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TOPICS OF THE WEEK

THE situation on the Continent of Europe is developing "according to plan"—that is, according to the French plan. The passive resistance of the Ruhr has after six months' endurance come to an end : Germany not having gained anything, but rather lost everything by it. For the cost of maintaining the non-co-operators has completely broken the finances of the Reich ; and the mark has now become so valueless that it can hardly pay any longer even to print the notes, since they have to be superseded almost from day to day. What next? People are not wanting who say that France has bitten off more than she can chew ; that now that Western Germany is separated from the rest, France will have to meet the problem alone of how to pay the German workers, who are to produce the "Reparation" coal. How little these people know M. Poincaré ! For why should France meet the problem at all? She wants coal and coke free ; M. Poincaré has again reiterated that. He could not possibly now agree to pay for such coal, simply because the Reich can no longer pay for it. If France cannot have the coal free, she does not want it at all. Then what of the four million Ruhr workers? If they must not work for customers who would buy their products, how are they to buy the food which would enable them to work for those who want their products free? These troubles, says M. Poincaré, are not mine. France is only concerned in her Right—viz. to get her reparations. Then perhaps these four million Ruhr workers will starve? There seems quite a probability for that. And without the coal and steel of the Ruhr, the rest of industrial Germany will likewise have to stop work? Quite possibly. And starve to death? Not impossible. But then? But then, says Mr. Poincaré, when all German industrialism has been killed and the population of

Germany been reduced to that of a small, self-contained agricultural country : then France will have Security. The more hunger riots, the more "Rhenish Republics" and Bavarian putsches and Saxon Communist risings in the meantime, the better. They will all hasten the one process that matters : that of reducing 64 millions to 8.

* * *

THE representatives of the Swaraj party who are returned to the Councils, we may be sure, will not in fact practise the kind of uncompromising and indiscriminate obstruction to which they pledge themselves in the undertaking they have to sign before they are adopted as candidates by the party. But whatever they may actually do, the policy of the party must be judged from the manifesto now issued, and it is clear that no one opposed to blind and uniform obstruction can sign the pledge without compromising their principle. We cannot therefore too strongly deprecate as immoral the action of men like Mr. Jayakar who have publicly condemned the Swaraj party's policy and yet have formally committed themselves to that same policy by joining the party for electoral purposes. For the same reason we greatly appreciate the firmness of principle which Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal has shown in refusing to join the wreckers and offering himself as an independent candidate. His attitude to the Government measures that may be placed before the Council is described by him in his election manifesto as follows: "I shall judge every measure by the one supreme test, 'Is it likely to help or hinder our advance to full responsible government or Swaraj?' and shall support or oppose every measure according as it stands or fails to stand this test." This is a quite unexceptionable policy and is in fact nothing different from that of co-operation *cum* opposition which has been adopted and is being followed for years past by the Liberals. This was the very policy that approved itself to the judgment of the late Mr. Tilak, who called it "responsive co-operation." Mr. Joseph Baptista in Bombay, too, has refused to join the party and subject himself to its discipline. He said the other day that, if elected, he would spare no mistake of Government but open a fire of attack on them, but his opposition would not be blind opposition. Blind opposition would not be playing the game fair and square. Blind opposition would

rob even conscientious objection of its moral force. For this reason he did not believe in the working of non-co-operation, but he firmly believed in Tilak's responsive co-operation." Now that a frantic effort is being made by the Swaraj party to induce people to take its label, whatever their individual convictions may be, we would advise those who are not prepared to carry out the pledge they would be required to take in letter and in spirit to follow the example of Mr. Pal and Mr. Baptista and reject, as an aberration from the path of morality the line of action followed by Mr. Jayakar.

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Why Beat about
the Bush?

THAT the Kenya decision is a distinct violation of the pledge of equal status contained in the Imperial Conference's resolution of 1921 is now frankly acknowledged even in diehard circles in London. According to *New India* the *Times* is outspoken and "we respect it for its refreshing frankness." In an article under the heading "Indian Quarrels," it exaggerates the situation in India and says that the Kenya decision was undoubtedly right. But it adds that in India "there is bitter resentment at the definite pronouncement implicit in the decision that for the present Indians cannot expect complete equality of status throughout the Empire". Half of our annoyance would disappear if the British Government had also acknowledged this fact without beating about the bush and seeking to cover up the ugly thing by big words. We know where we are with an open enemy like Gen. Smuts; but the soft words of real unfriends posing as our champions irritate us.

* * *

Local Option in
Ceylon.

IT was in 1918 that Ceylon received the valuable privilege of local option, and as a result of it the consumption of arrack was reduced by 32 per cent. in four years. In the year of the concession 1,022,370 gallons of arrack were consumed, but in 1922 it came down to 961,749. Now, in a country in which there is an inherent prejudice of long standing against drink, one would expect local option to yield much better results. The Rev. J. Simon de Silva assigns three reasons for the slow working of this method. First, the percentage of votes required for the abolition of taverns is too high, viz. 75. It was reduced to 60 last year. In this connection it would be useful to note that the proportion of votes required in the Punjab is two-thirds of the total of registered voters.) Second, the "Estate Taverns," which exist in large numbers in the planting districts, ostensibly to supply the requirements of the coolie population on estates, are excluded from the operation of the Local Option Ordinance. This is a matter which touches India very nearly, for the coolie population consists for the most part of Indians, and whatever benefit the people of Ceylon derive from this temperance reform is denied to the Indian labourers. The third reason is that foreign liquor is not completely under the control of local bodies. In 1921, out of a total

of 733 foreign liquor licenses, there were only 71 which the people, at least theoretically, could control, whilst they had absolutely no voice in regard to the remaining 662 licenses given to hotels, refreshment rooms, rest-houses, clubs and the like. It is in view of this that the temperance Conference which met in Lahore on 3rd inst. suggested an amendment of the Punjab Local Option Bill to the effect that clubs, restaurants, &c. be not excluded from the scope of the measure, and of excluded, sales should be restricted entirely to European members or travellers, and that foreign liquor should be sold only to foreigners.

* * *

FOR some years past the women-students of the Poona Seva Sadan have been collecting locally donations for their institution during the Diwali holidays. This year both the teachers and the students are going much farther afield for collections—to Travancore and Cochin, Central Provinces and Berars, Southern Maratha Country, Central India, &c., and we trust that in every place they visit their unique services in the cause of the uplift of woman-kind will be remembered and generous monetary help given to enable them to sustain and extend their efforts. In Poona alone, under the auspices of this noble institution, a thousand women are receiving education of one kind or other—literary, professional, technical—for which provision is made in 50 different classes. Branches of the Sadan are now established in four out-stations—Satara, Ahmednagar, Sholapur and Baramati—where similarly a little under 300 women take advantage of the various kinds of tuition imparted in the institution. In addition most valuable work is being done in an Infant Welfare Centre in Poona. There are four hostels for women in Poona City, providing accommodation for 175 women of different castes and creeds, non-sectarianism being the cardinal principle of this institution. If great is the work which the Seva Sadan is doing, great also is the need for helping it financially, and we trust that this year's response to the appeal issued by Mrs. Ramabai Saheb Ranade, Mr. Devadhar and others will be such as at least to meet its ever growing need.

* * *

Personal.

WHILE there is a steady improvement in the health of Mr. Sastri, we regret that Mr. G. K. Devadhar was taken ill on his return journey from South Kanara where he had gone to assist in the organization of flood relief, and it was found on medical examination that he was on the point of a nervous breakdown unless he took complete rest. Since his return he has been taking rest at Poona, and is now making satisfactory progress. He was suffering from a malignant type of malaria and requires a long course of medical treatment and rest. Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru too was lying ill at Agra for over a month and is even now in indifferent health. Needless to say that his electioneering work is much interrupted. The Servants of India Society is in a very bad way just now, the most prominent members of it being struck down. Mr. Chintamani, who, though officially not a member of the Society, is practically one of them, was seriously ill at Vizagapatam, but we are happy to record with a devout sense of thankfulness that the crisis is now passed. We trust that the leaders in the United Provinces, whatever political view they may hold, will see to it that he is returned to the Assembly unopposed.

A VICEREGAL WARNING.

HIS EXCELLENCY LORD READING made on Wednesday of last week at the Chelmsford Club an important pronouncement which shows clearly that, however staunch might have been the Government of India in the past in its support of the claims of Indians in the overseas parts of the Empire, the continuance of that support is no longer to be expected, now that India seeks to embark on a policy of retaliation against the offending Colonies and against the Imperial Government. His speech is in the nature of a warning that these retaliatory measures, without seriously hitting the countries against which they are aimed, will recoil on India and will but serve to antagonise the British public and the British Government, at whose hands future instalments of constitutional reform have to come. As for the risk which India runs of incurring the ill-will of the British Government, frankly, we are not concerned overmuch with the wrath of a Government which surrenders in the most abject manner imaginable to the threats of armed rebellion of the white settlers of Kenya but goes into paroxysms of rage at the bare mention, on the part of Indians, of boycott, as a means of vindicating their just cause. If England feels annoyed at these boycotts, the annoyance will, we suppose, pass away, when India gives up this peaceful method of protest and, like the white settlers, threatens to take up arms instead, in defence of her rights. As for the British people, we feel certain that they have tolerated their Government's decision on Kenya, merely because they have not yet realised that at the back of the White Paper lies not the Government's professed concern for the native African, but the violence which the Europeans threatened to use in order to preserve their immoral ascendancy. Our boycotts, puerile as they may seem to outsiders, are intended only to bring home to the British people the real inwardness of the Kenya decision and to quicken their conscience to the injustice involved in it. And, so far as the British people are concerned, we feel certain that when they are placed in possession of the true facts, they will full appreciate our efforts to have the wrong redressed by means of boycotts, the like of which they have themselves organised in their fight for freedom.

Lord Reading, however, instead of interpreting to the British public the feeling of righteous indignation which Indians seek to express by this method, chooses to expostulate with the latter for talking of boycotts at all. And his particular resentment is reserved for the method of creating a deadlock of government machinery. We have no sympathy ourselves with the "uniform, consistent and continuous obstruction" of which the Dasites love to speak, but of selective obstruction, to be used judiciously in certain well defined contingencies, we are nevertheless strong advocates. Lord Reading, of course, professes unconcern at these obstructive tactics as sure to end in fiasco, but he goes

on to say that even if they are successful, they will succeed, not in paralysing the Government, but in paralysing the reformed constitution. "The Government," he said, "is prepared to meet the situation" created by deadlocks. This threat to scrap the reforms because of the use of the well-known constitutional desire of "Grievances before Supply" is idle, because the people of Great Britain are far too experienced in methods of constitutional agitation to mistake the withholding of supplies for the sake of getting certain wrongs righted as a misuse of power. Such a refusal of money will rather be accounted unto us as a virtue. If, for instance, a bill introduced in the Legislative Assembly for imposing on Colonials certain disabilities which in the Colonies were imposed upon Indians, and if the Government, either of its own accord or because ordered to do so by the Secretary of State, opposes such a measure, the Assembly will have every justification in obstructing the legislative business of Government on suitable occasions, and we cannot imagine that the British Parliament, which has itself resorted to this procedure in order to obtain full control over the executive, will think the less of Indians because the Assembly follows in its footsteps; it will rather draw the inference that the Assembly is making fair progress towards learning the lesson of winning constitutional freedom. Whether obstruction will accelerate or impede India's advance on the path of Swaraj, will depend upon whether India uses obstruction on right occasions or on wrong occasions. If she uses it on occasions which will command the moral support of the world, the British Government will be compelled sooner or later so to revise the present constitution that India will practically be mistress of her own household. Whatever Lord Reading may say, the British Government will not be able to revoke the constitution. It all depends upon how the elected members in the Assembly and Councils play their cards.

Lord Reading also reminds us of the British Government's declaration of 1917, now embodied in the Government of India Act, which says that the future progress towards self-government will be governed partly by the co-operation Indians give in working the present constitution: as if obstruction in circumstances in which it is justifiable were opposed to co-operation. Just as constitutional co-operation includes opposition of bad measures, so it includes opposition of some good measures for the sake of making opposition of bad measures effective. It is a well-recognised method which the British Parliament understand very well. Surely Parliament does not expect India to support Government, whatever the Government may do. If, while co-operating in a general way with Government, Indian representatives are driven to oppose and obstruct, then too they will be regarded as having

justified the powers conferred upon them. Incidentally Lord Reading still seems to believe that the next revision of the Indian constitution will come up before Parliament only in 1929, ten years after the present reforms came into force. And a leaflet issued by the Government of India giving a *resumé* of the Legislative Assembly achievements mentions 1931 as the year in which in the normal course of things the Indian constitution will come up for revision! If he is so blind to the surrounding circumstances as not yet to a just see that this is an impossible policy, we can well understand why he is not able to take a just measure of the general demand for boycotts. Of the proposed boycott of the Empire Exhibition or the boycott of British and Empire goods also, the Viceroy is as contemptuous as of constitutional opposition with a view to bring about deadlocks in order to punish persistent recusancy in the Government. There is no use in arguing with the Viceroy about the practicability of these measures, but if they are found feasible, they will be of invaluable help in drawing public attention in England to Indian grievances as perhaps no other measure will, and no amount of oburgation from Olympian heights will deflect the Indian people from the straight path which after full deliberation they have determined to follow.

THE SWARAJ PARTY'S PLATFORM.

THE Swaraj Party's Election Manifesto, now published, leaves the doubtful points on which enlightenment is generally required as much in obscurity as when the Party outlined its policy in the Programme of 22nd February. Its attitude to the reforms is again emphasised as being one of uncompromising hostility, the party being convinced that the real object of the reforms is "to continue the exploitation of the unlimited resources of the country by keeping Indians permanently in a subservient position to Britain and denying them at home and abroad the most elementary right of citizenship." If this is the Party's opinion about the real nature of the reforms, it is but natural that it should make it its primary object to undo them. And one can therefore well understand that the Party pledges its members, in case its demand for the right to frame a constitution for India is rejected, "to adopt a policy of uniform, continuous and consistent obstruction within the Councils with a view to make government through the Councils impossible." But the old condition still remains, that indiscriminate obstruction is to be pursued only if its members are in a majority in the Legislatures. As it is unlikely that the Swaraj Party will obtain a majority in any Provincial Council or in the Assembly at the ensuing elections, it would have been more to the purpose if the manifesto had told us what the Party members will do when they are in a minority, and for that matter in a small minority. In Bombay Presidency, for instance, the Swaraj Party is stronger

than in many other provinces, and yet there the number of candidates it has put forward is not more than one-third of the members to be elected, and these candidates include some who do not belong to the Party. Surely if a third of the elective seats are contested by the Swaraj Party, it is not going to form a majority of the total number of members in the Bombay Council. In some other provinces the party will be in a much worse case. People therefore desire to know what the Party will do not in a contingency neverdlikely to arise, but when it forms a small little band. On this all-important point the present manifesto is silent as was the Programme issued eight months ago.

Now it seems to us that those who wish to harass Government at every turn, irrespective of the policy the latter may pursue, will feel all the greater need to obstruct when they are in a minority than when they are in a majority. If they constitute a majority, they will of course bring about a complete deadlock, but even if a deadlock is not possible by reason of their forming a minority, their very inability to create an absolute *impasse* should strengthen their determination to make the most of the little strength they possess to impede the transaction of Government business. This was precisely the programme which Mr. C. R. Das unfolded to the Amritsar Congress even before non-co-operation was thought of. If Nationalists happen to be in a minority, he said at the time, they should keep their seats vacant, as did Sinn Feiners in the British Parliament, reminding the rulers by that very fact that the Nationalists are disaffected to them. If they are in a majority, they should be in their places to offer indiscriminate opposition to every measure that may be proposed by Government. What was Mr. Das's programme before the inauguration of the non-co-operation movement is being whittled away by him into, practically, nothing now, when he is swearing by non-co-operation. For the Swarajists will not be in a majority and if in a minority they do not pledge themselves, as the Nationalists under Mr. Das were prepared to pledge themselves four years ago, either to vacate their seats or to oppose every Government measure, whatever its intrinsic merits may be. There is another point on which some further elaboration was desired. The Programme of February last said: "Before adopting a policy (of obstruction) the representatives of the Party in the Councils will, if necessary, strengthen themselves by obtaining an express mandate of the electorates in this behalf." We were curious to know whether the Party still feels the necessity of obtaining a mandate of the electorates, and if so, how and when that mandate is to be obtained. A mandate can be obtained only by winning the election on an issue. We know of scores of Swaraj party candidates who have never explained this policy of obstruction to their constituents. Do they propose after their

election to resign their seats and go to the constituencies again in order to obtain their approval for obstruction? If even when the Dasites are in a majority there is still the back door purposely left open of ascertaining the wishes of the electors, in whose name obstruction may be conveniently dropped, and if when they are in a minority there need be no talk of obstruction at all, very little remains after all of the "uniform, continuous and consistent obstruction" of which we hear so much.

So great indeed is the insistence of the Dasite Party on following obstructive tactics only when in a majority, that they go the length of saying that even if any other party invites the Swarajists to join with them for the purpose of defeating Government, they will consent to join only if they are sure that, together with the inviting party, they constitute a majority. If other members think it necessary, not in pursuance of the principle of non-co-operation, but merely on the ground of the merits of the measures that may come under discussion, to oppose Government, why should a party pledged to indiscriminate opposition insist on satisfying itself that, by joining with them in opposition, it will be able to defeat Government? The opposition is initiated by others; the responsibility for it is shouldered by them. If an opportunity thus offers without any initiative on its own part of giving some trouble to Government, surely a party which takes its pledges about uniform opposition seriously and does not put them forward merely for electioneering purposes will seize such an opportunity and will not refuse to give a little trouble because it cannot bring the Government absolutely to bay. But all these reservations force the conclusion upon our mind that the Swaraj Party does not advocate obstruction in right earnest. If, however, the Dasites mean to exercise obstructive tactics seriously, we have no doubt that they are foredoomed to failure. To occasional obstruction, necessitated by the circumstances of the case, we are not averse. But the indiscriminate obstruction of which the Swarajists speak, we hope and believe, without conviction, is a policy which we can never approve. It lacks, as Mr. Baptista said in Bombay, all moral force and cannot command the moral support of the world. In Bombay we know of several people—Mr. Jayakar being among them—who have openly condemned the Swarajist policy of obstruction and who still have signed the Swaraj Party's pledge and agreed to become its candidates! If this shows that the Dasites' intentions are different from what the words they use imply, it also shows, we are afraid, a considerable decline in the standard of probity observed by our public men.

The real political backwardness of the Swaraj Party is easily observable from behind the brave words it is fond of employing. Look at the way in which it tries to ingratiate itself with the landowning class. It says it cannot be guilty of

"such madness as to undermine the very foundations of society as it has existed for hundreds of years in India by trying to eliminate an important and influential class from it." Is after all the expropriation of landlords such a bolshevik idea that the Swarajists should so dread it? The manifesto says further: "True it is that the Party stand for justice to the tenant (how extremely apologetic!), but poor indeed will be the quality of that justice if it involves any injustice to the landlord." Cannot landlords be justly expropriated? Has the Party never heard of giving compensation to the expropriated landlords in order to remove any injustice that may be involved in that course of action? This little glimpse into the mentality of the Swarajists is far more valuable as giving a true measure of their love of democracy than all their swagger about obstruction. While their policy differs in no wise from that of others in so far as fighting the bureaucracy is concerned, they will be so completely ridden by landlords and other aristocratic interests that they will be the most serious obstruction in the way of all internal reforms.

PROTECTIVE TARIFF: SOME FALLACIES.

4. DIVERSITY OF INDUSTRIES AS A REMEDY FOR FAMINES.

AN important argument in support of the protective tariff, which has been advanced by some economists of reputation, is that the tariff fosters many industries and that diversity of industries will operate as a remedy for Indian famines. They mean that now the people of India depend mostly upon agriculture and a failure of the crops puts them out of employment. If there were many industries, then when agriculture fails they would absorb and temporarily employ the agriculturists. At present they suffer acutely because there are no such industries to give them employment. This argument is wholly fallacious. All manufacturing industries ultimately depend upon agricultural products if only in the matter of food products. If there is a failure of harvest, the supply of the raw materials of most industries will be curtailed, and their prices will rise. In such circumstances these industries will suffer directly. Other industries, especially the key industries which do not depend upon agricultural products as their raw materials, such as iron and steel, coal, petroleum, chemicals, glassware, etc, will also suffer at the same time because the dependent industries will not be able to buy as freely as before owing to the increase in their cost of production as a result of the failure of harvest. All industries, key and dependent, suffer as a result of the high price of food-stuffs, which is the result of the crop failure, and which affects their labourers. In such circumstances a state of industrial depression prevails in most industries as the demand for their products at this higher cost diminishes even when the demand schedule remains constant.

But the demand schedule cannot remain constant inasmuch as the purchasing power of those who depend upon land as also of those whose money income does *not* increase as fast as the soaring prices will diminish considerably. A further depression in the demand for ordinary articles of consumption is likely to result in India where the food expenses form a high percentage of the total expenses of the majority of the people. This is so in the case of all poor people. Therefore, the consumers will economise more in the use of other articles in order to pay higher food prices than they would have done for the rise in the price of the former only. Hence there will be a considerable reduction in the demand for the products of all industries.

The situation then will be that the cost of production of the industries will rise, and the demand even at the old price will fall as a result of the high prices of foodstuffs. Both these factors operate in the same direction to depress the industries. With higher cost and lower demand for their products, the industries, instead of being able to absorb the agricultural population to give them temporary employment in famine time, will release some of their labourers to reduce their output in order to get over the period of depression, its extent depending upon the degree of failure of the harvest. This condition of depression will react on other industries which do not directly depend upon agricultural products for their raw materials. The purchasing power of the people will be reduced. That of the ordinary industries also will be reduced. This will affect the other industries, e. g. coal, steel, leather goods, woollens, etc.

Thus we find that diversity of industries is no remedy for famines. The only solution of this problem is to find remedies for the failure of the harvest. In India it is ordinarily due to deficiency in rainfall, and provisions should be made to supplement rain water by irrigation.

Even if diversity of industries were a remedy for the distress following in the wake of the famine, it would not prove the necessity of the protective tariff. It would only prove the need of developing Indian industries. This can be done by various methods, of which the tariff is one and perhaps not the best one at that.

Another argument urged in favour of the protective tariff is that agriculture makes those engaged in it conservative, fatalist, inert and culturally backward, and that therefore industries should be developed if the country is to progress along those lines of development of culture and national character. The argument is not economic and it is not desirable that a discussion of such questions should be raised here. Nor is it necessary to enter here into a discussion of the truth or otherwise of the allegations made against agriculture. Even assuming them to be true, this proves only the case for the development of industries in India, and not that of the use of the

protective tariff. All the arguments for and against other forms of protection and the protective tariff remain intact, and the particular means which are to be used to develop industries cannot be determined by means of this argument. Therefore, as between the tariff and other means of developing industries, this argument is absolutely irrelevant.

5. PROTECTIVE AND REVENUE TARIFFS.

In some quarters there prevails an idea that India's tariff should be framed so as to be both protective and yielding a large revenue. If by this is meant that, of the whole tariff, some rates will be for revenue and some for protecting industries, no objection can be taken. But usually it is meant that the same rate should both protect an industry and yield a large revenue. In this sense the statement is wrong. This can be proved in a few words. The object of the protective tariff is to raise the internal price in order to shut out the foreign product from the home market. The object of a revenue tariff is to allow as much of imports as possible and make them pay a certain rate. If the one be effective, the other will necessarily be defeated. Within a certain zone it may be that a comparatively high tariff yields a large revenue. That zone is where the tariff is not efficient either for revenue or for protection. To the extent that it approaches the revenue tariff it loses its value as a protective measure. To the extent that it approaches the protective tariff, it loses its value as a revenue tariff. The principles of the two tariffs are contradictory. If a protective tariff is yielding a large revenue it proves that the tariff is not sufficiently high to shut out foreign competition. To that extent the protection afforded to home industries must be said to have failed. Therefore, the supporter of a wide net of protective tariff should be prepared to sacrifice the present revenue which India gets from its customs tariff. In the United States of America the revenue received from the protective part of the customs tariff is only one-eighth of the total revenue from all such duties. This is a practical point which the supporter of an indiscriminate use of the tariff for purposes of protecting Indian industries should specially note.

6. EXPORT DUTY.

Sometimes it is advocated that an export duty on raw materials, e. g., cotton, oilseeds, etc., should be levied to cheapen the cost of Indian manufactures in order to encourage them. This will reduce the price of these raw materials within the country by restricting the marginal export because the price of the articles being thus artificially raised in export, their foreign demand will fall off. But the reduction in the home price will be only temporary inasmuch as the fall in the price at home will react on the output of the commodities. The ultimate effect on the price will be determined by the amount of the marginal output at the present time. India is an old country.

and in all old countries the proportion of the marginal to the total output is great. If, as a result of the fall in the price, the supply be considerably reduced, then instead of a fall the price may rise to a higher point in final response to the export duty.

Another danger is that the commodity, if it be an agricultural product as most raw materials are, may suffer in competition with other products whose export is not checked by a tariff. Thus it suffers either way. If its marginal output be great its price is not likely to fall. If that be not so it suffers in competition with the rival products of the soil. This may be prevented by a general export tariff on all agricultural products, thereby reducing the income of all persons who depend upon the income from land, that is, more than four-fifths of the total population of India. As the number of the producers in manufacturing industries is very much less than that of the producers in agricultural industries, and as the former are normally much richer than the latter, the loss to the country will be several times more than the gain to the manufacturers. But, really speaking, there will be no gain to the latter. If the industries are given these facilities in the matter of the export tariff only for normal profits, then the manufacturers will not be gaining any special profit at the same time that the producers of the raw materials will be suffering a heavy loss. This loss is to be balanced by the gain to the consumers. If the manufactured article be such that it is widely consumed by the rural people in large quantities, than the gain to the consumers can be very great, although the gain may not be properly distributed among the losing producers of the raw materials. But it should be noted that the consumers' gain to the agricultural classes can never be equal to their loss as producers unless, contrary to facts, we assume that they produce less than they consume the manufactured article thus protected, that is, unless they are perennially bankrupt in their consumption of the products of the protected industry alone. This net loss to the agricultural classes and all those who depend upon the products of land is to be balanced against the net gain to the other classes who gain as consumers but do not suffer any loss because they do not produce the taxed raw materials. Apparently the former are more numerous and less able to stand loss than the latter. Thus the balance seems to be very much against the country as a whole. The above argument assumes that the protected industry flourishes under the export duty and the prosperity is reflected in reduced prices. If the prices do not fall either because the industry is not prospering or because of combinations, none of the advantages come to the consumers and the loss to the agriculturists is a net loss to the country. The real value of the gain to a few manufacturers must be considered as negligible from the point of view of the whole country.

Again there is a third danger. We have seen that the imposition of an export duty upon one agricultural raw material will be futile so long as its rivals are left with a free market for sale. Therefore, to be comprehensive and effective, all the raw materials must be so taxed as also other agricultural products. In this case we have seen the balance to be against the country. But there is foreign competition with our goods which are exported. The ability of an article to bear an export duty depends wholly upon its position in the external market. If it has strong rivals in other countries, it will not be able to stand a higher price as a result of the export duty. In such circumstances the foreign demand for our article will be very elastic in the downward movement of the quantity but not necessarily in the contrary direction. This is the worst position for a commodity selling in competition. The danger is of losing the foreign market and thereby inflicting greater injury on the producers and the traders of that article than was contemplated in the calculation for gains and losses while imposing the export duty.

The amount of the export duty is an important factor. To be effective as a protective measure it must be sufficiently high so that the price of the raw material will be so reduced at home as to bring about a substantial fall in the cost of production of the protected industry and thereby enable it to compete with similar articles of foreign manufacture. But any heavy tariff means danger to the external market of that commodity. At one time saltpetre was considered to be able to bear a heavy duty. This was imposed and we have now lost the trade altogether. Apparently only those of our products in which we have a monopoly of production can be charged substantial export duties. I think that there is no such commodity except jute, which has not got a strong rival in foreign countries. In jute also the duty can be only at a moderate rate. Its extent must be fixed by the comparative difference between jute and other fibres as articles of consumption, that is, such a duty must not raise the price of jute, in the external market, to such an extent as to sweep away the difference in the prices of jute and other fibres, say, cotton, as compared with their use as articles of consumption. Even this comparative advantage will remain to jute only so long as jute or another substitute is not discovered in other countries, efforts for finding which are now vigorous, especially on the continent of America, both North and South.

PRAFULLACHANDRA BASU.

STOCKS OF RAILWAY STORES.

IN para. 21 of its report, dated the 19th July 1920, the Stores Purchase Committee said:

"In view of the very large sums at present lying idle in stock depots, especially in those of railways, we consider it well to draw attention to the desirability of

instituting searching periodical inspections of all such depots to ensure a full enquiry into the details of the stocks held, how they compare with issues, and the periods for which the different classes of articles are held in stock before issue, with the view of ascertaining whether, and if so in what directions, stock balances can be reduced and really surplus stock got rid of."

At the end of the year 1917-18, the value of stores, etc., not finally charged off in the accounts stood at the high figure of Rs. 11,70,46,000; by the end of 1918-19, it rose to Rs. 13,89,68,000, an increase of Rs. 2,19,22,000; by the end of 1919-20 it mounted up to Rs. 21,69,02,000; an increase over 1917-18 of Rs. 9,98,56,000; the end of 1920-21 found the balance at the still higher figure of Rs. 26,17,72,000; an increase over 1917-18 of Rs. 14,47,26,000; while on the 31st March 1922 it rose up to the unprecedentedly large figure of Rs. 30,41,90,000 against Rs. 11,70,46,000 on the 31st March 1918. (Col. 13 of Appendix 4 to the Railway Administration Report for 1921-22.) In four years the stocks of railway stores have been more than doubled in spite of the fact that the Rs. 12 crores of stores in 1917-18 was itself an undesirably large balance to hold. No notice was apparently taken of the recommendation of the Stores Purchase Committee, or some mention of it would have been made in the Railway Administration Reports for 1920-21 and 1921-22. But instead the public is informed of the grand feats performed by the Indian Railways in having purchased materials totalling in value the "enormous" figure of Rs. 30¼ crores in 1920-21 and the "record" figure of Rs. 38.61 crores in 1921-22.

The Indian Retrenchment Committee of 1922-23 has therefore done a distinct public service in inviting pointed attention to the huge stocks of stores maintained by railways, since none of the accounts and statistics published by Government give any information on this point to the public, although it is the public who, in the long run, have to pay the piper for extravagance in this direction. There was a time when Government did publish a great deal of information on this point through their Railway Administration Reports; but latterly the information has ceased to figure in these publications, presumably because it was held that it was not of much public interest. In view, however, of the greater interest taken by the public in railway matters it is highly desirable that the information should be re-introduced in these reports. In paragraph 32 at page 78 of its report, the Committee says:

"We are informed that the total amount of capital locked up in suspense account at the end of 1921-22 amounted to over Rs. 34 crores, and that, for some railways, the figures shown in the foregoing table represent the total value of certain specified stores and not the total value of all stores held. It is stated that the book value of many items is considerably above their present market price, in some cases by as much as 50 per cent.

We understand that the stocks of stores held on March 31st, 1922, were swollen by large arrivals of indents in the closing months of 1921-22, too late for issue before the end of the financial year and also by the strike on the East Indian Railway, which resulted in delay in the

carrying out of the works. We consider, however, that, allowing for this, the stocks of stores held are on an extravagant scale and we recommend that steps be taken by a careful scrutiny of indents to effect an early and very substantial reduction."

Item 23 at page 4087 of the Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. III, states that "The figure of Rs. 34 crores is not correct. It should be Rs. 23¼ crores." We shall not attempt a reconciliation between the figures of Rs. 30 crores, Rs. 34 crores and Rs. 23¼ crores, because in railway accounts as they stand at present reconciliation would be a hopeless task. The broad fact which stands out and has to be remembered is that the stocks of stores at present maintained are on an extravagant scale. It is not contended by Government that even the lowest figure of Rs. 23¼ crores is not extravagant or that it does not contain the element of understatement pointed out by the Committee. There is also another element of understatement besides that referred to by the Committee. It will be noticed from paragraph 6516 of Vol. III of the report of the Indian Railway Committee of 1920-21 that interest charges on the amount at the debit of the Stores Suspense account are all borne by revenue. It is clear that the balance of Rs. 23¼ crores referred to above does not include interest charges, which may amount to anything above Rs. 1 crore per annum. There are several other directions in which the Stores Account, like other railway accounts, falls short of a real commercial account, and we have no doubt that when the Financial Commissioner now attached to the Railway Board comes to examine the position, the account will be put on a proper footing. But no amount of perfection in book-keeping will do away with the large accumulations of stores. Item 23 at page 4087 of the Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. III, gives an indication of the steps which are being taken with a view to reducing the enormous stores balances. This reduction must be a slow process and must take a few years to materialize; and now that pointed attention has been attracted to it, we have no doubt that the reduction will take place. But what must afterwards be guarded against is an insidious recrudescence of these balances, once they have been brought down to the normal. There are obviously severe limitations on the capacity of a distant central body like the Railway Board or the Railway Commission to keep an effective check from day to day on any tendency towards a relapse.

Amongst the conditions favourable to the growth and continued existence of bloated stores balances few are so potent for mischief and likely to elude notice as the machinery for Stores control as it exists on railways, the procedure it has to adopt and the divided responsibility inseparable therefrom. All work connected with the purchase, custody and issue of stores and the maintenance of stores ledgers for all the various departments of a railway is concentrated in a separate department called the Stores department. This depart-

ment is only one of the several which together constitute the organization termed 'railway management' and no department is more intimately connected with every one of its sister departments than the Stores department. The organization of the East Indian railway, for instance, is divided into no less than 11 departments, viz., (1) the Agency, (2) the Engineering, (3) the Locomotive, (4) the Electrical, (5) the Carriage and Wagon, (6) the Colliery, (7) the Traffic, (8) the Audit and Accounts, (9) the Stores, (10) the Medical, and (11) the Printing. The Stores department is the agent for the purchase of stores for all these departments. Purchases are of two kinds, viz.,

I. Special purchases relating to stores required against definite works in progress or proposed to be undertaken in the immediate future. These stores remain in the custody of the Stores department for only a limited period.

II. Stock purchases relating to consumable stores and stores for repairs and petty renewals usually required in the course of the working of a railway. It is these stores which have to remain in the custody of the Stores department for an indefinite period and form almost exclusively the stock in the hands of that department.

We are at present concerned with class II only. This class may be divided into two sub-classes, viz.,

(a) Stores obtained from England,

(b) Stores purchased in the country.

For stores under sub-class (a) heads of departments prepare annual forecasts of the requirements which specially concern their departments, allowing some margin as a factor of safety, to avoid running short before the next supply arrives. These are then sent on to the Stores department where a similar allowance is again made as a margin of safety. This procedure, assisted further by a change in plans or design or policy, naturally leads to stores becoming surplus. This process goes on from year to year and the lists of surplus stores become longer and longer with each succeeding year. (Cf. paras. 6 and 7 at page 202 of Vol. II of the report of the Stores Purchase Committee of 1920.) Further, many consumers, particularly in the technical departments like the locomotive, have their own pet fancies as to what suits their work best and changes in the personnel of the consuming departments also act as a contributory cause in creating surplus or obsolete stores. What has been described here as happening with regard to imported stores also applies to stores falling under sub-class (b), i. e. stores available in the country, although only to a very limited extent. The net result is that, as pointed out by Mr. D. L. McPherson in his evidence before the Stores Purchase Committee, "majority of the items in the surplus lists are of imported stores." Articles purchased in the country also become surplus, but since they are

available without the long notice required in the case of English stores, the items which go into the surplus lists are few in number and small in quantity and in aggregate money value. The largest portion of the amount of capital locked up in Stores Suspense Account is on account of stores obtained from England. It would be impossible to ascertain whether, and if so how far, the present dropsical stores balances have been assisted by the increasingly generous grants of recent years for railway capital expenditure, or by gratitude for the immense sacrifices made by British investors in subscribing to "the East India Loans", or by sympathy with the unemployed in England. Lists of surplus stores are exchanged between different railway administrations but have never fulfilled the purpose for which they are issued, although the ceremony of exchange is still performed with religious solemnity. In the end the stores have to be disposed for small or scrap value, involving large losses. With the present system in force it is impossible to create and maintain in the different consuming departments a real genuine interest in keeping stores balances down to the lowest possible limit or make them effectively responsible for inflated balance.

The Stores department is in charge of an officer who is given the high-sounding but hardly appropriate designation of Controller of Stores. A Controller cannot control unless his status, experience and knowledge of the uses and suitability of the stores required by the various departments of a railway—particularly the technical departments—are such as will invest his judgment of the reasonableness or unreasonableness of the departmental demands or opinions with a weight and an authority which cannot be challenged. All these essentials are absent in the present organization. The status of the Controller of Stores is at best equal, if not inferior, to that of the heads of the other departments. His experience of the technical departments—for it is from these that the most expensive and heavy demands arise—is always inferior to that of the heads of the consuming technical departments, while his knowledge of the work of these departments is still more inferior. Nor can it be otherwise. It is a physical impossibility for one man to combine in himself the maximum qualifications of the heads of all the departments. Until more recent times a Controller with experience of even one of the several branches of engineering was a *rara avis*. Even now it is not always the case that the Controller has technical experience. There are no doubt some railway administrations where the Controller has graduated in one or other of the different branches of engineering. But this is obviously not enough. The consequence is that the so-called Controller is for all practical purposes a mere shop-keeper. He can of course enforce his decisions with the borrowed authority of the Agent of the railway, but in none of the essentials except that of status, is this latter officer either any better circumstanced

than the Controller himself. The only solution of the problem lies in decentralizing the work of this department and transferring the different portions thereof to the consuming departments and making those departments responsible in all matters in which the Stores department is now held to be responsible, although it does not, because it cannot, possess the means of carrying out those responsibilities efficiently. Such a decentralization would pay for itself in the way of economy and increased efficiency, and more than pay for itself when the grouping of railways recommended by the Indian Retrenchment Committee takes place.

ECONOMY.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE.

The French Colonial Empire. FROM fragments of painted stucco frieze recently recovered by Sir A. Evans, that famous excavator of the Minoan civilization, which flourished in Crete down to 3000 years ago, it would appear that this once mighty Empire, now believed to have formed the cultural stepping stone from ancient Egypt to classic Greece, employed Negro troops. Pictures of the fair sex of Mykenæ, in their pleated skirts and many frills, had reminded one of nothing so much as of the modern *Parisienne*: now this revelation of Negro armies buttressing the Cretan Empire seems once more to force upon one French parallels. In modern France it has of course become a commonplace to say that France is not a nation of 39, but of 100 millions—the balance of 61 millions referring to the “black Frenchmen” who inhabit the French Empire, which by its composition is predominantly African, as the following synopsis will show :

French Colonial Empire	Area in 1000 sq. miles	Population in lakhs
in Africa	4821	357.73
in Asia	256	172.69
in America	33	4.59
in Oceania	9	.81
Total	5119	535.82

As will be seen, exact statistics reduce the total of the round figure of 100 millions to 92.8 millions—but the point of importance remains that the 39 millions of Frenchmen are almost exactly counterbalanced by 36 millions of Africans.

Afro-Latinism. AS is further well known, the French policy is definitely in the direction of “welding their colonial empire into one whole with France herself”, as General Mangin put it the other day (Aug. 26th) at Strasbourg. General Mangin is a great Negro enthusiast, who was in charge of the African troops during the war and who, in season and out of season, insists that the African is perfectly well fitted for life in temperate climes. That indeed is obvious from the fact of the Negro thriving in North America, and with a dwindling French population in France it is

indeed quite conceivable that in time to come the balance will increasingly be made up of the black Frenchmen from the Senegal and Niger. The total population in March 1921 amounted for France (including Alsace-Lorraine) to 39,309,766, whilst in March 1911 the figure (which then did not include Alsace-Lorraine) came to 39,601,509: a decrease of four lakhs, to which however has to be added the six lakhs, population of Alsace-Lorraine, i. e. a total shrinkage of a million in a decade. Worse still, of the 39 millions enumerated in 1921 more than 1½ millions were foreigners! Thus there is of course little wonder that French statesmen have for more than a generation worried, how to keep up France's position in a world, which—quite unlike France—does not decrease, but steadily increases in population. The French—like all Latins—having no colour-line tradition, it is for them a most natural thing therefore to turn to their overseas compatriots, to make up the numbers. The Paris *Temps* some time ago protested mordantly against the contemptuous attitude to ‘niggers’ of Americans visiting France. “This is France,” the article ran. “Our forefathers did not write their Declaration of the Rights of Man, for us to forget its letter nor its spirit. These black people come from French colonies. Whatever their status—citizens, subjects, or *protégés*—they are our compatriots, and we treat them as such. Hence we expect our visitors to obey our rule which proceeds not from our laws, but from our character, in virtue of which all Frenchmen form one grand family, from which none are disinherited, whatever their race or the colour of their skin.”

Anglo-Saxon Presumption. THIS is fine language indeed: and one wonders what the British Empire might be, if its policy had been as free of colour prejudice as the French Empire's. But then, the latter does not include India. The French Empire of 93 millions would be quite comparable with a British Empire excluding India, which would number 130 millions, of whom 60 millions are whites, 40 negroes and 30 “others.” But there is India with its 315 millions. It cannot be swallowed, as the French may hope to swallow their Africans: and that is where the rub comes in. It is India, which makes the whole of the current British conception of the British Empire impossible—simply, because it is physically impossible to “tack on” 315 millions to 130 millions. Or rather to 60 millions, for it is only the “whites” of course that count in Anglo-Saxon eyes. (These sixty millions are distributed, 45 in Europe, 7 in Canada, 7 in Australasia and 1 in Africa.) The 315 millions of India might agree to a partnership agreement with the 130 of the Empire: but agree to a subordinate status? Why, the thing is permanently impossible and all the dreamstuff of which Imperial Conferences are made cannot prevail against this solid, t ubborn, natural fact. There is only one othe^r

country comparable with India, and that is China. Both form a solid cultural unit of such magnitude, that all other units are dwarfed by comparison. 35 crores of Chinese form a solid block which—like the 30 crores of Indians—may perhaps enter into some new form of symbiosis or mutual adaptation with one or more other cultural units: but it is quite impossible that any such other unit could ever swallow either China or India. We subtract from the latter Burma, which for cultural purposes we would rather combine with the rest of Indo-China and with Malaysia, all of which form a definite cultural type of their own.

The World's Cultural Units.

EVEN so, India remains at 30 crores: and it is interesting to compare with such size that of the main other cultural units of which, roughly, humanity is made up today. The so-called "White" race, it is true, numbers 70 crores of human beings: but it is quite misleading to base a division of mankind, except for anthropological reasons, on any physical feature. What unites and separates human beings, is their respective *ethos*; and amongst the "Whites" we can distinguish four such *ethes*—Anglosaxon, Latin, Teuton and Slav—which are of so fundamental a nature, as to make it quite impossible to lump all "Whites" together as one cultural unit: a fact, well illustrated by the complete absence of the colour line amongst Latins and Slavs and its typical manifestation amongst Teutons and Anglo-Saxons. The latter two units, it is true, are tending to converge into what has been called "Nordics": a process, deliberately fostered by the United States. At present there are 18 crores of Anglo-Saxons and 12 crores of Teutons (i. e. Germans, Scandinavians and Dutch): the Nordics therefore, if such a cultural unit corresponds to the facts, if not of the present, at least of the immediate future, would therefore actually equal India in size. On the other hand, if the Latins (25 crores all told) were to amalgamate with or absorb the Negroes (10 crores at present) they would even equal the Chinese block in size. But it is not conceivable that all Negroes could come within the Latin orbit—notably not those of the United States for instance. If so, one ought perhaps to put down both the Nordic and the Afro-Latin block as of equal size, say, 32 crores each. From this point of view, mankind might be divided into the following cultural units:

Chinese	35 crores.
Nordic	32
Afro-Latin	32
Indian	30
Slav	15
Levant	10 (i. e. the Moslem world from Morocco to Afghanistan).
Japanese	8
Malaysian	8
	<hr/>
	170 crores.

This may seem a strange and novel way of looking at things but, whatever its immediate practical results, it anyhow ought to supply a much needed perspective for the relative position assigned by the nature of things to India on the one hand and to the rest of the British Empire on the other. And at that one might leave it.

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