

THE Servant of India

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TOPICS OF THE WEEK

A LARGE and interested audience listened to the Right Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri on the 19th February on the Gokhale Hall grounds of the Deccan Sabha, Poona. The occasion was the eighth anniversary of the passing away of the great statesman. Mr. Sastri was averse to the practice of treating the career of a man as though it was something to be dissected and analysed for the edification of the student—so many virtues illustrated by such and such incidents and anecdotes. He would far rather dwell for one loving and reverential hour with the memory of Mr. Gokhale. He observed that like others who spent their lives in politics Mr. Gokhale enjoyed greater fame after death than when he was alive. Both Europeans and Indians failed of justice to him so long as he was actually with them. In another part of his speech Mr. Sastri said it was wonderful how far they seemed to have travelled in political conditions during the last eight years and yet how near they seemed to be to Mr. Gokhale, when they considered the many parallelisms between that time and now. Most interest will, however, be felt in his closing remark upon a subject hitherto unknown to the public. He alluded to the statement now and again made that on his deathbed Mr. Gokhale nominated him as his successor and committed the Society to his charge. This he denied; and made certain observations which we will give, as far as possible, in his own words.

"THOUGH reminded of the Society," said Mr. Sastri, "and entreated to state his wishes in regard to it, he

said nothing. Perhaps he retained to the last a misgiving that he had always had about me, that I had marked leanings to the other school of politics and was only an extremist in disguise. Perhaps, too, he remembered that Mr. Gandhi was back in India and they had had anxious talks about his joining the Society. But I feel sure, as sure as if he had told me, that his reticence on the subject was due to a deeper motive. He was aware how institutions like property often suffered from having to follow courses prescribed by dead men. He loved the Society like his own child and cherished it above all things. Its future was for long his greatest concern in life. Any other man would have given minute instructions as to its conduct after him. But he had greater wisdom and greater faith than most men; and left it to the judgment of his pupils, unhampered by the wishes of a dying master. He had done all he could for it and now he must part from it with complete resignation as he had parted a little while ago from his family. It was a moment of supreme Sanyasa such as crowns the lives of a few elect ones in this holy land, the final detachment from all that one held dear, the withdrawal of the soul of set purpose from its earthly attachments before the last release.

AN important announcement on this subject was made at the Gokhale Hall, Poona. Gokhale anniversary meeting at the Deccan Sabha on Monday last. It was to the effect that the trustees of the Sabha had from that day become the owners of the site on which the Gokhale Hall is to be erected in course of time. It will be remembered that it was on that day last year that the scheme of the Hall was publicly inaugurated, when promises of support amounting to a little over Rs. 14,000 were announced. During the year that has elapsed since then, this figure is understood to have gone up to nearly Rs. 53,000, thanks to the splendid co-operation of the generous public and the exertions of a few earnest workers. This is no doubt very creditable to all those that have put their hands to the task. But what is of more practical value is that they were able to collect within that period nearly Rs. 33,000, and thus made it possible for the Sabha to secure the valuable site for the Hall, which, we have no doubt, will be one worthy of the great name it will bear and the city in which it will be situated. It is however necessary to remember that what has

An Unfounded Report.

been achieved is little as compared to what remains to be done; and Sir Mahadeo Chaulsi rightly insisted upon all of us putting our shoulders to the wheel. We trust his warning will be taken to heart by all concerned. If the Hall is to be a reality before long, it will need the best energies of all those that believe in its utility as a means of public education.

A Civilian let loose.

THE Government of Madras has obviously some grudge towards the Legislative Assembly. Some time ago it deputed Mr. Bryant to startle and puzzle it and now it has let loose upon it a most didactic civilian in the person of Mr. Moir. This gentleman is evidently used to the very pleasing exercise of introspection. In a remarkable contribution he made to the debate on the Indianisation of the Army, he analysed the state of his feeling into the three elements of relief, regret and apprehension. The apprehension was a simple and natural feeling such as comes to those who perform in ordinary life the great operation of crossing the rubicon. But the regret and the relief were fantastic to a degree. Which was the more so, we leave each reader to judge for himself. The regret was that comradeship in arms was soon to cease between Britisher and Indian. Mr. Moir must be very sanguine as to the success of the experiment and the rapidity with which it would be followed up to its conclusion, that he should have afflicted himself with the contemplation of the day when the British officer would be no longer commanding Indian troops. But in that contemplation we would just ask the Madras Civilian to interrogate himself again; and find out whether it really is the termination of comradeship which is the cause of his sorrow. Rudyard Kipling must be gratified that his idea of the white man's burden has been taken up in dreadful earnest by a countryman of his in the Southern peninsula and developed, in one particular viz., the defence of India, to such an extent that the prospect of its being shifted to the shoulders of the sons of the soil actually enables him to feel lightened of a great load. How this farrago of self righteousness was received by those who heard it we do not know. But perhaps the Assembly felt that it was not sufficiently strong in the element of pedantry and Mr. Moir for that reason might be a welcome addition.

Nauseating.

IT is surprising how lightly principles sit upon some persons. Pandit Motilal Nehru was loud in the protestations of his undimmed faith in non-co-operation and professed in advocating a change in the current programme of the Congress, to confine it within the four corners of that policy. If he were to disregard the mandate of the Congress relating to the boycott of Councils, it would be merely for carrying non-co-operation into a domain to which it had not yet been extended—i. e. for obstructing every measure proceeding from the Government and thus bring-

ing the machinery of administration to a wreck. He affirmed, in the sight of the world, that all the other roads of policy were closed by non-co-operation inhibitions. All this conscientious objection, however, which sounded so very impressive in the Civil Disobedience Report, came to an abrupt end when, a month after, he moved a resolution in the All-India Congress Committee which sought to permit non-co-operators of his own complexion to employ, in certain circumstances, all the recognised methods of co-operation in the Councils. Mr. C.R. Das who was equally unctuous in the abhorrence of co-operation, i. e. a policy of supporting good measures, is no more tenacious of principle than Pandit Nehru. He declared recently at Calcutta that his party, after winning the elections, would not be pledged to pursuing obstructive tactics in the Councils but would obtain a mandate from the constituencies as to what it should do in the Councils, which mandate it would follow. It is all to the good, from our point of view, that these dissident Congressmen do not go on fanatically insisting upon using their obstructionist artillery but are brought to reason. But from another point of view, it is a very painful reflection—painful to the point of nausea—that some of the topmost politicians in the country should proceed from one conviction to another with such remarkable celerity.

Threatened Violence in Kenya.

WE desire to draw the attention of the authorities to the letter from the secretary of the Eastern Africa Indian National Congress which is published in another column. It shows what type of a being the European settler in Kenya is. If the statements in the letter are founded on fact, as to which there does not seem to be much doubt, the alarm felt by our Indian countrymen in the Colony at the Europeans' recent threat of violence is perfectly natural. May we hope the Government both here and in England will leave no stone unturned to prevent the threat being translated into action?

Bombay Budget.

THE remarkable improvement in the condition of the finances of the Bombay Presidency, as revealed in the revised estimates for the current year and in the budget for 1923-24, is bound to allay a good deal of apprehension, regarding the future of Bombay provincial finance, created in the mind of the public, by occasional gloomy utterances of responsible members of Government and also by their almost incessant opposition to schemes of nation-building. The revenue for the coming year is estimated at 1437 lakhs and the expenditure at 1432 lakhs, thus leaving a surplus of five lakhs. The closing balance is expected to stand at 336 lakhs. If a sum of two crores is regarded by Government as the minimum balance for safety, one fails to understand with what justification Government had opposed the proposals for increasing the proportion of grants to secondary schools. In the budget for 1923-24, provision has been made for a sum of sixteen lakhs of rupees for carrying out the first year's programme as outlined by the Compulsory Education Committee.

AT LAST !

THE Army pedants in England have given their decision at last. The Commander-in-Chief made a momentous declaration in the Assembly the other day on the subject of Indianising the Army. One part of the declaration was to the effect that eight units mainly of infantry with a slight proportion of cavalry would be selected for complete Indianisation, that this would be effected as rapidly as possible by transferring to the selected units Indian officers already in service and that this process would begin immediately. The second part of the declaration was a promise that the grant of King's Commissions to Indians and the training of Indian Cadets at Sandhurst will continue as heretofore apart from the above-mentioned scheme. This latter promise is satisfactory in itself if we could get the Military Department to keep it.

Touching the former half which is the essential part of the declaration, we confess we are not quite happy. We recognise that it is a genuine move: we also recognise that it is a considerable move. But we cannot make up our minds that it is the better of the two moves which the authorities were believed to be considering as alternatives. The rejected alternative would have given us a liberal recruitment every year of Indian Commissioned officers, and put them into various regiments, in all arms including the artillery and air force along with British officers. This arrangement would have ensured for the recruits the advantages of emulation and competition, and participation in the life of the messes and the clubs, in sports and in recreations, side by side with those who have long traditions to maintain. More than in the ordinary school, more indeed than in any department of life, constant association, example and rigidity of discipline are essential to success in an army. It is no disparagement nor unworthy distrust which makes one misgive whether left altogether to themselves, the new Indian officers with only a brief experience will be able to sustain the experiment on equal conditions. It does not make one easier in mind to remember how in the past similar experiments have been handicapped in the first place by selection of unpromising material according to preconceived but utterly erroneous notions as to the martial qualities and hereditary loyalty of the various races in this country: and on the other hand by the selection of narrow-minded officers, who have no sympathy with new ideas and have perhaps resisted them bitterly. We would make a personal appeal to the Commander-in-Chief to satisfy himself, before placing particular officers in charge of the new experiment, that they were men of broad views and kindly disposition, who felt it a privilege to be called on to assist in the uplift of India on the military side.

The arrangement which has commended itself to the Army authorities reminds one of a suggestion made in influential quarters in respect to poli-

tical reform. Some undoubted well-wishers of India favoured it, but upon the whole it fell flat whether on the men of light and leading or on the public at large. It was that some one province in the country should be selected and completely Indianised and allowed to run itself as part of the Indian Empire with an Indian Governor, Indian Councillors and Indian Services generally. The idea has many attractions; but the experiment would have had to be continued for a fairly long time and probably transferred from province to province before any conclusions could be reasonably drawn. If the correspondence on the subject should be published, we might be in a position to discover why a type of Indianisation, rejected on the political, was accepted on the military side. It is easy to imagine dark motives and to suggest unworthy designs. Now that the experiment is about to be made, let us resolutely dismiss the might-have-been's from our minds, give the utmost credit to the authorities who have undertaken it and help them to carry it on under the most favourable conditions. Not much curiosity was expressed in the Assembly as to the length of time that it would take for the complete Indianisation of the Army on the supposition that the experiment proved successful. One can understand the reluctance of the head of the Army to accept any limitation of time. But it is well known that time was one of the important elements under consideration with reference to the rival schemes and it is of supreme interest to us to know what ideas on the subject prevailed in the end.

THE CONSTITUTIONALISTS' CONFERENCE
AT DELHI.

WITH the exception of a few Panislamist fanatics who desire to convert India from a British into a Turkish Dependency, there is to-day nobody in India and not even in England who does not realise that India is in a mere transition stage from dependence to *Swaraj*; and at least as far as India is concerned, there is nobody either who is not convinced that it is imperative to shorten this transition, and that rapidly: since, whether to be a Dependency be bad or to be a Dominion be bad, to be neither the one nor the other is surely worst of all. The only difference in Indian opinion is as to the methods best calculated to terminate the transition. In the past we have had the advocates of violence and armed rebellion; more recently we have had those of boycott and non-violent non-co-operation: but the results actually obtained by either of these methods cannot be said to have made Indians at large very optimistic as to the results that are claimed to be potentially obtainable by them. As a consequence the method of constitutionalism, which has never lacked supporters, is to-day—if not popular—at least less unpopular than it has been for many a weary twelve month. As a further consequence it was there-

fore only logical that all those who at present believe in the constitutional method should be invited to confer together, when the miracles promised by the other methods had failed to materialize. Moreover, since, if the constitutional method is at all capable of success, it can only achieve that success by dint of constant constitutional pressure and agitation: it follows further that such conference must fill a very real need.

No little praise therefore is justly due to the energy and enthusiasm with which Mrs. Besant took up this idea and succeeded in giving it a practical start by organizing the "Delhi Conference" which met on the 12th and 13th insts. and the warmth with which the president, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, eulogized her share in it in his concluding speech was wholly deserved. To Dr. Sapru himself on the other hand must undoubtedly be given the credit for having steered the Conference to a harmonious and successful termination and speaker after speaker expressed but the unanimous verdict of all participants when they said how much they had gained by the Government's loss of his services. To him perhaps more than to anybody else was due the disappearance of the suspicion which at the start was an undercurrent of the Conference, viz. that its real object was the making of a paper constitution. Substance was lent to this suspicion by an otherwise needlessly elaborate resolution which (with many (1) and (2) (a) (b) (c)'s) recommended to the electorate Dominion Status and charged certain Committees appointed by the Conference to work out its details: but, as both Dr. Sapru and Mrs. Besant pointed out, nothing therein really committed any future Convention, which would be at full liberty to adopt, reject or amend any recommendations sent up to it: and, as a matter of fact, not a single resolution refers even to such a Convention at all.

The Conference itself commenced on the 12th with a presidential address of Dr. Sapru's and the reading out on Mr. Sastri's behalf of a Memorandum of his (which we reproduced last week); the morning of the 13th was set aside for general discussion, which at times, it must be admitted, became so general, that many began to wonder what the discussion was about; but the evening of the same day eventuated in the passing of four resolutions, the first of which declared Dominion Status to be the goal; the second of which appointed four committees to elaborate details; the third of which (to which reference has already been made) more or less repeated (1) and (2); and the fourth of which appointed the Continuing Committee. As regards the latter, this at first appeared on the agenda as a complete organization, from a Central Council down to those of talukas and even villages: but since nothing so far had been done about merging already existing political organisations, the wider resolution was somewhat premature and wisely restricted to the appointment of a Central Continuation Committee. As for the immediate pro-

gramme, it is for the various Committees so appointed to explore how far advantages can be pressed even under the existing Reform Act and where exactly the latter needs amending; and to enter upon the ensuing elections with an election programme based on the resulting recommendations.

As Dr. Sapru in his concluding speech said, a beginning had thus been made; though to many it might seem a small beginning, it was a beginning and one in the right direction. Whether their efforts therefore would immediately be crowned with success or not, he was satisfied and would refuse to be disappointed: and one wholeheartedly agrees with him when he emphasized that to a constitutionalist, as all present were, the only sanction for all their endeavours lay in the justice and reason of their case. That indeed is of primary importance and not the least gain of the Conference viz., that it has clearly enunciated constitutionalism not as an expedient, but as a principle; that, as Mr. Sastri previously had stated, there must be no veiled threat, if constitutional methods do not immediately achieve their object; and that on the contrary, India must be convinced that her goal of *Swaraj* cannot be reached except she pledges herself *ex animo* to a policy, which he so happily has called one of Faith, of Hope and of Charity.

THE DELHI SESSION.

(FROM OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.)

DELHI, 17th FEB, 1923.

AMENDMENT OF THE FACTORIES ACT.

MR. INNES on the 10th brought in—somewhat apologetically—a curious little amending bill, which however went far to expose the littleness of the employers who are affected by the Indian Factories Act. Mr. Innes represented the bill as merely designed to correct a drafting error which had crept into the Act passed only a year ago, which had provided a weekly rest-day and a maximum week of 60 hours. Now when other holidays were to be substituted for a Sunday, it was found that this was not possible; with the result that there are 62 statutory holidays under the Act as it stands. This the Bombay Millowners declared to be more than they had bargained for and the mean little bill above mentioned is the result of the pressure they have been able to exert on the Government, as a consequence of which these holidays have now been reduced from 62 p. a. to 55-57. To achieve this, the amending bill has created the legal monstrosity of a week of eight days including two Sundays (which, as Mr. Joshi said, beat even the unmarried grandmamas about whom Sir H. M. Smith had made so merry the week before); and changed a maximum week of 60 hours to a maximum fortnight of 120 hours: a clear infraction of the international engagements entered into. However, notwithstanding Mr. Joshi's spirited attack, the Assembly endorsed the Bill and sent it up to, what a wag has called "our Secondary Chamber."

LABOUR EMIGRATION.

The question of emigration to Ceylon and Malaya has at last been settled for the time being, by both Chambers agreeing to the Draft Notifications, to which I first referred to in the issue of the 8th inst. The Assembly, which on the 1st had postponed further consideration of the two official Resolutions (viz. to approve the draft notifications), pending the publication of all papers which had been before the Select Committee, resumed the discussion on the 10th. There were six amendments down in the case of the Ceylon Notification, and four in that of Malaya. Most of these dealt with the question of wages and I for one was so surprised to see doughty capitalists like Sir Montagu Webb amongst the advocates of a minimum wage (and a generous one at that) that I began to think the age of miracles had returned, when it occurred to me that perhaps the zeal of the honourable members in a socialist direction would not be quite as strong in the case of Indian labourers in India, as it was in that of Indian labourers in Ceylon. Perhaps. Anyhow, none of the amendments were accepted: the two that were forced to a division being lost by 36 to 32 (Sir M. Webb's) and by 46 to 23 (Mr. Subrahmanya's.) The minimum wage is in itself of course a great desideratum and Mr. Subrahmanya's argument that, if such a minimum for Ceylon was fixed, it would prevent all exaggerated ideas as to the attractiveness of that Colony, is perfectly sound; as is the recurring criticism that wages in Ceylon are too low. The fact remains, as Mr. Wilson pointed out, that in Southern India the wages were even worse, in fact "beggarly", as he put it. Those therefore, who would like to stop emigration altogether, have apparently an easy way of effecting this, by the simple expedient of enacting a generous minimum wage in India.

That single little remedy apparently not fiding favour, Mr. Joshi therefore said that people who have a prospect of bettering themselves must not be prevented from leaving India and he grew sarcastic about Mr. Rangachariar's objection to Ceylon making enquiries into labour conditions in S. India, before fixing a minimum wage in Ceylon. The same member laid it down as a principle that, if a minimum wage was fixed, it should be done having due regard, not only to the Indian immigrant himself, but also to the rest of the labour already in the colony; and he rightly emphasized the paramount importance of appointing a Consular Agent. In the Upper Chamber, which considered the same Notifications on the 15th, Professor Kale, on the same subject of wages, contented himself with urging that the Ceylon Government be kept to their promise of enacting a minimum wage—a suggestion to which Mr. Sarma readily agreed. As regards Malaya, it was very noticeable with how much less asperity conditions there were being viewed by both Houses. Mr. Rangachariar on the 10th stated that in his opinion no risk was being run by Indian labourers emigrating

to Malaya and eulogized the manner in which the Malaya deputation had met them. Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas on the 15th echoed the same sentiments and naively admitted that at first there had been an idea of stopping emigration to Ceylon, Malaya, Mauritius &c., in order to bring pressure to bear on the Colonial Office in regard to the status of Indians in Africa: but one is glad to find that this idea of making them whipping-boys was only suggested to be immediately dropped. As regards the bar against non-Europeans entering Civil Services of Malaya, Mr. Lalubhai seemed unduly optimistic. Anyhow it is satisfactory to find that one of the few Indians who got into that service before the present Colonial Office regulation was passed, Mr. A. H. de R. Fonseca, is at present acting Deputy Controller of Labour in Malaya, as I see from the latest report of the Indian Immigration Committee in Penang, which also gives the total number of arrivals in Penang from India during 1922 as 53,688 adults, whilst departures numbered 43,420.

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INDIA'S FISCAL POLICY.

The event of the parliamentary week of course was the debate in the Assembly on the 16th on a resolution standing in the name of Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas "that a policy of Protection be adopted." One could hardly say that the mover's speech was calculated to "mark an epoch": what did that was the fact that Mr. Innes on behalf of the Government moved an amendment which "accepts in principle the proposition that the fiscal policy of the Government of India may legitimately be directed towards fostering the development of industries in India" and which asks for the appointment of a Tariff Board to apply the principle so accepted. The House occupied the whole of the day in a debate on this and other amendments moved, but in the end Mr. Jamnadas accepted the Government amendment, which was then carried without a single dissentient voice. Sir C. Rhodes reminded the House that India already had got a haphazard form of protection which masqueraded as free trade: but the definite pinning down of Government to a policy of discriminating protection goes a long way beyond that and incidentally shows, as Sir Basil Blackett put it, that the Government, if not responsible, most certainly is responsive to the legislature. Nobody in fact could attend that historic meeting without realizing how real and how great the power is that the Reform Act has devolved on the legislature already. Discussion was of two kinds—of those for whom Mr. Innes did not go far enough and of those for whom he seemed to go too far. The latter included the agricultural interests; the former of course all the industrial magnates. Only one speech was in a class by itself and that was Mr. Joshi's who insisted on looking below the surface of the question.

Declaring himself as by no means against the principle of developing industries nor against that

of making India as self-contained as possible in a world which had not yet abolished war: he did question whether a high tariff wall was the best method of achieving that end. The principal objection of course to tariffs is that they afford a subsidy the extent of which is quite unknown and which is therefore removed from all popular or governmental control: and that there is no guarantee whatever that the profits made out of the tariff will be put to the fostering of industries. Mr. Joshi rightly deprecated the appeal to the patriotism of the poor, called upon to pay the price of new industries, instead of appealing to the patriotism of the industrialists themselves; and reminded his hearers that, just because there were no members of the labouring classes in the House, to defend the interests of their own class, the House itself was a trustee of their interests. As for an alternative to Tariffs, there is of course the system of direct subsidies, which, working in the open light, is free from the grosser defects of protective import duties; there is the further alternative of starting new industries as state ventures: a system on the advantages of which Mr. Joshi did not wish to dilate (even if the chair had allowed him to, which it did not), since he left all those arguments to his friends Messrs. Kamat and Jamnadas who could be trusted to advance them—at the time of the railway debate: a shrewd hit which brought the House down. Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas in his concluding speech indeed seemed at one time to suggest that Mr. Joshi must have been "got at" by Lancashire for not falling round Mr. Innes' neck and "hailing him as a long lost brother come back home" (as Mr. Jamnadas actually did): but it is characteristic of Mr. Joshi's reputation that any such veiled imputation merely provokes the House to angry protests in all quarters. The decision arrived at, to commit India to a definite policy of protection is indeed of tremendous consequence and goes far beyond the mere cancellation of privileges which have hitherto accrued to the predominant Imperial partner and one can well believe that if the quarrel between Bombay and Lancashire is now to come to an end, it will only be because, as Sir C. Rhodes put it, a greater quarrel will be engendered between Indian consumer and Indian producer in future. At which one must leave the matter for the present.

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INDIANISATION OF THE ARMY

But the marking of epochs did not end there; it was continued to-day, when the Commander-in-Chief made an announcement, the importance of which rivals, if it does not surpass, the declaration anent the fiscal policy made yesterday. For if there has been one point more than any other on which India has always demanded a visible pledge that the declarations made now and again were really intended for fulfilment; it has been that the vital question of the Indianisation of the Army without which every other advance lacks permanency. Again and again has Indian opinion tried

to get the Indian Government to commit itself to a clear cut programme in this respect—but hitherto in vain. This morning at last that great step has been taken, when Lord Rawlinson announced that the Government had decided to Indianise completely eight units of the Indian Army for a start. In view of the momentous nature of this announcement, the subsequent debate was distinctly disappointing with the two exceptions of Mr. Rangachariar's and Mr. Moir's speeches. Mr. Moir in a very impressive speech deprecated facile optimism; whilst Mr. Rangachariar welcomed unreservedly the step taken and emphasized the cost of such a first step, however small the actual distance covered by it might appear. Other speakers unfortunately failed to rise to the occasion and concentrated on the smallness of the step taken. Dr. Gour's amendment came nearest to express the feeling of gratification with which might very properly have been coupled the legitimate desire that the scheme initiated that day would be expanded as soon as possible; instead of which it unfortunately called upon the Government to formulate a new scheme—a demand, as Mr. Burdon pointed out, which the Government would hardly be expected to accede to when itself had only just formulated the beginning of a scheme. Dr. Gour's amendment was defeated by 42 to 40 votes and Mr. Seshagiri's (which was hardly to the point on this occasion, calling as it did for the publication of correspondence between the Secretary of State and the Indian Government) by 54 to 28. Even the original resolution moved by Mr. M. Yamin Khan on the 24th of Jan. had become obsolete through the Commander-in-Chief's amendment, and it was therefore natural that if persisted in it would be defeated, as was the case (by 43 to 22), quite a number of members not voting. What remains, is the actual start made, though it be a start made with 8 only out of 141 units, and what further remains is for public opinion now to continue its pressure, so that this start may be followed up by ever widening measures of Indianisation.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT ON INDIAN RAILWAYS.

II. THE IMPROVED SUBSTANCE.

DEALING with the substance—as distinguished from the form of the report, the most noticeable feature of this year's issue is its informative character. It is responsive to public criticism concerning railway economics and management offered in the Central Legislatura, in the press or on the platform. This policy of informing public opinion and being in turn informed by that opinion cannot but result in ever more informed and reasoned criticism and growing appreciation of the viewpoint of each other and in lessening reliance on the credulity of the public in the explanations offered of the results of a year's working. Although the report under review is, generally speaking, a decided improvement on its predecessors in

point both of quality and quantity of information does not give adequate information on certain matters, while on certain others it is wholly silent. The Government of every country stand to the public in the relation of trustees

(a) of the limb, life and property of railway customers, railway employees and the general public; and

(b) of the rights of the travelling and the trading public using the railways against exploitation.

As regards (a), the protection afforded from injury to limb and life is measured by the number and circumstances of railway accidents. There is an integral chapter devoted to this subject, but the information given in it is both meagre and confusing. The total number of accidents was 6190 during 1921-22, 6055 during 1920-21 and 6279 during 1919-20. After referring to the "very slight" increase during 1921-22 over the figure of 1920-21, the report says, "These fatalities may seem large but it must be borne in mind that the number of passengers carried was 561,329,000." This explanation would have had some chance with the credulous if they were at the same time told to forget that the total fatalities decreased from 6279 in 1919-20 to 6055 in 1920-21 in spite of the increase in the number of passengers carried from 520,027,400 to 559,246,100.

The standard of protection afforded in respect of property has never been high or even reasonable in achievement. The amount paid as compensation for goods lost or damaged during the long term of 18 years of so-called business management of State railways has risen from a few lakhs to over a crore. During one quinquennium alone, viz., that ending 31st March 1921, it rose from Rs. 18 lakhs to Rs. 112 lakhs, equal to a rise of no less than 522%, although the increase in goods earnings was only 16%. The whole subject, however, is dismissed in a paragraph of 15 lines at the end of chapter VIII and the hope is expressed that "the short explanation now afforded may serve in some measure to assure the public that every effort is being made so far as means to do so admit, to get rid of legitimate cause for complaint in respect of transport arrangements." With the spirit of the reform which this department of the State has caught, it is not unreasonable to expect that the next report will give us some statistics about this form of waste and extravagance and will also be able to shew some substantial improvement. In this connection we are tempted to make one observation, and that is that the problem will never be solved by mere pious instructions for greater co-operation between the traffic officers and the watch and ward officers. The root of the mischief lies in divided responsibility and it is this that must be removed.

As regards (b) the vices to which a railway monopoly, like any other monopoly, is liable are extortionate charges, unjust discriminations in rates and fares and failure or delay to provide reasonable facilities. Taking the case of third

class passengers, for instance, the fares charged for this class in India have always been regarded as extortionate in so far as they are in excess of the capacity of the customers concerned. This was clearly brought out by the late Mr Neville Priestley in his report of 1903 on the Organisation and Working of Railways in America and by the late Sir Thomas Robertson in his report of the same year on the Administration and Working of Indian Railways. These fares have since been increased at least twice with the inevitable result that they have restrained the normal development of railway custom. This is fully borne out by the fall both in the number of passengers carried and in the earnings derived from passenger traffic as compared with the budget anticipations for the current year.

As regards unjust discriminations, Government's own statistics prove that the rates charged to first class passengers not only do not cover the working cost but fall considerably short of it; while those charged to third class passengers are pitched high enough to wipe out the loss on the first class traffic and yet leave a large balance as profit.

As regards failure or delay to provide reasonable facilities, we cannot do better than give below a few extracts from the report of the Indian Railway Committee of 1920-21:—

"We have received many complaints regarding the treatment of third class passengers. Their grievances are of long standing... Stress was laid upon them by Sir Thomas Robertson in his report of 1903..."

"In India, with its vast population... flocking in enormous numbers to melas (fairs or fetes) or on pilgrimages to holy places, occasional overcrowding is inevitable. To construct and equip the railways so that on rare occasions they should be able to accommodate without inconvenience traffic out of all proportion to the normal is evidently impossible... But when it comes to overcrowding as a constant everyday affair, carried to the length that Members of the Committee have seen with their own eyes—passengers by regular trains perched in the luggage racks and in suburban services hanging on outside or squatting on the steps of the coaches, it is another matter."

It will be seen from what we have said above that there is strong *prima facie* evidence to show that the payments demanded from a section of the public in return for the services given by railways are both extortionate and unfair in their incidence; and yet not a word is said about these matters in the report. This is a deficiency which, we hope, will be made up in the next report.

A considerable wealth of information is given in chapters VI, VII and VIII, describing what has been done, what is being done, what it is proposed to accomplish by the end of 1926-27 and what are the difficulties in the way of provision of reasonable traffic facilities. It is impossible in a review of the report to notice the several points arising out of the arguments advanced. We shall, therefore, confine our attention to one point only, viz., the provision of rolling stock. The report makes a great point of the fact that it is useless to equip

railways with a liberal supply of stock unless improvements of existing lines are simultaneously carried out, providing adequate facilities for the movement of additional stock. We have been hearing this argument for a number of years past without being given the faintest idea as to the point in the unending futurity where this argument will cease to be operative and where railways will begin to provide, as advised by Sir Thomas Robertson, facilities slightly in excess of the requirements of the day, so that when the traffic comes, the railways may be ready to carry it and help on its development. Government have never yet placed before the public any programme by pursuing which they hope to be able to complete, within some reasonable amount of time and money, the provision of adequate facilities for the movement of the necessary rolling stock. The enormous leeway to be made up may render it impossible to make such a forecast, but in that case the least that the public is entitled to know from year to year is what was the capacity at the beginning of the year, what has been added, what is proposed to be added during the ensuing year and what will remain to be added at the end of the ensuing year. Nothing short of this, or some such, information will inspire confidence in the Government moving in the right direction. According to paragraph 92 of Sir Thomas Robertson's report of 1903, the necessity of concentrating all efforts and money was accepted as long ago as 1900; and yet we find that during the 16 years ended the 31st March 1922, no less than 38 crores out of the total capital expenditure of Rs. 212 crores was spent on new lines which only served to bring in additional traffic and hamper the already overloaded old lines. If improvements in existing lines are to be completed as rapidly as possible, there must be no such diversion of the available funds for works which do not add to the capacity of the existing lines.

Considerations of space preclude us from noticing other phases of the working of this big commercial department of the State as disclosed by the report; we cannot however conclude this review without observing that the reports, considered from the point of view of its literary merit, does not come up to the standard which we are accustomed to expect from the other publications of the Government of India.

ECONOMY.

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION.

IT is a matter for sincere congratulation that the subject of agricultural education has recently received in this presidency (Bombay) something like the prominence which is due to it. The Hon. Mr. C. V. Mehta spoke of it on several occasions in his recent tour in Khandesh and Gujarat and gave a strong impetus to it in those districts. Elsewhere also the subject has been brought before the public by those keenly interested in agriculture and among the latter may be mentioned the addresses delivered to the Deccan Sabha in

Poona by Dr. Mann and Prof. D. L. Sahasrabudhe. This awakened interest in the subject is perhaps due to the cut that has been made in the public expenditure on agriculture, which cut is certainly as deplorable as that in general education. While one is thankful to Mr. Mehta for renovating local agricultural associations and starting agricultural schools of a secondary grade, it is, however, regrettable that he should have spoken in a disparaging tone about the graduates of the Poona Agricultural College. We are sure that he did not mean any real disparagement of an institution of which this presidency is justly proud and which is getting students from Ceylon, Burma, other British Indian provinces and Native States; but only meant to stimulate local interest in agricultural schools. Nevertheless, his utterances, in virtue of his high office, may result in creating a prejudice in the public mind against a very useful institution and tend to confirm the misconception already existing in ill-informed circles that agricultural colleges are not benefiting the country in proportion to the money spent on them. It is therefore worth while reminding ourselves of the objects of university education in agriculture and of the achievements of the Poona College. Prof. Sahasrabudhe's addresses were in fact devoted to this purpose.

Mr. Mehta deplored that the graduates of the Poona Agricultural College were not going back to work on their lands. This is a general popular charge levelled against all our agricultural graduates, and by repeating it Mr. Mehta has lent to it the weight of his authority. The facts and figures adduced by Prof. Sahasrabudhe (before Mr. Mehta's recent utterances were made), however, show that in this respect the graduates of the Poona College have no need to hang down their heads. Out of 369 persons who graduated between 1906 and 1921, 196 or 53.1 per cent. are employed in the service of the Bombay Government, 142 in the Agricultural and 54 in other departments. The Indian States have absorbed 28 or 7.5 p. c., leaving 145 or 39.3 p. c. for private enterprise. Of the latter 61 or 16.5 p. c. are known to be engaged on their own land or in their own concerns and 22 in private service in agriculture or allied industries. Regarding the remaining 62 no definite information is available, but as they are not in Government or State service, they are either engaged on their own lands or are in private service. Taking only the 61 graduates about whom we have definite information that they are engaged in private agriculture—either on their own lands or on those of others—and who form 16.5 p. c. of the total number of our agricultural graduates, they compare favourably with the graduates of the Cambridge and Edinburgh Universities only 5 p. c. of whom, according to Prof. Sahasrabudhe, are engaged in private agriculture. American graduates, it is true, show a better percentage than Bombay graduates, but then economic conditions in America are

infinitely more favourable than in India. There is plenty of land and plenty of capital; and the system of agriculture is also such as to attract a university man. A graduate there starts as a servant on a well-established farm (there being quite a large number of such farms), gains experience there, saves money rapidly as he has no dependents to look after and generally purchases an estate from an old person retiring from business. Things are very different here where the subdivision of holdings has gone on to such an extent as to make agriculture uneconomical in most cases. A graduate will not find sufficient and profitable employment on a farm of less than a hundred acres of fairly good land. It is therefore a matter of no little satisfaction that as many as 61 graduates, and probably a good many of those about whom definite information is not available, are engaged in private farming. There would be a large increase in their number in the near future if our big landlords, inamdars and others realised the necessity of applying modern methods to our agriculture. Large and striking profits cannot be shown in one or two years, but deterioration can and ought to be arrested whether of soils, crops, or methods. And that work requires the trained intelligence of a graduate.

The purpose of university education in agriculture is seldom understood by the critics of our agricultural colleges. They seem to think that the colleges are meant to teach mainly the routine of agricultural practice, which 80 p. c. of our agriculturists already know and which anyone can pick up by working a few weeks on a farm. It would be a waste of time and energy for graduates in a technical subject to do routine work which people without their special knowledge and training can very well do. We want graduates for studying and solving questions of agricultural economics and for doing scientific research work, which men with elementary and secondary education cannot undertake. Prof. Sahasrabudhe has given a small list of the problems which need immediate solution. Improvement of seeds of important crops, treatment of plant pests and diseases, investigation of the deterioration of certain crops, improvement of salt and monaf lands, improvement of fruits for men and grasses for cattle, improvement of cattle breeds and production of labour saving machinery, these are problems that can be solved only by men who have received high scientific education. Besides, there is the question of organising Indian agriculture as a modern industry capable of standing competition with advanced European and Asiatic countries.

The Poona College is rightly held to be the best of its kind in India. Its graduates are as good as, if not better than, graduates of foreign universities, and when appointed to the higher posts in the Agricultural Department, for which foreign graduates are usually imported, have acquitted themselves very well. Those graduates of the Poona College who have been to foreign univer-

sities have found no difficulty in obtaining Master's degrees after six or eight months' stay. They have done and are doing excellent research work. They have put forth a large number of publications which are valuable not only on account of their high scientific interest but also because many of them are directly useful to the cultivators. By their work in the Bombay Agricultural Department they have been able to give an extra profit of a crore and a quarter of rupees annually to cultivators who have actually taken up the improvements suggested to them. The improvements introduced are of various types such as that of cotton seed, the introduction of new groundnuts, of iron ploughs, good potato seed, manures for sugar-cane, remedies against pests and diseases of grapes, rice and jowar, &c. No greater justification is needed for the existence of the Agricultural College. It is often said that the establishment of the Poona Agricultural College is very expensive. But very few people know that the teachers in this college do more teaching than the teachers of other Government colleges and in addition act as expert officers of the Agricultural Department; that is to say, the public are getting extra work from these Professors without paying a single extra pie. When these facts become widely known, it is to be hoped that the taxpayer will not grudge the money spent on higher agricultural education, nor that there will be a diminution in the enthusiasm of those who seek the portals of the Poona college.

V. R. G.

A LETTER FROM LONDON.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

LONDON, FEBRUARY 1.

FIRST INDIAN WOMAN BARRISTER.

A BOMBAY girl is the first Indian woman barrister. She is Miss Mithan Ardeshir Tata, B. A. M. Sc., and she is one of the first two women barristers called at Lincoln's Inn. Miss Tata, who is not a bluestocking, came to this country with her mother, in 1919, as representative of Bombay women in support of the claim submitted to the Standing Joint Committee on the Government of India Bill that there should be no sex disqualification under the Reform Scheme. Another clever Bombay girl, Miss Piroja Powalia, is returning in a few days to India with her relatives, Mr. and Mrs. Cowasji Jehangir (Jr.) Not long ago she took her honours degree at Oxford in the history schools.

TIMES ON LORD PEEL'S DESPATCH.

Commenting a few days ago on Lord Peel's despatch regarding the question of further reforms, the *Times* says—

"There are some who still regard the reforms as in themselves a colossal error; who would have liked to maintain the velvet glove and iron hand of a beneficial bureaucracy; who hold that in a country steeped in religious prejudice, race feuds, and caste exclusiveness, the attempt to impose a democratic system of Government was a political crime. Such an attitude it is difficult to

understand. The reforms, as we have always held, came not a day too early. Had they been longer delayed there would have been no longer a question of the velvet glove; it would have been all iron hand—or the loss of India. As for the democratic system, the amazing thing is that India has taken to it so quickly as she has. In this respect, at all events, the East is very little different from the West; it is only more backward. Democracy in England a few hundred years ago would have been unthinkable; but that did not mean that the English people were not fundamentally democratic. In India there is ample evidence of the latent spirit of democracy in the village *panchayat* and the tribal *friga* India—thinking, articulate India, which is the India that counts—has welcomed the democratic system with open arms. This is well; but she must remember that *wise maxim, Festina lente.*"

INDIANS IN KENYA.

We now know some of the essential Kenya terms of the despatch sent to Kenya, containing joint proposals for a settlement of the trouble there, but which appear to have stirred up fresh trouble. These terms, it will be remembered, are the result of joint deliberations between the Colonial and India Offices, in consultation with the Government of India, and are designed to carry into effect the resolution of the 1921 Imperial Conference acknowledging the doctrine of equal citizenship. The terms now put forward to both parties in Kenya as a basis of settlement are said to provide for a common electoral franchise, property and educational qualifications to be introduced if the standard is otherwise too low, it being, however, of such a character as to permit of the enfranchisement of a minimum of ten per cent. of the adult Indian population. It is stated that there is a difference between the two Departments as to the exact number of seats and the proportions in which they will eventually be held, at the outset, by the two communities, but there will be either eleven or twelve of these constituencies, returning a minimum of four Indian members. Representation on the Executive Council will remain as at present, and the official majority will remain there as well as in the Legislative Council. There is to be no segregation in commercial or residential areas, residents to comply with the sanitation and building by-laws. No restriction on immigration is proposed at present as the immigration figures do not warrant that course, but the Colonial office claims to retain the right of restriction, should Kenya be threatened by an undue influx of Asiatics. It also desires to reserve the Highlands for Europeans, but the Government of India does not agree with this clause, and claims the right to reopen this question later.

The "Times" correspondent at Nairobi states that these proposals, which are dated last September, were brought to the Colony by Sir Robert Coryndon, and that they emanated from Mr. Churchill. As a matter of fact, I have the best reason to believe that they resulted from conferences between Mr. Edward Wood, M.P., on behalf of the Colonial Office, and Lord Winterton. They were subsequently confirmed, doubtless on Mr. Ormsby

Gore's recommendation, by the Duke of Devonshire. Between September and the present time, it is stated, Sir R. Coryndon frequently pointed out that he could not introduce such terms, but that the Duke of Devonshire ultimately insisted on reopening local discussions. That may account for the demand that has been made by the white settlers for Mr. Ormsby Gore's retirement from the Colonial Office. Week-end conferences have been held at Nairobi between Sir R. Coryndon and the representatives of the two contending communities separately. The "Times" correspondent thinks that there is little hope of a settlement. The Europeans object to the principle of a common franchise, also to non-segregation in residential areas and the absence of restrictions upon immigration. They consider "that restricted immigration is the only means of safeguarding the country from Indian domination and the native workers from Asiatic competition." It would be interesting to know exactly what the white settlers have contributed to the industrial development of the native artisan, who, presumably, is to be protected from Asiatic competition. I understand that the Indians, on the other hand, recognise in the proposals a genuine attempt to solve the problem in terms of the Imperial Conference resolution, and in spite of that they do not meet entirely the Indian claim, are inclined to favour acceptance of the terms if they are not changed. Sir R. Coryndon is stated to be pressing them to agree to restricted immigration as a bar to the entry of "the lower classes," but that the Indian leaders refuse to agree. It is reported that the terms are referred to in the despatch as "nicely balanced" and "to help the present conditions in India." I learn that the Indians Overseas Association, which is closely watching developments, has been officially informed that the Kenya Legislative Council elections have been postponed for twelve months or such shorter time as the Governor may determine, with a view to work out the conditions of the new constitution.

The "Times" deals editorially with the situation in Kenya in somewhat ignorant fashion. It very rightly says that the present controversy is a phase of the perennial conflict between the white settler, careful for the future of his race, and the Indian, with his determination to insist upon meticulous equality of citizenship within the Empire. The paper says that there is no desire on the part of the people of the Empire to shirk the implied consequences of the Imperial Conference resolution. But then the paper goes off the track. It is quite agreeable to non-interference with long-resident Indians in Nairobi and elsewhere. But it then mixes up the problem of the self-governing Dominions and the Crown Colonies, and declares that "it is high time that Indian opinion should cease to regard restriction on the settlement of Indian subjects within the Empire as a legitimate grievance." It thinks that the implication is not one of inferiority at all, but of

difference. Most assuredly, it remarks, the white settlers of Kenya have every right to insist upon the maintenance of an order which safeguards not only their own future, but the future of the Colony as well. The paper thinks that a satisfactory settlement "would seem to imply the grant to the Indians in the Colony of a voice in the discussion of affairs that would ensure their adequate representation without holding out any prospect that the future of East Africa will fall into their control." It is also deemed "only fair" that the Highlands should be reserved so far as possible to the white settlers. Europeans are finally exhorted not to take the law into their own hands, whilst the Indians in India are urged to refrain from prejudicing the case of their kinsmen in Kenya "by putting forward impossible demands." I am informed that Mr. Polak has replied to this editorial comment on the situation, but there has hardly been time for the reply to appear. Meanwhile Indians here greatly appreciate the energetic protest against European methods of intimidation in Kenya by the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association and by the Aga Khan, the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Indians Overseas Association.

CORRESPONDENCE.

INDIAN SITUATION IN KENYA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—Only recently a despatch has arrived here from the Secretary of State for the Colonies which the Governor has instructions not to disclose; but the Europeans have somehow got the information that the Colonial Office intends to grant a common franchise to Indians. They consider that this would amount to granting equal status to Indians which they are bent upon opposing at all costs.

There is a large number of level headed and fair minded Europeans in the Colony who consider that it is only equitable that the Indians should be granted some rights as a proof of their sincere desire to carry out the resolution passed by the Imperial Conference in 1921, but the small clique known as the 'Reform Party' are agitating and exciting the minds of the general European population by making them believe that if a common franchise is granted to Indians, it means that the Europeans will be ousted from the country in course of time.

As a result of the mischievous propaganda carried on by Europeans, even the innocent and just among them are also being dragged into becoming a party to use violence against Indians in case the common franchise is granted. Papers also suggest that the Government cannot enforce this policy without bloodshed, and it is being stated openly that *the intention of the Europeans is to shoot down every Indian in the Colony.* It is too ridiculous and wild to believe; but the class of settlers that reigns here have been encouraged to indulge in this sort of lawlessness which has been resorted to frequently by them in the past and on every occasion they have succeeded in intimidating the Local and Imperial Governments and have been allowed to go their own way.

On one occasion a party headed by a noble Lord went to the Government House, threw stones at the Governor and behaved themselves in a disgraceful fashion and asked the Governor to resign. On another occasion an assembly of Europeans including a number of European leaders gathered in front of the Court House and flogged certain natives because they thought it was useless to take the case to the Courts as the Magistrates did not and would not punish them sufficiently.

Then again a responsible and very much respected settler took the law in his own hand and set fire to the huts of several natives whom he suspected of having stolen his cattle or sheep. Another settler, a very high personage, shot a native dead because he suspected him of having stolen his sheep. The European was tried for murder, pleaded guilty and yet the Jury returned a verdict of "not guilty" and he was consequently discharged. Well may Lord Cranworth speak of this country as a place "where they shoot the natives and stone their Governors."

This will show you how the threat given by the Europeans to resist by force if necessary the fair and just settlement of the Indian problem is not a mere wild threat, but is meant to be backed up by action at the proper time.—Yours, etc.

Nairobi, Jan. 12, 1923.
SHAMS-UD-DEEN,
General Secretary,
Eastern Africa Indian National Congress.

THE ADVERTISING OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—The Board of Temperance of the Methodist Episcopal Church has started a campaign for the exclusion of liquor advertisements from the newspapers of India and Burma. At the request of the Lucknow Conference of this Church the Secretary of the Board wrote to the Editors of the daily papers published in English throughout the United Provinces appealing that no advertisements be accepted for publication after the expiration of the present contracts. "The Indian Daily Telegraph" of Lucknow has replied agreeing that the publication of such advertisements is prejudicial to the public welfare and promising not to make any further contracts of the sort.

Temperance reformers everywhere would do well to support this appeal to the Press, for advertising in the newspapers is one method upon which the liquor trade relies for the up-keep of its business. The whole purpose of advertising is to stimulate trade and the stimulating of trade in intoxicating liquors is always contrary to the public welfare. One certain method of discouraging consumption would be to prevent advertising.

It is believed that many newspapers are now publishing liquor advertisements simply because the attention of the managers and owners has not been called to the wrong they are doing thereby. There are surely few newspapers in India that would advocate in their editorial columns the extension of the Drink habit. Why should any paper promote in its advertising columns what it would not defend editorially? One of the turning points in the Temperance campaign that led to the adoption of national prohibition in America was the renunciation by the majority of the newspapers of this practice and of the income they had formerly obtained therefrom. A newspaper that depends for a part of its income upon advertising intoxicating liquors can hardly be expected to join impartially in the patriotic demand for the destruction of the traffic. Editors may contend that their attitude towards the Drink problem is not affected by the contents of their advertising columns, but the general public will always be wise enough to observe that those newspapers that consistently misrepresent prohibition and do nothing to advance the cause of Temperance are the ones that publish the advertisements of the liquor trade. Surely the day has come when the newspapers of India and Burma that expect to win the favour of the majority of the Indian people and of a considerable minority of the European community must no longer qualify as assistants of the distillers and brewers in promoting the destruction of morality, the increase of poverty, crime, and disease, the multiplication of accidents and the general degeneration of society by inducing their readers to purchase intoxicants.—

Yours, etc.

Arab, Feb. 12, 1923.

J. W. PICKETT.

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