubt it is the purpose of all who derive authority from you, to put your faces constantly forward never to turn back in this great work to which you have put your hands, but to see that your duty to India and your duty to the India of the Britannic Commonwealth is nothing less than the great duty you owe to civilisation and to humanity.

I have been compelled to take up a little of your time to speak on behalf of this idea of Empire, about which I have been supposed to be a little overenthusiastic, but as I know that my country cannot prosper except by rising to the fullest political height within the British Commonwealth, I am one of those who identify the British Commonwealth and India in one close and indivisible union. If I speak of the one I seem necessarily to be speaking of the other. I wish I had the fire of eloquence to transmit to you something of the great enthusiasm that I feel for the future of the world and of civilization, of which it seems to me this British Commonwealth is destined by Providence to be the greatest and noblest of instruments. (Applause.)

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