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Editor : S. G. VAZE.

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## TOPICS OF THE WEEK

**Ahmedabad Strikes.** THERE is no prospect of an early settlement of the Ahmedabad mill strike. The earnest efforts of Mr. C. F. Andrews at conciliation have failed and he has left the place. Ahmedabad labour is reputed to be the best organised in India and so far it has lived up to its reputation. The Labour Union has taken steps to prevent violence on the part of labour by organising volunteers to control their movements and particularly to keep them away from the lure of drink. A large proportion have temporarily gone to villages. Meanwhile the mill-owners, pleading hard times and depression in trade, have nevertheless been declaring 50 per cent. and even higher dividends. The strike is quite welcome to them because they have large stocks on hand. But, as has been pointed out, it is their own fault that they have such large unsold stocks. In the pre-war period they were satisfied with a profit of  $\frac{1}{4}$  anna and  $\frac{1}{2}$  anna respectively per lb. of yarn and cloth. During the war they raised it to 8 annas and now want to maintain it at that level. If they lower the prices sufficiently the stocks will be soon sold and production can go on unchecked. Instead they have restricted output by creating strikes. It may well enough suit the mill-owners but certainly does not suit society at large. The only remedy is for Government to institute compulsory arbitration, which we respectfully urge should be speedily done.

**A Storm of Protest.** LORD READING'S action in certifying the salt tax is being vigorously condemned by Indian public bodies of various interests, thus showing that among Indians at least there is a perfect unanimity on this point. And we may say here that public opinion is the more exasperated by the farrago of fallacious arguments contained in the Governor-General's explanatory

memorandum, not the least provocative among these being the one that since 1st March the enhanced salt collections have been in progress without any "visible discontent" on the part of the people. We congratulate Sir. Montagu Webb on the stand taken by him and if Parliament does not stand by public opinion thus solidly and unambiguously expressed, it will afford Indians a forcible reminder of the fact that when the autocracy left intact in the Government of India chooses to put out its mailed fist, no appeal to Parliament can be of any avail. No one was of course under a delusion on this point, but the actual experience of the exercise of arbitrary authority naturally goes farther than an intellectual perception of it. And however depressing may be the immediate effects of this experience, we feel certain that it will only add volume and strength to the movement for the elimination of autocracy, and this is all to the good. The more unjustified the certification may be, the nearer comes the end of autocracy by its own action.

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**The Non-co-operator's Remedy?** THAT, however, is for the future, though we hope and trust for the near future. In the meanwhile we may note the reaction which this ( aptly described ) certificated autocracy is having on party politics in this country. The immediate result, of course, is to bring into rather cheap ridicule those who, in the face of popular opposition, have taken upon themselves to work the reformed constitution. Such jibes, however, prove ineffective as they lead nowhither. If Constitutionlists seem unable to prevent an addition to the burden on the poor, so do non-co-operators. The latter indeed assume a lordly indifference to all bureaucratic proceedings, and profess to deal—in their own good time—a fatal blow to the bureaucracy itself. It may be that this fell stroke which is to make short work of all autocracy is timed to come very soon, but for the present the hardships of the people are accumulating and the non-co-operator is apparently powerless to prevent them. Nor is he prepared immediately to embark on civil obedience, the objective of all his activities. Thus having himself no answer to give to the action of the Viceroy, his taunt levelled at the Constitutionlists is void of a sense of reality, and in fact recoils on his own head.

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**And the Dasite Party's?** THE Das-Nehru party, however, seems the most anxious to make party capital out of the salt tax

*debacle*, but is really the least in a position to do so. The constitution, however defective and even insubstantial it may have proved in actual practice, the Dasite is not prepared to boycott, and he does not even profess to do any better than the Legislative Assembly has done. At one time he seemed to be in a rage to subvert the constitution by creating perpetual deadlocks and went the length of declaring that it ill consorts with his conscience to do anything else in the Councils. Now, however, he has put his conscience fairly to sleep and does not object to lending his support to good measures, reserving his opposition only for measures which he considers to be bad—a course we should think not substantially different from that of the constitutionalists. But whatever modifications the Dasite policy may have undergone, this party never dreamed of doing anything more, in the case of such an unjust impost as the salt tax, than to throw it out, as the Assembly has actually done. Any plea, therefore, on the part of this group that if it were in the Assembly in full force to fight the exactions of Government such a constitutional crisis would never have occurred, cannot go down with anyone, as it is the avowed aim of that group, taken at its strongest, to create such crises. While with the Dasite party, however, that is only a programme for the future, the sitting members have actually carried out what that party holds out as a promise. And the voter, even in India, is not a fool to exchange one who has done a thing for another who merely promises to do it. If therefore the constitutionalist appears for the moment unable to have an effective counterblast to the Viceroy's action, the rival parties are in no better position, and for our part we do not at all regret that the non-co-operator of either designation refuses by this crisis to be stampeded into a violent but futile course—the Gandhi-ite into civil disobedience and the Dasite into wholesale obstruction—for an intensive and sustained but well-directed agitation cannot but secure the end of autocracy, the end and aim of all parties alike.

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**Malabar Police.** THE conduct of the police in Malabar during the martial law regime was recently discussed at a largely and influentially attended public meeting in Madras, the principal speakers being Messrs. Manjeri Rama Aiyar of Calicut and C. R. Reddi, M. L. C. of Madras. We believe this meeting was called in order to show that the public were not satisfied with the Government's denial of the allegations of police misconduct made by responsible public men like Mr. Rama Aiyar who knew intimately the state of things in Malabar in those days, and to mark their confidence in them despite the slighting way in which Mr. Koopp had spoken of them. The allegations were supported by judicial judgments and the fact that some officers and constables are now being punished on departmental enquiry shows the utter utility of the official denial. The *Times of India*, which was obliged to take

editorial note of this meeting for the only reason that the A. P. I. telegram about it was allowed to appear in its columns, sees in Mr. Rama Aiyar's 'beneath contempt' speech 'an effort now to regain the worthless favour' of those whom he displeased by signing the Moplah train tragedy report. Unfortunately for the *Times of India*, Mr. Rama Aiyar's attack on the police was delivered nearly a year ago, in fact soon after martial law was withdrawn. Those who know Messrs. Rama Aiyar and Reddi will smile at the amusing ignorance and superciliousness of our contemporary.

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**Academic Freedom.** THE correspondence now published between Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee and Lord Lytton relating to the Calcutta University, places the latter in a most unfavourable light. All that Lord Lytton is able to bring home to the late Vice-Chancellor is that he opposed the University Bill himself and influenced others like Sir Michael Sadler to take the same view. It appears to us that there is nothing in this to which any exception could be taken, and if the Vice-Chancellor's post can be retained only on a promise of supporting the Government through thick and thin, there is an end to all academic independence, which Sir Ashutosh has been maintaining in so exemplary a fashion. But the manner of Lord Lytton's letter appears even more objectionable than its subject matter, and we must confess that it came to us with a shock of surprise. One cannot help feeling on perusing the correspondence, which does not err on either side by over-politeness, that there is more behind it than meets the eye. On the issue which it presents to the public, however, we have no doubt that every lover of education will range himself emphatically on the side of university freedom.

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**Certification in Madras.** IN an interesting speech which Lord Willingdon made in proroguing the last session of the Madras Legislative Council, he expressed satisfaction at the amount of legislative work that had been got through during the last two years and at the spirit of co-operation that had prevailed between the two sections of his Government, announced the re-introduction in a modified form of the Irrigation Bill over the defeat of which Sir K. Srinivasa Aiyangar resigned his membership of the Executive Council, and appealed to the members to create public opinion in the country in favour of labour legislation intended to secure for labourers in Madras at least as good conditions of life as had been obtained by the Assembly for emigrant labour at the hands of the colonies. He explained, further, his reasons for restoring by certification two grants which the Council had refused. One, a sum of Rs. 5 lakhs for the administration of the Agency Division, was necessary to meet the medical, educational and economic needs of the backward people of the area; and

the other, relating to the post of Factory Chief Inspector, was restored because the retention of the post was necessary in the interests of labour, particularly in view of the factory legislation recently passed by the Indian Legislature. It would appear that an adequate discussion of these items could not take place in the Council on account of a certain Standing Order. The objection, however, is not to the expenditure but to the certification. Instead of restoring the original grants, as Lord Willingdon, erroneously in our opinion, felt called upon to do, he should have followed the example of Lord Lytton, who last year restored only such portion of a refused grant as was necessary for carrying on till the Council met again and voted a supplementary demand.

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WE are not disposed to be hyper-critical (*a la* the *A. B. Patrika*) about the proceedings of the Bengal Provincial Conference which took place in Jessore at Easter under the presidency of Babu Shyama Sundar Chakrabarty, indisputably the most trusted leader of non-co-operators in that Presidency. But we cannot refrain from pointing out the glaring inconsistency to which the Conference exposed itself by adopting a resolution, first, exhortating non-co-operators to capture district boards "in order to do more good for the people" and, then, dissuading the very same people from going into union boards because the latter "stood in the way of the attainment of Swaraj and were not beneficial to the country." We wonder what difference there is between the two bodies, whether as to composition or powers, which makes one an instrument, and the other an impediment, of Swaraj. In regard to local bodies the non-co-operation party has never been able to formulate a coherent plan of action, but the incongruity between the two resolutions passed by the Jessore Conference beats us altogether. The proceedings of the conference were, however, signalled by a resolution passed by an overwhelming majority, urging the country to start civil disobedience. Resort is to be had to civil disobedience because it is thought that it will rouse the waning enthusiasm in the country. And the best method of inaugurating civil disobedience, in the opinion of the Conference, is "to disobey the newly imposed salt tax." A political gathering which betrays such utter lack of either responsibility or intelligence forfeits all claim to consideration. We believe, however, that there is no non-co-operator of any consequence who will be hustled into civil disobedience at the present day.

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THE Jessore Conference passed several resolutions touching subjects of social reform, one of them "requesting people, especially Congress workers, to accept drinking water from all castes and sub-

castes." If this represents an earnest attempt to throw down all caste barriers in regard just to that matter wherein the restrictions are perhaps most rigid, the Conference deserves warm congratulations of all social reformers. In Maharashtra, however, the non-co-operators of the Gandhi school, occupying foremost places in the Congress hierarchy, prove far more reactionary in this matter than any other political group, even more reactionary than the representatives of the Das school. Last week a proposal was submitted to the Poona Municipality urging that all public cisterns, to which untouchables are now denied access, be thrown open to all classes of people, without distinction of caste. The proposal was thrown out by a large majority, all the orthodox non-co-operators without exception voting against it. The proposal, if carried, would have entailed no serious hardship on anyone. All those who objected to using water "defiled by the touch of the depressed classes" could go to a standpipe or have a private waterpipe of their own. That in a place like Poona where popular prejudices are fast breaking down, the non-co-operators should use all their influence in strengthening these prejudices instead of weakening them, would perhaps be thought rather surprising outside Maharashtra. But in Maharashtra itself it causes no surprise as it is common knowledge that there political extremism and social reaction go hand in hand.

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On the subject of the reclamation of Malkana Rajputs Mr. Rajagopalachar speaks in accents closely parallel to those in which the bureaucracy speaks on picketing, for instance. The proposed reclamation is a much simpler affair than the reconversion to Hinduism of people who have definitely gone out of the Hindu fold. To the latter proposal no orthodox Hindu would agree, while the proposal in relation to the Malkana Rajputs has the hearty support of numerous bodies of orthodox Hindus and that of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya who typifies in himself all that is enlightened in orthodoxy. No one suggests or can suggest that there is any danger of the application of force or the exercise of intimidation in the movement. But Mr. Rajagopalachar detects a political motive in it and puts his foot down. This is not a genuinely religious movement, he says, but one designed for the purpose of increasing the numerical strength of one political group—the Hindus—at the expense of another—the Mahomedans, and, anxious to preserve Hindu-Muslim amity on the basis of the now exploded doctrine of the Balance of Power, he forbids all action that has the appearance of disturbing this balance. It may be that the leaders of the movement may be inspired, in their subconsciousness, by a motive which has a savour of politics, but it is essentially a religious movement—to take back into Hinduism those who are Mahomedans only in name, but who are Hindus by belief and who desire to be formally readmitted to Hinduism. If this movement is partly political, how much more so was that of the picketing of liquor shops, which the Government repressed on precisely the same ground as that on which Mr. Rajagopalachar seeks to damp down the present one? We are all for a spirit of forbearance in our dealings with our fellow-countrymen, but this excessive tenderness can only breed an oversensitiveness on the part of the favoured community, which will not help to strengthen the ties of real friendship between them.

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Untouchables and Public Cisterns.

### THE POST OFFICE UNDER THE AXE.

OWING to the relatively small amount of net revenue which the Posts and Telegraphs actually yield, or are likely to yield in any case to the Government of India, and owing to the commercial character of the department, an ordinary layman could have hardly expected any substantial benefit to the public revenues from the labours of the Inchcape Committee in connection with the Post Office budget for the current year. As a matter of fact, however, the Committee have recommended a cut of nearly 2 crores in the expenditure of this department. This represents nearly one-fourth of the total reductions in the Civil Expenditure of the Central Government recommended by the Committee, and roughly one-fifth of the total budgeted expenditure on the department for this year. *Prima facie*, it does not reflect much credit on the management of a commercial department like this reduction that such a huge should have been considered possible without materially affecting the normal services rendered by the department to the public. One-fourth of the saving proposed is, no doubt in the capital expenditure, but a reduction of 137 lakhs from the total estimated expenditure of roughly 10 crores is certainly substantial, and the fact that it was found possible should alone suffice to invite a closer scrutiny into the working of this important department.

The position with reference to the finances of the department may be roughly summarised as follows :—

Receipts		Expenditure	
1913-14	515 lakhs		471 lakhs
1921-22	889 "		985 "
1922-23	1091 ( Budget estimate )	1019 "	

From a surplus of 44 lakhs in 1913, the net revenue gradually decreased to a net deficit of nearly a crore in 1921-1922, a very unsatisfactory position for a department avowedly run on commercial lines. The total reductions proposed by the Committee in the working expenses of the department amount in round figures to 137 lakhs as against the estimated total of 953 lakhs. This is exclusive of the saving of 51 lakhs recommended in the capital expenditure on the Telegraph branch. It is neither possible here nor necessary to review in detail the several heads of expenditure under which reductions have been proposed by the Committee, but the results of the inquiry made by the Committee may be thus summarised briefly in their own words :

Having reviewed the expenditure of the Posts and Telegraphs, the Committee recommend that,

- (1) Steps be taken to maintain a strict relation between the telegraph staff employed and the work performed and to improve the average output;
- (2) The use of motor services be restricted in future to large towns and important lines carrying heavy mail;
- (3) Outside tenders be obtained for the construction of all large Postal and Telegraph buildings;
- (4) House rent and local allowances be renewed and economic rents charged for all staff accommodation pro-

vided, subject to the ordinary rule as to limit of salary ;

(5) The reserve stock of constructional and general stores be limited to 9 months' supply ;

(6) Contracts for clothing be dealt with at a central office, the scales of clothing provided be reviewed and the period between issues extended where possible ;

(7) A Financial Advisor be associated with Director-General to assist in the control of existing and future expenditure ; etc.

While the reductions proposed by the Committee are substantial and their recommendations are in the right direction so far as they go, even a cursory perusal of their report leaves the impression that much has yet to be done before the department could be said to have been put on a sound financial basis. In the first place the system of keeping the accounts of the department requires revision as suggested by the Committee with a view to a complete separation of the capital as distinct from the working expenditure of the department. It is also necessary that all the services rendered by this department to the other departments of Government and *vice versa* should be accurately accounted for in the accounts of the department. We trust that this will receive the immediate attention of the Government. The most serious drawback of the present report, however, is the inadequate examination of the staff employed in the Posts as well as the Telegraphs. Considering that the cost of salaries is nearly 6 crores now, i. e. 60 p. c. of the total expenditure of the department, it is obvious that this item should have afforded the largest scope for economy. As a matter of fact, however, the reductions effected in this item amount to only 25 lakhs, and, beyond mentioning the facts that the staff of *officers* in the Post offices and the operative as well as non-operative staff in the Telegraph offices were excessive, the Committee do not seem to have done anything, presumably because they had not the time required for a detailed examination of the staff. The matter, however, cannot be allowed to rest at the reductions promised by the Director-General or recommended by the Committee. It is extremely desirable that the question should be thoroughly examined by a small committee of experts, official as well as non-official. The report shows that while the numerical increase in the staff since 1913-14 has been only 17 p. c. the cost on account of salaries has increased by 113 p. c. Then, again, the number of officers in the Posts has increased by 32 p. c. against an increase of only 17 p. c. in the rest of the staff. It is to be hoped that the reduction of 85 superfluous officers recommended by the Committee does not take long to materialise. Having no time to examine the staff employed in the Post office in relation to the work, the Committee had to remain satisfied with the general assurance that the *time test*, which forms the basis on which the Post offices are staffed, had been recently raised and that the standard had been reduced by 6 p. c. The public, however, would be perfectly justified in being less complacent and asking for a closer and exhaustive analysis of the staff employed, particularly in the

Presidency and other large towns. There is no reason to suppose that the inflation of staff is confined to the Telegraph branch, and a further scrutiny is the more imperative now because the rates of pay have increased by 100 p. c. in general, and the employment of additional staff involves proportionately much greater expenditure. The recommendations of the Committee in respect of other items of expenditure do not call for any comment here.

There are other and more important reasons for having an early and exhaustive inquiry made into the working of this department. In 1913-14, the Post office in India was comparatively the cheapest as well as one of the most efficient services in the world. Now it has ceased to be cheap and, unfortunately to the public, is far less efficient than before. In spite of the huge increase in the cost of the services, the postal facilities enjoyed by the public have been seriously curtailed during recent years. This curtailment of facilities so long enjoyed by the public could be justified only on the ground of economy, but as the report of the Committee shows, the expenditure of the department has been steadily outgrowing its revenue, notwithstanding the substantial increase in rates and a steady curtailment of the services. In spite of the increase in the staff there are now fewer deliveries of mails and fewer hours open for transactions with the Post office. In fact the convenience of the public seems to be now considered of secondary importance as compared with the convenience of the staff. The public must be excused if they refuse to tolerate this state of things any longer, and they would naturally like to assure themselves that the output of work per man has not decreased, and that the system of administration is not top-heavy. The huge establishments maintained in the Presidency towns obviously require a close and independent scrutiny. It is also possible that in addition to the inflation of staff, there are other causes at work which are responsible for the present state of things. We wonder if the wholesale and indiscriminate promotions given to men in war-time for their supposed services in the field, of which we remember to have heard some time back, has not any thing to do with the decrease in efficiency. In any case an independent and expert examination of the working of the department is bound to be of considerable use and we trust that Government will lose no time in instituting it. It is essential in the interests of public economy as well as public convenience that the service rendered by the department should be as cheap and efficient as circumstances permit.

#### CO-OPERATION IN INDIA.

IN an article on the "Progress of Co-operation" published in the *SERVANT OF INDIA* of 29th March, we made certain suggestions which, if carried out, will, in our opinion, enhance the utility of the little volume of statistics relating to the co-opera-

tive movement, published annually by the Government of India. We could not on that occasion examine the progress made in 1921-22 by the different provinces as revealed by the statistics contained in that volume. In that year the total number of societies of all kinds in British India and the four Indian States of Mysore, Baroda, Hyderabad and Bhopal, increased from 47,503 to 52,182 or by 4,679. This is a considerable falling off from the achievement of the previous year in which 6,731 new societies were started. Among the provinces the most notable increase took place in Madras, which, by adding no fewer than 1100 new societies to its roll, wrested the second place from Bengal. It is, however, a long way yet from the Punjab, which has for several years been the premier province. In 1921-22 it added 857 new societies—a number next only to that of Madras—and carried its total to 9,310. The societies in Bihar and the United Provinces increased by 681 and 644 respectively. These provinces appear to have become distinctly progressive. Bengal which some time ago took rapid strides seems now to be resting, for it organised only 313 new societies. But in the Central Provinces there was actually a decrease—from 5,011 to 4,967—a thing hitherto unheard of in the history of co-operation in India. Of the Indian States Bhopal made good progress—from 691 to 781: the others were more or less stationary. The total membership of primary societies increased from 17 $\frac{1}{6}$  lakhs to 19 $\frac{3}{4}$  lakhs; Madras and Bombay between them being responsible for quite a half of the increase. The total working capital, as calculated in the volume under review (about which, more presently), increased from Rs. 26.42 crores to Rs. 31.12 crores, Madras and Bombay again contributing nearly a half to the increase and the Punjab coming next.

As the provinces differ very much from each other in area and population, it is necessary to judge their progress in various directions by suitable common standards. In the volume before us, population has been chosen as the basis of the different standards: the relative progress of the provinces being judged by considering the number of societies per 100,000 inhabitants, the number of members of primary societies per 1000 inhabitants and the number of annas which the working capital would give per head of the population. These are no doubt useful standards and perhaps essential for international comparisons. We should, however, like to apply somewhat different ones. It has been the object of co-operators (official and non-official) to organise a society in every village—and many believe there should be only one society for a village. We would therefore compare the number of societies in any province with the number of villages in it. The working capital, as calculated in the volume before us, is deceptive and shows a much greater amount than is available for use in the movement; because a sum passed on from one society to another is counted in the working capital of each of those societies.

Suppose a district bank obtains a loan of a lakh of rupees from the provincial bank and lends it out to a number of primary societies : this lakh of rupees is counted three times—as working capital of the provincial bank, district bank and primary societies—and shown as three lakhs, though only one lakh has been available for use. Real working capital is arrived at only after omitting the amounts lent by societies to each other. How great the difference between nominal and real working capital can be is illustrated by the Central Provinces and Madras whose nominal capital was Rs. 6.01 and Rs. 3.16 crores respectively, while the real capital was not more than Rs. 3.08 and Rs. 1.55 crores respectively. Even after this elimination, there will be a certain amount of overlapping in respect of share capital; for a primary society which takes a share in a central bank passes on a part of its working capital to the latter as share capital. But such amounts cannot be eliminated from our calculations as they are not separately shown. The statistics before us judge of the working capital by spreading it over the whole population of a province in annas. We think, however, that it would be much more useful to see what amount is made available per member. The following table has been constructed so as to show the relative position of the major provinces and States according to the standards explained above :—

Province.	Villages & townships.	No. of Societies.	No. of Villages per Society.	No. of Members.	Actual Working Capital.	Amount available per Member in Rs.
Madras	54,114	7387	7.3	458	309	67
Bombay	26,253	3411	7.3	321	308	96
Bengal	119,850	6679	18.0	250	237	95
Bihar and Orissa	87,743	4251	20.6	128	93	73
United Provinces	106,441	5137	20.7	128	99	77
Punjab	33,560	9310	3.6	259	265	102
Burma	18,699	5279	3.5	134	244	182
Central Provinces	39,117	4967	8.0	80	155	194
Assam	27,895	631	44.2	32	16	50
Mysore	16,831	1519	11.1	95	69	73
Baroda	3095	539	5.7	17	19	114
Hyderabad	20,236	1464	14.0	36	57	158

It will be seen that so far as the proportion of societies to villages is concerned, the Punjab and Burma stand in a class by themselves, that Madras, Bombay and the C. P. come next in order and are fairly satisfactory, while Bengal, Bihar, and the U.P. are lagging very far behind. Economic life in Assam is so different from that in other provinces that we doubt whether it is really so backward as it appears in the table given above. With regard to working capital, it is indeed surprising that Madras, which has more of it than any other province, nevertheless gives the least per capita financial aid to its members, Assam alone excepted.

There were Provincial banks in 6 out of 9 major provinces, those not having them being the Punjab, U. P. and Assam. The banks of Bihar

and Bengal are not so well developed as those in the other provinces. The expenditure incurred by the former on staff is very inadequate and as they are earning a fair amount of profit there is very little justification for this risky parsimony. The Burma and Madras provincial banks attracted the largest amount of local deposits—Rs. 80 and Rs. 54 lakhs respectively—while that of Bombay which came next had Rs. 32 lakhs. The Bombay bank, however, got Rs. 33 lakhs as deposits from primary societies, against less than Rs. 8 lakhs obtained by the Burma bank. It was only these two banks that got considerable deposits from primary societies, the banks in other provinces getting them through central banks. The usual rate of dividend varied from 9 per cent. in Madras to 5 per cent. in Burma. The provinces of North India had on an average 2 to 3 central banks per district as against one in other provinces. The result is that the latter are much more economically worked than the former. For example, the 32 banks of Madras handled 50 per cent. more money than the 73 banks of Bengal at about one-third the cost of the latter. The North Indian central banks will perhaps do well to amalgamate and economise.

In estimating the work of primary societies in the different provinces, we would emphasise two points: the proportion of non-credit societies to credit societies, and the proportion of overdue amounts to total dues. The following table gives that information in respect of agricultural and non-agricultural societies:—

Province.	No. of Ag. Societies		No. of non-Ag. Societies		Percentage of Overdues	
	credi	non-credit	credit	non-credit	in Ag. Societies	in non-Ag. Societies
Madras	6206	83	694	162	19.1	13.7
Bombay	2599	154	370	191	13.5	7.0
Bengal	6017	99	162	291	37.5	9.2
Bihar	3828	33	121	140	27.4	18.4
U. P.	4848	9	171	28	29.1	11.5
Punjab	8232	25	194	207	2.4	4.4
Burma	4023	128	171	28	...	...
C. P.	4496	32	67	28	...	...
Assam	555	...	25	32	52.2	24.0
Myso	1170	63	158	112	36.4	26.4
Baroda	450	39	42	3	31.7	5.0
Hyderabad	...	...	114	59	6	...

It will be seen that the Punjab and Bombay have the largest number of non-credit societies of both agricultural and non-agricultural kinds. That Bengal has the largest number of non-agricultural non-credit societies and that they are nearly twice as many as non-agricultural credit societies and that Behar also occupies a very good position in this respect, is clearly due to the zeal of the Bengal Home Industries Association. For the majority of these societies come under the description, 'production and sale.' Societies of this class also figure prominently among agricultural societies in these two provinces which are served by the Association.

The figures in the last two columns show the

percentage of overdues to the total loans due by members. As we pointed out on the last occasion, it would be more appropriate to give the proportion of collection and balance to demand than to total dues. The real position is, therefore, much worse than that revealed in these columns. That in Burma and the Central Provinces no figures should be given under overdues is quite gratifying. Their absence could not be due to a failure on the part of the authorities concerned to supply the figures. For in the previous year's volume a figure is given for the C. P. non-agricultural societies. That the overdues in agricultural societies form such a high proportion in all the other provinces except the Punjab is a most painful revelation. Even in non-agricultural societies they are unexpectedly high. The existence of these overdues in this proportion is a negation of moral improvement in the members. We hope the provincial Governments will give their most urgent attention to the rectification of this evil.

Share capital is a prominent item in the working capital of the agricultural societies of the Punjab, Burma and Madras. Members' and non-members' deposits are largest in Bombay, the Punjab coming next. The non-agricultural societies of Bombay are financially the strongest in the country. Their working capital is more than a third of the entire working capital of all non-agricultural societies in British India. In the matter of rural stores Bengal was foremost with the Punjab as second, while in the matter of urban stores Madras and Burma and Mysore were supreme. Considering its population, the store movement appears to be strongest in Mysore. On the whole we should think that the Punjab should get the all-round championship prize, with Bombay and Burma disputing the second place.

### KANARA FOREST GRIEVANCES.

AT a long last the Bombay Government have announced their new policy in relation to the forests of Kanara. They have been hatching this policy for two years and a half, but the result of this long gestation is by no means satisfactory to the people of Kanara. Long has been the suffering of this district, bitter have been the cries of its agriculturists. And the press note just issued does nothing to alleviate these cruel hardships. The Government itself seems to be conscious of the reception it will meet at the hands of the people, for it recognises that "the arrangement may not satisfy every one", and all that it claims is that thereby "the long-standing question will be on a road to settlement."

But it is not even on the road to settlement. In order to explain this point, I will go a little into the history of the question. It was in September, 1920, that Government issued a press note on Kanara forest grievances, in which they attempted to answer the severe criticisms then made of the Government's forest policy, especially

those voiced in the Kanara District Conference held in May, 1920, under the presidentship of Sir Narayan Chandavarkar. This press note was a great disappointment to Kanara. The people of the district had demanded a reconstruction of the forest policy, but the press note promised only a slight readjustment of it. So keen was public discontent that two Rao Sahebs, than whom nobody had helped Government more in their agricultural propaganda, resigned their titles in protest. The Bombay Government then seemed to awake to the situation, and there was some stir in official circles. In the meanwhile, the reforms had been introduced and the Ministers appointed. The Hon'ble Mr. Mehta, the Minister for Forests, evinced great interest in the question. It was universally recognised at the time that the policy outlined in the press note, was unsatisfactory and that a further enquiry by an independent Committee was necessary. A formal resolution to this effect was moved, and accepted by Government. The Minister then held out hopes that within about three months the question would be settled. But there came a hitch. Either because the forest officials objected to the individuals whom Mr. Mehta had agreed to appoint on the Committee or because the latter refused to serve on it, the Committee remained still-born. Mr. Mehta, if he had wished, could have appointed other equally able men. But he failed to do so, and the proposal of carrying on an inquiry by an independent Committee was finally abandoned. The point to be noted here is that the press note of 1920 was recognised by the Government or, for that matter, by Mr. Mehta himself as unsatisfactory. And yet Government thought fit to take action under this very press note and to engage the services of a special officer for forest settlement. We cannot but regard all the labours of the officer as waste of energy and the funds spent on the establishment as waste of money.

I will now refer to the settlement as actually carried on by the officer. A necessary condition of successful settlement work is the hearty co-operation of the people. It was very unfortunate therefore that wherever Mr. Collins, the officer in question, went, the people refused to co-operate with him. I am far from regarding this action on the part of the people as wise. But I cannot but think that there was sufficient provocation. People liked Mr. Collins personally, but they could not assist him in carrying out a policy which they instinctively hated. As a consequence, to such an extent is the settlement faulty, that it is all centre and no circumference. I cannot think that such a settlement, carried out under such defective conditions, can be considered at all satisfactory, even though we may individually appreciate the pains taken by the officer concerned.

Now I propose to examine the orders passed under the present press note. It is not possible here to refer at length to all the aspects of the question for want of space. Nor do I think it necessary. I would only refer to two points. Government con-

sider that the "arrangements now sanctioned provide an adequate amount of minor forest for the needs of the people and afford them an opportunity of sharing effectively in the management." It is ridiculous to say that the arrangements provide an adequate amount of minor forest. Government recognise on the one hand that "a large area which can be brought under control is preferable to a smaller area, which would be worked intensively, and not allowed to rest and recover." On the other hand, they allow only about 33,000 acres more of minor forest for the four coast talukas, where this need is specially felt. It is easy to show how inadequate this area is. The scale adopted in South Kanara (Madras), conditions in which are akin to those of North Kanara (Bombay), is 2 acres of minor forest as Kumki to 1 acre of wetland. This scale is the least that can be applied. It was besides actually recommended by a joint conference, in 1919, of three responsible officers, Mr. Tupper, till lately Collector of Kanara, Mr. Eddie, now Conservator, and Mr. Copleston, now Chief Conservator of Forests. But this recommendation remains a dead letter. If this scale were applied—certainly none too generous in the eyes of the people who demand three acres per acre of wet land—the increase of 33,000 acres now provided would only suffice for one taluka, for example Kumta, which has an area of 35,000 acres of cultivable land, and only about 26,000 acres of minor forest. If the whole district were to be provided with minor forest on the scale prevalent in South Kanara and approved by a past Collector and the present highest forest official, nearly 7 lakhs of acres would be necessary. At present, the provision is of 4½ lakhs of minor forest only. That is, 2½ lakhs more would be necessary to provide what may be called an adequate supply. And Government give only 33,000 acres more and consider it an adequate provision. The extent of forest in Kanara is more than 22 lakhs of acres. And the demand is for minor forest only, which grows very little of rich timber. It has also to be remembered that a large part of this minor forest brings in little return to Government. Minor forests are retained under the Forest Department only as properties to be developed in future, and if we judge from past experience of more than fifty years, they will never be developed at all. Why not allow them to be developed by the agriculturists and to fructify in their pockets, so to say?

The other point is as regards the transfer of the minor forest to the control of the Revenue Department. This has been the demand of the people for a long time. It has also been recommended by the Conference of the Collector and two forest officials mentioned above. The reason for this demand is that the Forest Department multiplies enormously the difficulties in the exercise of privileges. The press note mentions that the minor forest is to be retained under the control of the Forest Department only, on the very curious ground that it is ultimately to be handed over

to village punchayets. I cannot see why village-committees should not be constituted now, possessing real authority, or why the transfer to the Revenue Department should not form an intermediate step before Committees are actually formed. Government no doubt express a hope of forming village committees, but they are not committees in whom is to be vested the control of forests, oh, no—they are only to explain to the people the nature of the privileges conferred and the areas where these privileges are to be exercised. One searches the press note in vain for any trace of an opportunity being afforded to the people "of sharing effectively in the management" of forests.

In considering the Kanara forest privileges, it has to be remembered, that what the people ask for is not new concessions but old rights which they had enjoyed from time immemorial, but of which they were deprived by the Forest Department. Nor is their demand unreasonable. They want just such things as would help their agriculture and to avoid all those things that would harm their agriculture. They are not blind to the financial advantages of forest development, at least the more sensible among them. But they cannot tolerate forest conservancy to the extent of killing their agriculture, which it has actually done. Why not get at the truth by an impartial Committee?

The conclusion forces itself upon one that the advent of the Minister has not proved beneficial in any way to the people of Kanara in the matter of forests. He was very enthusiastic in the beginning. But the enthusiasm which he then showed only places in stronger relief his eventual failure. He has brought no relief to the agriculture of that district from the depredations of the forest officials. Indeed the story of Kanara is the story of the pauperisation of a whole district.

S. G. WARTY.

### THE WORLD OUTSIDE.

*Race Feeling in America.* IN a covering letter sent to us with his contribution on "Race Feeling in America" which we published last week, Mr. Garland Craig stated that he seemed to detect of late an anti-American bias in our columns. We are glad of having this opportunity of assuring him that nothing is further from our mind, since we are fully aware of the thousands and thousands of Americans who are in the very front rank of those who fight the battles of Humanity. Their aims are our own; their ideals ours; their antagonists those against whom our own attack is directed. But just because that is so, we cannot make an exception in our fight against any unrighteousness, because it happens to concern the United States; nor do we think would Mr. Craig himself desire us to adopt such hypersensitiveness. As for his charge that our comments on the fate of the Dyer Bill were too highly coloured, our withers are unwrung by his somewhat too simple and mechanical arithmetics. We still maintain



that, whatever the opinion of the enlightened few, the bulk of the people of America have such fierce race pride, that 99% of the white Americans still abhor and loathe the only possible permanent solution of the race problem in the States : amalgamation. If that is so, and only because it is so, otherwise "decently minded" Americans permit an Anti-Lynching Bill to be filibustered ; just as, throughout the world, otherwise decently minded people turn the blind eye on prostitution and all its cognate problems, not because they approve of the actual state of affairs, but because, subconsciously, they are persuaded that only so can they purchase security for their own women folk and for themselves.

AND not only can we not forbear to comment on what we consider to be glaring wrongs in the United States, we feel even bound to do so. For we would not be very much exercised in our mind, if they occurred in, say, San Marino or the Falklands : but—fortunately and unfortunately—the United States of America are not merely of greater importance than these countries ; they are rapidly becoming of greater importance than any other country in the world. One of the most thought-provoking little tables we have seen of late, is one contained in a recent monthly circular of the Guaranty Trust Co. of New York, and for the benefit of our readers we reproduce it here-with :

COMPARISON OF NEW CAPITAL SENT TO FOREIGN COUNTRIES BY ENGLAND AND THE UNITED STATES.

Year.	England.*	United States.
	( In Millions of Dollars ).	
1911 ... ..	503	31
1912 ... ..	465	71
1913 ... ..	422	78
1920 ... ..	40	464
1921 ... ..	111	596
1922 ... ..	276	652

\*£ converted at \$5.

This puts in a nutshell the new situation created by the war, as regards world dominion—a development to which we have frequently called attention, since in our opinion its importance cannot be over-emphasized. The table not only makes abundently clear, how American financial control has leapt to the front, but also, how little London is able to catch up with Wall Street. That dollar conquest of the world naturally begins and shows its full force in Latin America ; and some of our readers may remember that in our issue of Dec. 7th we commented on the assault on British supremacy even in the Argentine, at one time practically a client-State of England. *La Revue Universelle* of Jan. 15th has a long article on the policy whereby "the United States try to reduce her neighbours to economic vassals, by smothering them with gold." Latin America's vast potentialities are still almost entirely undeveloped—whether agriculturally or industrially—hence the need and opportunity for foreign capital.

THE Paris paper quoted illustrates this buying up process of Latin America by mentioning the following loans placed during the past two years in the United States :

by Cuba	...	...	million	\$ 50
Haiti	...	...	...	7
Colombia	...	...	...	4
do. Province of Antioquia	...	...	...	30
Ecuador	...	...	...	33
Peru	...	...	...	50
Bolivia	...	...	...	33
Chile	...	...	...	56
Uruguay	...	...	...	13
Brasil	...	...	...	50
do. Rio de Janeiro	...	...	...	12
do. Rio Grande do Sul	...	...	...	10
do. Ceara...	...	...	...	2
Argentine	...	...	...	360

\$ 700 millions

—a cool two hundred and thirty crores of rupees ! And all this does not include the money advanced to private concerns by way of loans, debentures, shares, &c., nor the concessions obtained from these South American States by the great trusts and combines of the United States. Of the latter a striking example is found in the recent 2½ million acre petroleum land lease of the Standard Oil Co. from the Bolivian Government. No wonder an Argentine publicist recently said that all these countries were but mortgaging their national independence. No wonder, too, that "Americanism" is described by many as the next world danger : vide Mr. W. T. Colyer's book (of that title), recently published by the Labour Publishing Co. One may feel that Mr. Colyer is a trifle exaggerating the danger : still the fact remains that in the United States we have a self-contained continent of a hundred million people forming a national unit ; a people who are in the very van of industrial development, physically as vigorous, as mentally they are alert. Is it a wonder if one has misgivings about this country, which already owns practically all the gold in the world and to which already half the world must pay tribute in one form or another ? Who could withstand America, if she chose to make war ?

AND the trouble is that the American people themselves are held in thrall ( and led by the nose ) by the financial autocracy which rules from Wall Street by way of Washington. In other countries Big Business is confronted and kept in check by organized labour ; in other countries, the very real tendency towards naked plutocracy, of which tendency there can be no doubt, is at least not given free play ; in other countries, capitalist exploitation and dominion has had to reckon with a Jaurès, a Bebel, a Ramsay Macdonald : but in America there is nothing but a Samuel Gompers, himself *plus capitaliste que les plus gros capitalistes*. How long will this condition last ? Curiously enough, its corner stone is unrestricted immigration : and things

in that respect are changing—rapidly. The balance of immigration over emigration amounted for the United States of America to an annual average of 6,63,000 in 1910-14; to 86,000 in 1915-19; and to 2,77,000 in 1920-22: and it has been calculated that the War has deprived American industries of two and a half million alien workers, who, but for it, would have been employed by American capital to do work which the native-born refused to do. To make up for this, it is notorious that during the War American industries drew largely on negro workers from the lynching belt of the South; it is not so well known, that, owing to the drying up of an unlimited supply of utterly ignorant and defenceless "hands" with very low standards of life, the American manufacturer has had to have recourse to more machines and to the getting of more work out of the machines already installed. The fact however is of great importance, as showing, how wasteful capitalism economically is—this being another instance of the slovenliness and inefficiency quite compatible with the capitalistic system, whose watchword is not "maximum production with minimum effort" but "maximum profits with minimum investment." But the restriction of immigration has not only compelled employers to do, what the principle of competition has been unable to make them do; it has also—and in this we are far more interested—stopped the unlimited supply of blacklegs, upon which the unlimited autocracy of the American industrial system is based and by which alone it is made possible. And American capital is rather in a cleft stick over this: for if with restricted immigration it has to meet the danger of better organized labour, with unrestricted immigration it has to meet that of hungry unemployed!

*A Far Cry.*

TALKING of South America—the "Museo Social" of Buenos Aires is promoting an International Conference on Social Questions in September of next year, with the object of bringing together social workers from all countries. The leading idea will be, how "to improve the social organization of all nations," and delegates are invited from all social institutes, public or private, engaged in social reform, welfare, health or education. An exhibition, giving documentary and graphic expression to the progress made by each nation, is to take place simultaneously. Surely a great opportunity for delegates from our social service institutes, if they can afford the expense, to imbibe some fresh ideas from altogether new fields, to open the eyes of those far away peoples to the "actuality" of India, and to inaugurate a new and—who knows?—perhaps far-reaching international friendship between the people of India and of Latin America.

*Soviet Persecution of Religion.*

THE execution of Archbishop Budniewicz has been an opportunity not to be missed by anti-Soviet propaganda. As we have said again and again, we have personally not the slightest use for Russian Sovietism, since we happen to believe in Democracy and the present rulers of Russia emphatically do not. Again, we are against capital punishment as such; and we certainly are the last to be accused of wishing for State interference in matters religious. For all that, it seems to us that with the said press campaign raging, a few corrective facts would not come amiss. First of all then, it is well to impress firmly on one's mind that the national Russian Church under the Tsars was part and parcel of the administrative machine. A Russian had to be a Russian Churchman, as he had to be a Russian taxpayer: if there were exceptions, they only confirmed the rule. Hence it is only natural that after the Revolution the great bulk of the clergy and laity continued to identify their religion with Tsarism. The Soviet Government as a matter of course took them at their word and treated all professing Christians as counter-revolutionaries. At the same time the Communist Party (constituting the Government of Russia) was still under the dominion of those actively anti-religious ideas, which, dating from the 18th century, were so detestably applied during the French Revolution and again by the "anti-clerical" French Governments of twenty years ago; in fact, all the blasphemous processions, &c. now reported from Russia seem to be but slavish imitations of the sort of disgusting exhibitions which the generation before the War was only too familiar with in France—such as the almost incredibly offensive travesties indulged in by the Anti-Clericals on Good Fridays, &c.

GRADUALLY the Soviet adopted the principle of religious toleration, in theory at least; and there is good reason for this, since religion in general and Christianity in particular showed no sign of waning under this as under any previous persecution elsewhere. The Russian Government therefore took up the contemptuous attitude that, though for themselves religion seemed sheer buncombe and mere "opiate for the masses", they had no objection to the exercise, whether public or private, of any religion, provided religion steered clear of politics. As a consequence, churches in Russia are today more crowded than ever, public processions as common as formerly, and altogether the eminently Christian mentality of the Russian masses manifests itself today publicly with a frequency and freedom which is the surprise of all foreign visitors. Again and again there have been attempts on the part of Russian Churchpeople to meet the new situation by resolutely throwing overboard the old idea of the inseparability of State and Church and to turn their Church into a purely spiritual organization, as are the Churches of America, for instance. The

trouble has been for them twofold: on the one hand, they have been "stabbed in the back" by the old die-hards of the Tsarist régime, and on the other of course a rigid autocracy like the Soviet Government will not allow itself to be criticized by anybody: which means that there is no "freedom to prophesy", (to use a Protestant expression), without which no purely spiritual body can exist. Still, the attempt of establishing "a Free Church in a free State" in Russia persists and must necessarily, whether sooner or later, attain its object—however much the Tsarists may be against the idea of a free Church and the Communists against that of a free State.

*Soviet and Vatican.* WHILST all this was going on, the Vatican seemed to detect here a fine opportunity of capturing Russia for Roman Catholicism. Unlike the Russian and other Eastern Churches, which are solidly national, the Papal Church of course is strictly international and has shown great adaptability to any State form—being staunchly monarchical in a Monarchy, strictly republican in a Republic, &c. In fact, was it not even revolutionary, when the masses of a nation were revolutionaries, as used to be the case in Ireland? Public memory is so short, that most newspaper readers will have forgotten by this time the great *rapprochement* between Soviet and Vatican at the time of the Genoa Conference—the sympathetic references to Chicherin in the Italian Catholic press, the meeting between the Archbishop of Genoa and Mr. Kommissar Chicherin, &c. As a matter of fact, an arrangement was come to, whereby full religious freedom was to be guaranteed to the Roman Catholic Church in Russia, and as a consequence the Vatican erected a hierarchy there and started gaily on its attempt of winning over for Rome all that was left of orthodox Christians in Russia. The results seem to have been far from promising—largely no doubt, because the only Russian-speaking priests available were Poles; and if there are any two people who hate each other more heartily than Poles and Russians, we should like to know of them. Hence with a hierarchy of Poles—the first Roman Catholic Archbishop of Russia Mgr. Budlewicz himself of course was a Pole—it goes without saying that political Polish intrigue was bound to develop and that the presence of a lot of foreigners violently antagonistic to all Russian sentiments could but lead to collision. So much one can deduce from the very facts of the case, but further details will no doubt soon be available and shed further light on the tragic events of which only cable news has reached us so far. One thing anyhow is clear, that the idea of a *Free Church in a Free State* is still far from realization in Russia, and that, however much blame for it attaches to the Soviet State, Ecclesiasticism, both Russian and foreign, can by no means be held blameless either.

## COMPULSORY MILITARY TRAINING.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—As a regular reader of your paper, may I be allowed to express the very great regret which I feel at your attitude on the subject of Compulsory Military Training in India? I have read the notes on this subject in your issue of March 1st, with great surprise, for your influence is emphatically on the side of progress, and it is difficult to understand how you can lend your support to so reactionary a proposal as to force men to serve in the Army. Surely if one fallacy has been exploded, it is that the way to prevent war is to prepare for it; people seem more and more to be recognising the fact that to those who prepare to fight war will come sooner or later.

Are we to look in vain even, in India, for a paper which will stand out against such notions as that "it is necessary to introduce compulsory military training... because the martial spirit must be revived and fostered among all classes and communities?"—Yours, etc.

C. G. ESERLY.

Lakshetipet  
(Nizams Dominions).  
April 4.

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