

THE Servant of India

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TOPICS OF THE WEEK

IMMEDIATELY after enunciating its policy, the Dasite party, which hereafter desires to be known by the name of the Swaraj party, entered into a compact with the majority in the Congress to suspend for two months the most vital part of its programme, viz. a pro-Council propaganda. This saves us from the necessity of criticising the programme at length, though we may remark in passing that the party seems at last to have successfully damped down the grave conscientious scruples which its leaders had discovered against non-co-operators taking any other line in the Councils than that of uniform opposition and obstruction of all Government proposals. We had hoped, when it was founded, to begin to see some little daylight in the Congress camp where there was a veritable welter of confusion. Far too many Congressmen had, without any inner agreement in the method of non-co-operation, outwardly conformed to it, with the result that there was an utter moral pauperisation, if not a moral atrophy. The emergence, in these circumstances, of a party avowedly opposed to the fundamental plank of non-co-operation and wedded to Council entry, was welcomed by us in the hope that it would at any rate clear the air and enable political groups to arrange themselves on the basis of principle. But the Dasite party is only making confusion worse confounded. In the name of non-co-operation it intends to pursue a policy of furtive co-operation, thus helping only to obscure still further the issues involved in the rival policies. We are therefore not at all sorry that for two months at least there will be a respite in the polemics of a party which was merely producing heat without imparting any light.

COLONEL WEDGWOOD deserves the sincere thanks of the Indian people for drawing the pointed attention of Parliament to the gross abuse of authority vested in the Governor-General in overriding the Legislative Assembly in the matter of the Princes Protection Bill. He seems to have made a telling speech in refutation of the arguments advanced by the Government of India and made it clear that the measure typifies an attempt on the part of the Government to range themselves on the side of autocracy in its conflict with democracy. Autocracy being on its last legs in British India, the bureaucracy naturally tries to strengthen autocracy in the Indian States, hoping that there it can find a haven of refuge. Too much play was made in the Commons with the help in men and money given by the Princes in war-time. But Col. Wedgwood very successfully pricked this bubble by showing that the credit for both kinds of services really belonged to the States subjects, who had poured out their lives and scanty treasures for the sake of the Empire. As to the Princes, not one had received even a bruise. One Commoner tried to make out that Princes were being regularly blackmailed by journalists, but he forgot that if such was the case the Princes had a complete remedy in law. Extortion is already a penal offence and the Princes can bring all offenders to book. Earl Winterton of course reiterated the stock phrases about treaty obligations and so forth. We have no doubt that Col. Wedgwood on this point showed how pledges for the military protection of Princes against enemies were being distorted to mean pledges for protection against newspaper attacks, on the ground that it is possible to inflict a deeper wound by the pen than by the sword! The rejection of Col. Wedgwood's resolution was of course a foregone conclusion, but we feel hopeful that the publicity it has received will have the result that the Act will practically fall into desuetude.

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A Promising Mass of Movement. THERE is a very large population of several non-Aryan communities numbering several lakhs—Kajje parajs as they are called—in Surat district and the adjoining States of Baroda, Dharampur, Bansda, &c. Endowed with a simplicity of mind and leading a hard and frugal life, they are an easy prey to the enticements of liquor and toddy so plentifully placed in their way both in the

British and Native State areas, especially in the latter. During the last few months a number of "goddesses" have been going round in their midst and exhorting them to abstain from liquor, toddy and all other intoxicants, to abstain from killing animals including goats and fowls which they keep in large numbers, and to be thoroughly swadeshi even in their scanty dress. They are also enjoined to have daily two or three baths and to keep the surroundings of their huts very sanitary. The response of these simple folk to this appeal has been surprisingly good and they have proved true to their word for the last four or five months. They held two open air mass meetings of several thousands on 21st January and 25th February last in Mahuva and Songad talukas of Baroda territory and passed resolutions strictly to observe their vows inspite of the petty harassments and hardships which they have to suffer. The Parsi liquor contractors, who are also owners of large areas of land cultivated through Kaliparaj tenants, are at their wits' end, because their liquor shops as well as their lands are very effectively boycotted. Labour on liquor contractors' lands is forbidden lest they be compelled to tap toddy trees or to deal in liquor. A slow but sure social revolution is thus going on among a primeval community.

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THE "European Association Quarterly Review" of February has a thoughtful article by "E. H." on

Ascendancy and After.

the functions of the Association. The outlook of the article is distinctly refreshing; it has no use for the type of European "who looks upon India as merely a place of a few years' exile during which sufficient money can be accumulated to facilitate an early retirement of ease in England." The writer exhorts his fellow-members to dispel the "appalling amount of ignorance among Englishmen in India on so many problems of every day political life, even where those problems affect industries in which Englishmen are specially interested." May we suggest that this laudable purpose will be best and most speedily achieved when the said Englishman takes his mental gaze off the amount he has got to teach, and scrutinizes for a change what he has got to learn from Indians. Like all ascendancies, the British rule over subject people must be bad for the subject people, but it most certainly is still worse for the British rulers themselves. Home Rule in India therefore should prove of pre-eminent benefit to a fine race of people who, however, would have to be more than human, if they had been able to withstand the subtle poison of racial "prestige". We therefore doubly welcome the article in question and only hope that our European fellow-citizens in India will heed it and agree to come off their pedestals into our common arena. Only then will the day dawn, when—in Mr. Montagu's fine words to the Cambridge Mejliss—"the horrible word 'ascendancy' will disappear and in its place there will be enthroned 'partnership' and 'friendship'."

A PROPOS of the subject of emigration to Malaya the franchise in that country has lately come in for some discussion. Like snakes in Iceland, it is as a matter of fact non-existent. The legislature of the Straits Settlements (a "Colony") has just been *enlarged* and is from this year onwards to consist of 27 members (as against 19 formerly), of whom 14 (formerly 11) are officials and 13 (formerly 8) unofficials. All members are nominated by the Governor (no democratic nonsense there!), except two who are elected by the European Chambers of Commerce of Singapore and Penang respectively. Of the the remaining 11 unofficials, there are to be nominated 3 Chinese, 1 Malay, 1 Eurasian, 1 British Indian "resident in the Colony" and 5 Europeans. Comparing the distribution of un-official seats in this "reformed" (!) Chamber with the last Census Report, we obtain the following interesting figures :

	Population	Representation.
Europeans ...	1%	54%
Eurasians ...	1%	8%
Indians ...	11%	8%
Malays ...	30%	8%
Chinese ...	56%	22%
Others ...	1%	—
Total ...	100%	100%

* * *

IF this is the state of affairs in the colonial part of Malaya, one can already imagine, what it will be like in the adjoining protectorate of the Federated Malay States, where the British Government can so nicely and conveniently shelter itself behind "the Treaty Rights of the Native Rulers". There, they have a Federal Council, consisting of 8 officials ("of pure European descent on both sides"), 4 Malay "Sultans" and 6 unofficials—all of whom are nominated. Of the unofficial members 5 are at present Europeans and one Chinese. In this august assembly the Governor, according to latest advices, has just made an "interesting announcement on the question of Council Reform" (*vide* "Malay Mail" of January 24), to the effect that in future there is to be added to the number of unofficials one more Chinese and one Malay! This is indeed reforming at break-neck speed and one only hopes that the foundations of Malaya will not be sapped by so wild and revolutionary an innovation. Indeed the Governor reminded this Chamber that it was very young, since it was created only in 1909, and that therefore "having regard to its youth, it is of vital importance that no step be taken to alter the representation upon the Federal Council until it is certain beyond all reasonable doubt that the change is in the true interests of the Malays." The British walrus weeping over the little Malay oysters is indeed a sight for the gods: meanwhile we give our readers another little table to ponder over :

	Population.	Representation.
		(Sultans and Unofficials).
Europeans ...	0.4%	42%
Eurasians ...	0.3%	Nil
Malays ...	38.5%	42%
Chinese ...	37.3%	16%
Indians ...	23.0%	Nil
Others ...	0.5%	Nil
Total ...	100%	100%

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

IF Sir Basil Blackett had arrived in India earlier than he did, if he had had more time to acquaint himself with the facts of Indian finance, and if the Inchoape Committee report had been longer in his hands, we believe he would have got over what he so aptly described as his "first depressions", and would not have presented a deficit budget nor proposed so unwelcome a measure of taxation as the enhancement of the salt tax. In his first experience of Indian finance it is natural that he should be shocked and alarmed to find that during five successive years deficits had been allowed to accumulate to the extent of 100 crores, that part of it was covered by the reprehensible device of inflating currency, that unproductive debt had more than doubled itself and that revised estimates of revenue for the current year were considerably lower than the original budget estimates. He naturally feared that India's credit in the financial world might be impaired and India landed in a financial morass like so many European countries, though she had fortunately escaped from such a fate so far. He, therefore, made a cautious estimate of revenue for 1923-24 and proposed new taxation to cover the anticipated deficit of even so small an amount as $4\frac{1}{2}$ crores. No one will treat lightly the considerations urged by the new Finance Member, but we venture to think that if he had given full weight to two very important factors that affect the present budget, he would have found it easily balancing itself without new taxation. We mean the monsoon and the proposals of the Inchoape Committee, the former enhancing the receipts and the latter decreasing the expenditure.

The effect of the monsoon on the Indian budget is so great that it has often been described as a gamble in the monsoon. On it depends not only the land revenue—which is now a concern of the provincial budgets—but also the export and import trade of the country, affecting vitally the Indian budget in receipts under customs and income-tax and to a greater extent under railways. Sir Basil Blackett has expressed satisfaction at the monsoon having been particularly good during the current year but has made no allowance for its favourable effect on revenue, particularly on railway earnings. It is true that the revised estimates for the current year show a great decrease of revenue from railways as well as from customs, income-tax and posts and telegraphs. The total decrease in these items is estimated to be 13'84 crores but retrenchment and better yield under some heads are expected to help the revenue to the extent of 5 crores, making the net decrease from the budget estimate 8'34 crores. The fall in railway income is estimated at 5'86 while that in income-tax and customs is estimated at 3'42 and 3'12 crores respectively. This fall in railway revenue is attributed partly to the prolonged E. L. R. labour strike last summer, partly to the fact that enhanced rates

did not come into operation for some months on several railways and partly to a fall in passenger and goods traffic on account of the enhanced rates. In estimating the income from railways in 1923-24 the Finance Member has made an allowance of 3'5 crores for the first two causes but none for the last. When rates are enhanced the immediate effect is no doubt a reduction of traffic both in passengers and goods. But after a time there is bound to be a general recovery, as there is no other means of transportation to compete with the railways. This is especially the case with regard to passenger traffic. The Finance Member ought to have made some allowance for this expected recovery in traffic. Further the goods traffic, particularly the export of raw materials, is so obviously dependent on a good monsoon that we cannot understand how the Finance Member has thought fit to ignore it in framing his estimate of railway earnings. The trade depression which was serious in the first half of the current year is now rapidly passing away, but Sir Basil Blackett, with what appears to us to be excessive caution, has refused to make any allowance for the expected revival of trade, which revival is bound to be expedited by the good monsoon that we have had. If due weight had been given to these factors the estimate of railway earnings would not have been placed at a lower figure than the original budget estimate for the current year. In other words, instead of being placed at 95'5 crores, it would have been placed at 99'5 crores. But the influence of a good monsoon does not end with railway earnings. The stimulus that it gives to trade is reflected in increased returns under customs and income-tax, the income from which two together could be fairly estimated at about 3 crores more than what Sir Basil has put it at. These remarks, we may say, are not offered without a due appreciation of cautious budget estimates. For in the era of prosperous budgets before 1918 we have been made only too familiar with under-estimates of revenue and over-estimates of expenditure and have learned correctly to appreciate a favourable monsoon.

With regard to expenditure we are glad to acknowledge the wholehearted effort that the Government as a whole have made to keep it down and to give effect, as far as possible, to the recommendations of the Inchoape Committee, who have earned the gratitude of India for the thoroughness and expedition with which they have concluded their arduous labours. If, nevertheless, we are of opinion that there can be a further reduction in the estimated expenditure, it is because the Finance Member has not had sufficient time to explore fully the possibility of giving effect to the recommendations of the Inchoape Committee in greater measure than he has been able to do. Inchoape Committee have recommended a reduction of 19'25 crores, made up of 10'50 in military, 4'50 in railway, 1'37 in posts and telegraphs and 2'88 in the other departments.

budget for 1923-24 the Finance Member has given effect to 8.35 crores and promised to give effect to another 4 crores before the final demands for grants are made. Out of this total of 12.35 crores, 5.75 represents reduction in military expenditure and 6.6 in non-military, including that of railways. This we must consider as not sufficiently satisfactory. As the Incheape Committee have themselves recognised, it no doubt takes some time to give effect to the changes they have recommended and to close down establishments. But surely the 'lag' and 'terminal charges,' as Sir Basil Blackett called them, ought not to amount to nearly 6 crores or 30 p. c. of the recommended retrenchment. These charges are particularly high in the military expenditure. In the budget presented last year 67.75 crores was provided for military expenditure, including Waziristan operations and demobilisation charges. The Incheape Committee have recommended that it should be reduced to about 57 crores in the present budget and the Commander-in-Chief has approved of it. They have recommended that in course of time it should be brought down to 50 crores, but the Commander-in-Chief does not think it feasible. The provision actually made in the present budget is 62 crores. The Finance Member has explained that if it had been possible to give effect from 1st April, 1923, to all those recommendations of the Incheape Committee which the Commander-in-Chief has approved of, then the expenditure would have been 57.75 crores; but 4.25 crores had been added partly on account of 'lag' and 'terminal charges,' and partly on account of Waziristan, the latter being responsible for 1.69 crores. If the Government is prepared quickly to abandon Waziristan and expedite the reduction of establishments, it should be possible to keep the military budget well under 60 crores.

There is less scope for reducing lag in the civil departments. Out of a retrenchment of about 8.75 crores, 6.6 has already been or will be given effect to. More than half of this retrenchment relates to railways, for the better and more economical working of which the Incheape Committee have made the most detailed and far-reaching recommendations. We have every hope they will all be given effect to as early as possible, but some lapse of time is inevitable. The utmost reduction in lag that may be expected by expediting matters in these departments would not exceed a crore.

Thus we think that by estimating revenue more accurately and by carrying out retrenchment with the same vigour as has characterised the Government during the current year, particularly by further reducing military expenditure, the present 4.5 crores deficit can be converted into a surplus of about the same amount. Even otherwise, that is, supposing that at the end of the budget discussions there will remain a deficit of 4 crores, we would suggest an enhancement of income-tax, in place of the proposed salt tax which presses upon the poor man. The

Finance Member has tried in his speech to coax the Madras, U. P. and Punjab representatives into accepting the enhancement in salt tax by holding out the hope that it will bring nearer the day when provincial contributions can be dispensed with. But we have no doubt whatever that they would rather wait than walk into the Finance Member's parlour.

THE AGE OF CONSENT.

NO social reformer, no student of the prostitution problem in particular, but realizes that the only principle on which this question can successfully be dealt with is to make it impossible for any third parties to desire profits from the vices of others. The airy contempt of those, who glibly talk of the fatuity of trying to make people more virtuous by Act of Parliament, is thus a mere red-herring. Nobody expects to be able to abolish extra-marital intercourse by legislation: but every finer human instinct surely revolts at the idea of allowing outsiders to make money out of human degradation. Not only so, but it has been abundantly proved, that once you allow people to make money out of somebody else's vices, you cannot but put a premium on those people stimulating vice, in order to expand their "business". At first reformers tried to get at the prostitute as the source of all evil: but the policy of mere "rescue-homes" was soon found to be merely palliative. It did not take long to discover that there must be plenty of capital invested to defray the obviously high cost of procurers scouring the country and of the transport, keep and exhibition of their victims. The first and radical blow to strike at the whole fabric of prostitution therefore must clearly be aimed at the procurer. The matter, however, must not end there; and a landlord who charges a prostitute ten times the rent he would charge a bank clerk, obviously derives, equally with the procurer, profit out of the vice of others; and one must therefore clearly press for his punishment as well as for that of more direct traffickers in prostitution. In fact, the principle does not stop at prostitution, but applies to every form of vice and we, for one, hope that it will eventually be so extended, as to render it illegal for any individual making money out of another person's drunkenness or gambling or what not.

Seeing however the crass ignorance of the general public on all such questions—due mainly to that false sense of "delicacy" so-called which thinks it genteel to pretend complete ignorance of all unsavoury subjects—the social reformer necessarily must content himself with making a start at one particular point. Such point came before the Legislative Assembly on Feb. 26th when it was called upon to legislate against procurers: and even then, it was not a question of making all procuration illegal, but only that of minor females. Truly, a most modest start; and still more so, when one considers that all the debate re

turned on was merely the age limit; i. e. as to what age was to consent to a "minor" in the case of procuration.

The question arose—as so many humanitarian advances of late have done—out of the action taken by the League of Nations. The suppression of the international traffic in women and children, which had already been the subject of pre-war International Conventions (Paris 1904 and Geneva 1910) was taken up by the League's Assembly at its second session (in 1920) and the international agreement there come to was submitted in due course for ratification by India just a year ago, when the then Home Member moved a resolution to that effect in the Legislative Assembly (Feb. 7th, 1922). The League's proposal dealt with the procuring of women under age (even with their consent); and it fixed that age at 21 years. India's representatives at the time reserved the right of fixing the age limit at 16 on account of that age being already the norm adopted by the Indian Penal Code. But when last year the resolution came up for discussion Mr. Joshi immediately urged that the League's Convention should be adopted as it stood (i. e. with a 21 year age limit), instead of watering it down to an age limit of only 16 years. On that occasion Sir William Vincent, though sympathetic, doubted whether Indian public opinion was quite ripe for the change advocated and suggested the adoption of the resolution as introduced by himself, pending enquiries being made, when a legislative measure based on the result of such enquiries, would be brought in. It is under such circumstances that Mr Joshi's amendment at that time was not adopted; but even so, it was lost by 24 to 32 votes only.

The Government duly kept its undertaking; enquiries were made and a Bill to embody the League's Convention was introduced at the last Simla session, and referred to a Select Committee. This Committee's Report and the Bill, as amended by them, then came up for consideration by the Assembly on the 25th ult. Let it at once be conceded that the Bill does not content itself with merely ratifying the letter of the International Convention, which of course is primarily designed to stop the export and import traffic in women and children across international frontiers. India of course fortunately is not very largely affected by this particular development: mainly because of her size which in this case makes her largely "self-contained." The Bill then goes further and deals with the pest of procurers in India itself—making it an offence punishable with imprisonment up to ten years (to which a fine may be added), (a) to compel or trick any woman into extra-marital sexual intercourse, (b) to induce any woman under age, even with her consent, to engage in such intercourse. Whilst there was (and indeed could be) no difference of opinion as regards (a)—except a futile objection of Mr. B. N. Misra's, eventually withdrawn by him—discussion centred round (b),

the Bill once more fixing the age of consent at only 16.

Seeing what the antecedents of the Bill were, one would naturally conclude from this fact (that the age of consent was left at 16) that Indian opinion had declared itself against any raising of it. It must therefore cause a shock of surprise to find now that the opinions obtained by the Central Government on the whole decidedly favour a higher age of consent. None of the local Governments, except Madras, the United Provinces and Bengal favour a retention of the 16 year limit and even Bengal, as Sir D. P. Sarvadhikary showed, had by no means committed itself by its reply. As regards the House, there never was a moment's doubt as to what its opinion on the subject was, and Mr. Joshi, in moving an amendment to substitute "18" for "16", had it with him right through. For as he cogently showed, the age of consent does not depend on physical maturity, but on maturity of judgment and he defied anybody to say that an Indian woman of 16 was of as mature judgment as a European woman of 21; indeed, since the Indian Majority Act already fixes 18 as the age of majority, it seems to follow naturally that the age of consent should, at any rate not be fixed any lower; and if there are social customs in India which favour an earlier age, they are customs referring to marriage and to marriage alone.

Only Mr. Rangachariar—outside the Treasury benches—was found to dissent. He dared to cite the *devadasi* system still existing in South India as a valid reason for not raising the age of consent and had the audacity of referring to the concubinage into which tender girls are sold by such mothers as an "honourable alliance": and his whole argument came to this, that Mr. Joshi's amendment should be refused, because otherwise, forsooth, these *devadasis* would no longer be able to sell their daughters to the rich Zemindars! Starting on that level, Mr. Rangachariar naturally had nothing but sneers for what he called Mr. Joshi's ideals: a mentality he shared with Sir Malcolm Hailey who deprecated "taking a high moral plane" in approaching the question—and listening to them, one almost had the impression that to take to a high moral plane was more reprehensible than to procure a woman of 18. Mr. Pyari Lal dotted the i's and crossed the t's of Mr. Rangachariar by saying that it was "the established custom" for servants to call in prostitutes for their masters and that to raise the age of consent to 18 was to expose these "faithful" domestics to undue risks. The Home Member took a similar line (!) and hinted at the power for blackmail thereby put into the hands of the police. Well might Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas express his amazement at finding Sir Malcolm Hailey take up the stand he did—ar his amazement indeed cannot but be shared by decent-minded people, who still find themselves unable to see why facilities should be provided for people who would have subordinates

for them some dirty work, which, if it is to be done at all, should surely be left to themselves! Member after member rose—such as Mr. Cotelingam, Sir D. P. Sarvadhikary, Manshi Iswar Saran, Mr. Chaudhari, Dr. Gour, and Mr. Abdur Rahim Khan—proving that Indian public opinion is perfectly ready for an advance in the age of consent; and it was anything but edifying to see the determination with which the Treasury benches defended what was an unenviable position of moral isolation. In fact, Government mobilized all their forces and insisted on a division, which however only sealed their defeat (by 43 to 40 votes), amidst loud cheers from all but their own quarters.

The rest of the consideration of the Bill was altogether uneventful. Mr. Misra indeed moved an amendment, which, if carried, would have stultified the whole measure; and, notwithstanding constant cries of "withdraw" which punctuated his speech from start to finish, he persisted in a defence of a class of people, whom he metaphorically called "butchers," as long as there was a demand for "meat"! In fact the honourable member made as complete an exhibition of himself as is possible for anybody to do: and one can really not suppress a malicious satisfaction at such support being given to the attitude taken up by Sir Malcolm Hailey. One hopes he relished it! The Home Member indeed seemed to take his defeat badly; and when the consideration of the Bill was finished, he got up and, without any of that urbanity and suavity which otherwise are so characteristic of him, rather acidly informed the House, "I do not move that the Bill as amended be passed."

Since the position so gallantly won by the carrying of Mr. Joshi's amendment now cannot be abandoned, one hopes that the postponement of the Bill's passage portends a desire of—or the necessarily laid upon?—Government to bring the parallel provisions in other sections of the Penal Code up to the new age level established by the Assembly. This indeed would be a splendid advance in social reform, all the more welcome, because so much overdue: but if the recent debate has shown anything, it has shown that the greatest retardatory factor today is a Government which never dares to take a lead in such matters—just because it is still so largely foreign and not responsible to the Legislature. February 25th was a sorry day indeed for Government and incidentally offers one of the most powerful arguments that if the country's moral advancement is to be saved, Swaraj is indispensable. We hope sincerely that the lesson will not be lost and that the Assembly will pile up many more such arguments and boldly coming out as the champion of social as well as political emancipation.

THE DELHI SESSION.

(FROM OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.)

DELHI, 3rd MARCH.

CR. PR. CODE BILL.

THE Assembly began the week by uttering tender farewells to an old friend, to wit the Criminal Procedure Code Amendment Bill, which had been abiding in the bosom of the House for six solid weeks and now at last finally passed out. If I understood Mr. K. Ahmed aright, this gentleman even lamented the opportunities for further consideration which had been lost through members absenting themselves one afternoon to attend the National Conference: obviously, some people can never have too much of a good thing! Sir Malcolm Hailey did the final bowing out of the guest, but deprecated the making of merely complimentary speeches. In the evening of the same day, Monday, the President of the Assembly took the chair at a crowded public meeting held at S. Stephen's College, to pave the way for the formation of an Indian League of Nations Union. Sir Frederick Whyte made an introductory speech on the idea of the League of Nations and was followed by Mr. Sastri, who effectively replied to the various criticisms levelled at the League, and whose forceful exposition was listened to with evident delight. A most successful and enthusiastic meeting was brought to a close by a speech of Sir Basil Blackett's, who described some of the actual achievements of the League, more particularly the financial saving of Austria.

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WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION.

Tuesday began with another old friend, the Workmen's Compensation Bill, which had come back from the Elder Statesmen, decorated by them with ten amendments of which I have already given an account. The indefatigable—where amendments are concerned—Mr. Agnihotri indeed had two more amendments *in petto*, but a heartless House cruelly slew the little ones. The Bill, as amended and sent back by the Council of State, was then finally passed: but its passing was once more made an occasion for a last wail on the provision of compensation in the case of a deceased workman who had failed to offer himself for medical examination to the employer's doctor. The wail in question—though with a good deal of soft pedalling—was voiced by Mr. Lindsay who asked that at least the Commissioners should be instructed to be very circumspect when applied to under this clause: a request, which Mr. Rangachariar strongly resented. Sir M. Smith pointed out that the Commissioners were going to be officers of ripe judicial experience whose discretion could be trusted; and Mr. Innes, that the *onus probandi* would at every point be on the dependents making the claim. The Commerce Member finally gave an undertaking that the working of the clause would be carefully watched and that if the clause was found to open the door to fraud, he would subsequently bring

in a further amending bill. With that, the last sounds of discord and dissent died away and the legislative curtain came peacefully down on the measure. Which reminds me that I have not yet chronicled the final passing (notwithstanding its attempted 29 amendments) of the Official Secrets Bill, nor of the Cotton Cess Bill: but I really must hurry on to the *pièce de resistance* of the week—the Railway Debate.

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THE RAILWAY DEBATE.

Technically the Assembly met, further to discuss a resolution moved by Maulvi Miyan Asjad Ullah last September. Three weeks ago, as you will remember, the scheduled discussion was again postponed to give the Secretary of State an opportunity for interference: though, whether or not he did employ the interval in that sense, was not made clear by Tuesday's debate. No less than fourteen alternatives of the original resolution (euphemistically called amendments) were before the House. The original, curiously worded, resolution had asked that India be given "the full benefit of State ownership of Indian Railways": the President now selected Mr. Neogy's as the principal amendment ("that the undertakings of guaranteed railway companies be entrusted, as the contracts fell in, to the direct management of the State"), and as amendments of that amendment two others—that of Dr. Gour and of Sir C. Rhodes. The former wished to restrict Mr. Neogy's proposal to the E. I. R. and G. I. P. contracts: the latter pleaded for the continuation of the *status quo* for another five years. Thus skilfully guided into manageable channels, the debate proceeded: and though all the *pros* and *cons* of the problem have already been so long and minutely canvassed, the discussion could not but be one of great interest. On the one hand there were the champions of a system which would hand over the Indian Railways to "indigenous" companies with a rupee capital and a rupee board of directors; on the other those, who, ringing the rupee, had pronounced it to be spurious and therefore insisted on the Government of India taking over the lines.

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NATIONALIZING PUBLIC UTILITIES.

To me the main interest was of a psychological nature: for though the occasion was clearly one for the taking of sides on the question of nationalizing public utilities, that principle was sedulously shirked by all speakers. Mr. Neogy came nearest to any attempt of espousing State management on abstract lines: but he also immediately added that his motion was far from being purely academic. But Dr. Gour set the keynote, when he brushed aside—with much apparent gusto—any question of principle and candidly admitted that there was but a choice between two evils; that State management to him was merely a last resort into which he was driven, to avoid a continuation of the exploitation of India by foreign capitalists. Sir C. Rhodes therefore was

running in open doors when he sagely remarked that rationalism did not spell nationalization; and the lurid pictures drawn of the incompetence, not to say imbecility, of officialdom in commercial undertakings were obviously but sermons to the converted. The Chairman of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce therefore was more to the point when he tried to make the House's flesh creep by a vision of German steel beating Jamshedpur steel in India itself, owing to the high freight rates on Indian State Railways which would be necessitated by the ineptitude of State management: but somehow, the bogey failed to frighten. It was at this point that Mr. Innes got up to enunciate the policy Government intended to adopt. His speech was a perfect masterpiece of zig-zag and one never knew right to the end of his speech on which side of the hedge he was going to come down. He quite agreed with Dr. Gour that it was needless to look far ahead. He quite agreed that the day of guaranteed companies with London Boards was past. He quite agreed that Indian opinion was solid for State management. Zig.

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A SERIES OF ZIG-ZAGS.

But with the sudden jerk of an "On the other hand" one found oneself on the zag. Efficiency and economy were the monopoly of private enterprise. Government officials were tied up in red tape. State management was hopeless. Another jerk, and zig again: Indian State Railways had not proved less enterprising nor less efficient than those under company management. Government owned the railways, it therefore had the responsibility of that ownership and must control. Sir C. Rhodes suggested delay of five years would only put a premium on the companies getting every pie out of their systems, whilst they could. Jerk. Zag. Nowhere, never, had railway management under democratic control led to anything, but utter failure. Zig. The Government had after all decided to take over the G. I. P. and E. I. R., when their contracts fell in. (Loud cheers.) Zag. But only for the purpose of re-grouping them nicely, together with the O. & R., and then handing them over to new rupee companies. (Loud groans.) He therefore would accept Dr. Gour's amendment. Zig. But he would add the rider "that efforts should be continued to concert measures with the object of handing over one or other of the two railways after such grouping as may be necessary to an indigenous company calculated to give India the benefits of real company management." Zag. Unfortunately I never could stand swings or see-saws and I can only say that the end of this performance found me a perfect wreck. The first tonic administered was the defeat of Sir C. Rhodes' amendment, which was quite unceremoniously thrown out. With this out of the way, the issue for the House was, whether or not to follow Mr. Innes's rider and get up on to the top of the nice hedge, whither the Commerce Member was beckoning them. Sir M. Webb asked whether members really

wanted to get a million more bureaucrats; Mr. Willson bewailed the paucity (1) of business interests in the House; Capt. Sasson thought the question not one for this moribund legislature to decide.

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DEMOCRACY AND NATIONALIZATION.

After some contemplative chewing of the cud by Sir H. Stanyon, Mr. Kamat let in a breath of fresh air when he asked Government either to commit itself to one of the two courses, or else to leave the subject to the House; and Mr. Seshagiri Ayyar, when he declared that he supported Dr. Gour, but not for the reasons given by him. The leader of the Democratic Party indeed alone took the line that the condemnation of State management was not founded on facts. He quoted telling figures as to the brilliant success of the German State Railways before the war; he showed that the illustrations taken from other countries referred exclusively to the chaos of war and post-war years; and he pointedly asked whether the Eastern Bengal Railway was better or worse as a State line, than it had been previously? Mr. Willson had previously let the cat out of the bag when he said that nationalization started from the point of view of the employee: i.e. thought in terms of human beings instead of in those of rupees, annas and pies. It was therefore as regrettable as it was strange that throughout that long debate the one member who officially represents labour interests was quite unable to catch the President's eye. However so it was, and after a final appeal from Sir Malcolm Hailey, Mr. Innes's rider was put to the vote and lost by a smashing 56 to 42—which must be one of the largest divisions in the history of the House. There was naturally no little exultation and Dr. Gour's resolution thereupon was carried as a matter of course. Thus ended a memorable day in the Legislative Assembly. Yet the fact remains that the arguments adduced by the victors in proving the compatibility of Democracy with Nationalization were few and far between, though this was the real point at issue. Can it have been, one wonders, because, in order to prove the compatibility of democracy with nationalization, one must exhibit the incompatibility of nationalization with plutocracy?

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A SHIFTY DEBTOR.

I am afraid, I have left myself little space in which to refer to the Council of State, which for two days was made the battle-ground of vested interests. On Tuesday the Council threw out Mr. Kale's Bill, dealing with the vested interests of hereditary Hindu priests—on which subject Sir Leslie Miller led the defence by a rigid insistence on the rights of property. To this eminent Victorian these rights of course are absolute and the modern idea, that property cannot be divorced from function, is utterly foreign. The day following, the vested rights in question were those of Europeans in the services. Lala Ram Saran Das had a resolution on

Railway Traffic Inspectors and Mr. Sastri on the appointment as far as possible of at least one Indian as Secretary, Joint Secretary or Deputy Secretary to every Secretariat of the Central Government, in order to give Indians an insight into the larger problems of Imperial administration and policy. The latter resolution obviously was merely an application of the idea of progressively Indianizing the services—a principle proclaimed and conceded again and again. Yet when Indians present the Promissory Note, asking for even the smallest payment on account, they are met by Government not only with the further promises, peculiar to all shifty debtors, but by a fury of wrath at the idea that in future a European's prospects should be cut across for no better reason, than that he happens to be a European! The Council's reply was an adverse vote of 19 to 13 against the Government, and the iron of racial discrimination must have entered for the first time the soul of a good many of the unlucky thirteen

CONTINENTAL LETTER.

BRESLAU, 31st JANUARY.

ON the 5th of October, 1914, the Russian ambassador in France M. Iswolsky sent a telegram to the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sasanow, in which the words occurred: "The demands and wishes of France have remained what they were—to annihilate the political and economic power of Germany." Now during the first months of the world-war the waves of national fanaticism in all countries ran rather high, and many utterances were made in this period which would have been impossible at any other time and served more as an outlet for the feeling of the speaker than as a serious statement of a set purpose. What M. Iswolsky had heard in France, however, was more than the expression of a passing feeling of exasperation. This became clear at the negotiations during the armistice, when the whole energy of Mr. Lloyd George and President Wilson were wanted to resist the French plans as to the annexation of the left border of the Rhine. But the victory of the Anglo-Saxon thesis was only a fictitious one, for the Treaty allowed France to carry on the war against Germany on her own responsibility. It was exactly as M. Clemenceau triumphantly declared: "This peace is only a continuation of the war with different means." The unrealisable demands against Germany which the Treaty had created enable France to keep her neighbour under a constant political pressure which was to be so strong that the question might be raised if Germany was in reality still a sovereign state. One of the most important aims which was to be reached by France in these circumstances was to be the capitalist penetration of the Rhenish Westphalian coal-district. The unfortunate country on the Saar, which according to the Treaty has been separated from Germany for fifteen years and has been put under the nominal supervision of the Council of the

League of Nations gives an example of the way in which this penetration can be performed. Here the great industrial works were simply asked to deliver up sixty per cent of their shares to French capitalists. If they declined they had to suffer from so many vexatious tricks by the authorities that nothing was left to them than to stop operations. As regards the Ruhr district, the "Comité des Forges" is the driving force of French politics. It would not be at all impossible for this capitalist trust to get the German 'entrepreneurs' to combine with them, for as everybody knows, capitalism is wonderfully unprejudiced as to national feelings as soon as profit is likely to be affected. But that is not what the "Comité des Forges" wants, for an agreement would still imply a certain independence of German capitalism. The Comité wants to get things cheaper. For this purpose it mobilises a great part of the French army. Its intention is to take hold of the Westphalian coal. In possession of it, it would be able to compete successfully with England and America in all markets of the world. For Upper Silesia being given away to the Poles, no rivalry for it on the continent could possibly arise. Another great aim of French politics, is the Rhenish Westphalian buffer-state. In this respect too the ambition of France shows a remarkable increase. At a time when she was in comparison with Central Europe a densely inhabited country with advanced forms of centralised administration and superior military organisation, the desire of her rulers did not go farther than the annexation of the German districts on the left border of the Rhine. Now when the French population is decreasing from year to year and numbers less than two-thirds of the population of her neighbour, she is not content with the left border of the Rhine but demands the Ruhr district into the bargain. In order to reach this aim the Reparation Commission has had to allege a wilful neglect on the side of Germany as to her duties of fulfilment, a certain small amount of the demanded coal and wood being left unsupplied. In vain the German government tried to show its good faith by offering to have coal and wood supplied from abroad. In vain Mr. Bradbury, the English representative on the Reparation Committee, entered his protest. The military invasion was decided upon.

It is true, that the whole enterprise went by a new name. While an army whose exact number is not given but which is estimated by many observers at from two to three hundred thousand soldiers marched through the towns of Essen, Dortmund, Gelsenkirchen, and other places of the Ruhr district, while tanks, machine guns and cannons shook the pavement of the peaceful Westphalian towns, M. Poincaré told the astonished world that no military occupation was intended but only the protection of a handful of engineers who were being sent into the Ruhr district to look after the delivery of the right amount of coal.

The Westphalian population is evidently peaceful, the miners especially are mostly anti-

militarists. They work hard and the desperate conditions of life in after-war Germany make their existence anything but easy. They know of no sort of chauvinism and besides there is a strong antagonism between them and the employers who belong to the parties that represent the chauvinist point of view. But it was a great mistake of the French Government to believe that for these reasons it would be possible to tend the miners like sheep into the French pen. For whatever their political creed may be, still they feel themselves to be Germans, and the militarism which they have got rid of in their own country appears to them not more amiable when it puts on the uniform of a foreign nation. Up to the day of the invasion they had been patiently working to supply their neighbour with reparation coal; every ten minutes a coal train had been despatched to France, the whole day long from the Ruhr district. The news that coal abounds in France to such an extent that one does not know what to do with it—in the Saar district mines the working hours have been shortened for this reason—while in Germany English coal must be imported and a warmed room begins to belong to the luxuries of life for whole classes of the population, did not slacken their zeal. But their goodwill naturally received a serious shock by the brutal military measure to which they saw themselves exposed. The German government, which has no weapons left except that of passive resistance, sent word that the coal trains were to be despatched no longer. The French generals, who felt themselves as conquerors although no shot had been fired, issued the order that the trains should be run as usual. Now a period of passive resistance set in, which means an entirely new stage in the Franco-German war. Passive resistance, the weapon of the weak has up to now been practically unknown in Germany. There could not possibly be found a field where it might be better practised than the Ruhr district, which is the most densely populated area of Europe, a kind of labyrinth as to railways, telephone, and other means of communication. It wants years to be quite at home here even for technical experts. Foreign occupation authorities depend on the goodwill of those that know the locality like nowhere else in the world. Now if there was any goodwill here towards the foreign invader, which is very much to be doubted, it was instantly annihilated by the harsh and brutal measures of the military. The mine-owners were taken prisoners, and dragged to Mainz, where they were put before a court-martial and condemned to heavy fines. Their return voyage was a triumphal procession, enormous crowds of enthusiastic people thronging to every station their train passed, offering cheers and flowers and singing the forbidden national songs. The evident incapability of the invaders to get the better of the population serves to strengthen their resolution. Wherever a French word sounded through the telephone, the connec-

tion was instantly interrupted, the trains which were entered by French soldiers were deserted by the locomotive drivers, the public and private banks whose directors were imprisoned shut their doors at once, endeavours to take the train service in hand on the side of the military invaders proved abortive, the system of switch-stands and shifting of the points being so complicated in this district that the management of the switches by strangers caused instant derailments. This state of affairs proving an extraordinary disappointment to the invaders, the brutality of their steps increased. At the present moment they seem to have decided principally upon two measures: firstly, to block the Ruhr district and the Rhine land hermetically from the rest of Germany by military forces, and secondly, to curb the spirit of the population by a methodical disorganisation and ruining of all forms of administrative, economic, and political order. This they try to reach by the banishment of all leading officials, of whom many hundreds already—some of them very old and even sick people—have had to leave with their families the country of their fathers at a few hours' notice.

The exasperation created in this way in Germany is of course tremendous. Germany has no weapon left, except moral ones, and in no period of history have moral weapons proved more blunt and edgeless than at present. The mark falls with an incredible velocity and the misery increases accordingly. In vain public hope in this country goes out to America and England. America has, as a sign of protest, recalled the rest of the troops she had on the Rhine, but this gesture was weak and inefficient, so much so indeed that the French press has been able to intercept its reason to the French public altogether; the effect has only been, to make things worse for Germany as the good-natured and truly neutral American soldiers were replaced by spiteful French ones. The attitude of the British government too, which seems to follow the 'wait and see' principle, has created deep disappointment in Germany. According to German opinion, England, in helping to disarm Germany and in making it absolutely defenceless, has assumed the duty to protect it against military violence from its neighbours. That it should look on and not even enter a protest when Germany is being maimed and brutalised, creates the greatest bitterness in Central Europe. The attitude of Poland, on the other hand, proves less threatening than was at first expected. It seems that the chauvinist intoxication from which Poland suffered since 1918 has given way to a more sober conception of things. The desire for annexation seems to have reached its climax. The nation has become conscious of the tremendous financial and economic difficulties it lives in, and the obvious defencelessness of Germany does not provoke her to risk imperialist adventures as it would have two years ago. The cry for bread is stronger now

than the cry for the neighbours' territories. Only Lithuania has thought the moment fit for one of those violations of international treaties which we have become accustomed to in the glorious period since the Versailles treaty: she has suddenly taken hold of the German town of Memel, which, according to the Versailles treaty was to form a territory of its own, whose future destiny was to be decided by the League of Nations Council. The only state that has dared to enter a protest against the French invasion is Soviet Russia. Moscow has arranged great public demonstrations against the occupation of the Ruhr district, and issued manifestoes to the proletariat of the whole world. There are two souls in the breast of sovietism. To the one the French measures cannot be unwelcome, for the intention of France is to dissolve Germany into her different units. In taking a Rhenish-Westphalian buffer state which she is going to create under her wings, she hopes to reduce the rest of Germany to economic impotence and beggarly conditions, with the exception perhaps of Bavaria, which she hopes to separate definitely from Germany. This scheme of course means paving the way to Bolshevism in Germany. So far the French militarists would play into the hands of the Soviet people; but on the other hand the political situation of Russia is very much weakened by the intended destruction of Germany. Russia considers the occupation of the Ruhr as a clever move of the capitalist powers of the West, which for her from a political point of view has an importance not quite dissimilar to their entrance into the Black Sea and the difficulties she finds on her southern frontier. Moreover the struggle on the Ruhr has developed into a fight between militarism and Labour. If the military wins the result would react upon the situation of Labour all over Europe. That is why Labour organisations from all parts of the world have expressed their sympathy with the passive resisters on the Ruhr. They need indeed sympathy, for their struggle is very hard. Up to now, little bloodshed has occurred, owing to the marvellous self-control of a highly civilised population. But it is very doubtful if this state of things will be kept up until these lines go into print. The French seem to be bent on reaching by hunger what they cannot reach by force, and hunger is a bad adviser. And Europe looks on.

LEVIN L. SCHÜCKING.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE AGRICULTURIST AND PROTECTION. TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—The Government of India has accepted the principle of protection, but hedges round the application of it by many conditions. It may be that these conditions are dictated more by a regard to the interests of British capitalists than to Indian interests. The objections raised by European merchants also may proceed from the same source: that protection will, by enhancing prices, impoverish those who are already poor, and, by creating trusts, pools and combines,

enrich those who are already rich. We are, however, not concerned here to canvass the motives of those who make protests, but only to find out if there is a substratum of truth in their objections. Most decidedly there is an element of truth in them.

The unsuspecting masses should know that this is not an imaginary danger, for there is not much to choose between an Indian and a non-Indian capitalist. The way in which the Indian millowner declared over 200 p. c. dividend at a time when his industry was enjoying virtual protection—outside supplies being inadequate—leaves no doubt that he will repeat the same thing when a real protective tariff wall has been erected. We have also to take note of the fact that the foreign capitalist will henceforth find it advantageous to transfer his business-stock to India to compete with us on the spot to avoid the tariff. The indecent haste with which mineral rights and mining leases are being acquired by the foreign capitalist, and the by-no-means economic methods of exploitation employed, ought to give us a foretaste of the regime of unrestricted protection.

It may be said that the country must be prepared for some such sacrifice, if we really want to industrialise India. It may also be suggested that the consumer can get some relief by the Government taxing surplus profits and thus removing iniquities of monopolising markets and putting up prices. But what about the foreign concerns? Should we not insist on the Government passing a law demanding an Indian domicile for all such foreign concerns with at least half their shares and substantial direction in the hands of the children of the soil? Unless this is done, protection or no protection—industries under Indian control will never flourish.

Will the legislators do it? Perhaps not. Because both the present Government and the legislators are capitalist bodies. Government wants free trade so that Britain's supply of raw material may be secure for ever, and the Indian capitalist wants protection so that he might exploit the agriculturist instead. Neither wants the agriculturist to be economically independent. India is an agricultural country and will ever remain so. No industrialist can, even in his wildest dreams, think of changing this characteristic of India and yet no one really wants the cottage industries to develop, without which there is no hope for the agriculturist. The way in which the millowners combine to put up prices of yarn to oust the cottage weaver ought to be an eye-opener. Why did not the Assembly accept Mr. Joshi's amendment that the financial burden resulting from protection should fall upon people in proportion to their capacity to bear it? The answer is not far to seek: it could not have been accepted by the capitalist, either Indian or non-Indian, and the legislatures throughout are dominated by this class.

Make Indians fiscally free, have recourse to protective tariff in order to industrialise the country by Indian capital and under Indian management, but let not the agitation stop there. Let the country agitate and agitate to make the voice of the people, and not of the capitalists only, supreme in the legislatures of the land, and through them let us, in the words of Sir John Simon, "control private enterprise in the interest of the masses and not of the classes." Then and then only can the nation prosper; otherwise there is not much to choose between a brown and a white bureaucrat.—Yours, etc.,
R. K. J.

TREATMENT FOR LEPROSY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR—In the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council on the 21st instant a resolution was moved by Babu Devaki Prasad Sinha proposing that leper dispensaries be established in the important towns of the province.

In replying to the resolution, the Secretary in the Department of Public Health stated that in the opinion of the Inspector General of Civil Hospitals it was not desirable to establish small hospitals for the treatment of the disease, and

that better results would be obtained if the lepers were treated in segregation camps and mission hospitals.

From an academic point of view this may be correct, but the fact remains that according to the census returns, in which it is notorious that the number of lepers is greatly underestimated, there are in the province 16,935 lepers, of whom 1436 are in institutions of the nature referred to. The remainder apparently are receiving no treatment at all.

There appears to be a certain amount of misconception both on the part of the proposer of the resolution and of the Inspector General of Civil Hospitals. The greatest authority on leprosy at present is probably Sir Leonard Rodgers, and the following are extracts from a speech of his in a discussion at the East Indian Association on "Leprosy in India":—

"The problem of leprosy in India is indeed one of the greatest difficulty and magnitude. Dr. Muir's recent estimate of from one-half to one million lepers in India is partly based on enquiries in Calcutta showing that only two out of thirty lepers, many being well marked cases, had been returned as such in the census, and my own opinion is that there cannot be less than half a million as the numerous early cases are certainly not recorded in the returns, while we know that many of them are infective on account of their nasal discharges containing many lepra bacilli. Segregation measures have undoubtedly proved of great value in reducing leprosy in several countries in which they have been properly carried out, but the long incubation period of the disease, probably averaging from six to eight years, and the difficulty of recognizing the earlier, but still infective, stages of the disease, greatly increase the difficulties of its successful application, for the early unisolated cases help materially to keep up the infection, while it is only natural that such patients should hide their trouble as long as possible. For this reason the leper asylums in India are very largely occupied by advanced cases, some of which, especially the anasthetic ones, are by no means the most dangerous as regards infective power. It is here that the recent advances in obtaining a much more effective treatment of leprosy should prove of the greatest service in the near future, for how greatly will the problems be simplified when the early infective cases, instead of having every inducement to hide their disease and keep out of the asylums as long as possible, learn that the earlier they go to them the better their chances of being so effectively treated that they will lose their infective powers and be able to return to their homes under a system of regular inspection to ascertain if they are remaining well, and that is the hope we can now confidently hold out to them.

* * * * *

American workers in Honolulu modified my method slightly by making ethyl esters instead of sodium salts, which we had also made in Calcutta, and these have the advantage that they are effective by the simpler subcutaneous or intramuscular methods, and Dr. Muir, whom I was fortunate enough to persuade to continue my researches in the Calcutta School of Tropical Medicine, when I left India, is now using this preparation in an almost painless mixture on a large scale. As 100 injections can be given in an hour, and it is antiseptic, the method can now be easily carried out in all leper asylums as well as in any hospital, and early cases will thus be able to get the improved treatment without difficulty."

In the second of the passages above quoted, it will be seen that Sir Leonard Rodgers mentions that the treatment can be given in any hospital, as well as in a leper asylum.

While it would no doubt be highly desirable that leper dispensaries should be established as widely as possible throughout the province, if financial or other difficulties stand in the way of this, it should be understood that this is not absolutely necessary, and similar results can be obtained by issuing a supply of medicines to all hospitals and dispensaries in charge of Assistant Surgeons, supplying them with literature on the subject, and directing them to

treat cases of leprosy as they would those of any other disease the patients suffering from which go to the hospital for treatment. Experience shows that this can easily be done, and all that is required is the extension of the system. In very large centres like Patna itself, the maintenance of a separate leper dispensary is desirable, but in ordinary mofussil towns the work can be carried on as part of the ordinary hospital routine, provided the Assistant Surgeon is keen on his profession, and does not shrink from unpleasant or possibly somewhat dangerous work. These risks are taken as a matter of course in connection with other diseases, and now that leprosy has become amenable to treatment, there is no reason why they should not be taken with regard to it also. However in order to overcome the traditional feeling of repugnance in regard to this disease, it might perhaps be desirable to give an extra allowance to Assistant Surgeons who display special interest in the work.

As compared with the course which appears to find favour at present, that proposed possesses the following advantages:—

In order to maintain leper asylums, large sums would have to be granted, the existing asylums having little or no spare accommodation, whereas only a small sum is required for the upkeep of a leper dispensary and nothing but the cost of the medicines for giving treatment at a hospital. The human element should also be taken into consideration. Many persons belonging to the well-to-do classes are stricken with this terrible disease, and very naturally they shrink from the thought of entering any asylum, although, as has been abundantly proved, they are most anxious to obtain treatment. Dr. P. C. Roy, Superintendent of the Sanitary School, Gulzarbagh, has received letters on the subject from the Government of Assam, high officials in Nepal, the Municipality of Karachi, and from other distant places, and a patient has come from Calcutta and is staying at Gulzarbagh in order to obtain the treatment.

To put it briefly, the question is this. There are at least 15,499 lepers in the province who are not receiving treatment, and who are a source of great danger to the public. Are they to be left in helpless misery, and the cure withheld from them, or is it to be made available to all, so far as is possible, in the manner in which they can most easily take advantage of it? There appears to be only one reply possible.—Yours, etc.

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