

THE Servant of India

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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

THE Colonial Secretary's announcement that his policy in Kenya will be directed towards the fostering of an indigenous peasantry on the West African model, is a direct reversal of the former idea of turning the country into a huge *latifundium* for the benefit of Lord Delamere and friends, and this deserves every praise. We also hope that the *Observer's* information is correct and that Mr. J. H. Thomas is planning an Empire Labour Conference to take place during the Empire Exhibition in London, in order to consider "trade, emigration and the status of subjects within the Empire." This seems to us a master stroke and we expect nothing but good from an attempt of bringing together the Dick, Tom and Harrys and the Bapu, Rama and Haris (not excepting the Harry Thakurs!) of the Empire. After the old style confabulations of the Empire's Elder Statesmen in Imperial Conference assembled, this new departure comes refreshingly and with the promise of getting an actual move on. For one thing it is obviously impossible to leave Imperial citizenship, where Gen. Smuts' reciprocity counsel of despair has landed it. For another, much of the colour-bar sentiment being economic, it is high time that, instead of talking about "protecting" an industry with a view to higher profits for employers, discussion would begin to centre around the "protection" of industries which enforce an Eight Hour Day and such like things. The solidarity of all the world's workers is a fact: as long as any sweating is possible anywhere, capital is bound to use the result-

ant low costs to depress the standard of life of workers everywhere else too. But as long as white workers—as in Africa—pose as an *elite*, from which "lesser breeds" are vigorously excluded, they merely spite their aristocratic face by cutting off their nose.

* * *

SIR LESLIE WILSON as Governor of **The Bombay Strike.** Bombay is more and more confirming the excellent opinion which the people of the Presidency have been forming about him. His memorable attitude in the release of Mr. Gandhi, not to mention that of Mr. Savarkar; his frank retreat out of the Borsad impasse; his altogether admirable speech at the opening of the Provincial legislature: have now been followed up by his reception of three striking mill workers at Government House. The Governor's unqualified desire for the spread and strengthening of trade-unions and his appointment of a Court of Enquiry on the avowed model of the one which only so recently was able to terminate the English dockers' strike, are further evidence for the faithfulness with which he is trying to work in the spirit now animating Whitehall. It is true that his appointments to the "Committee to enquire into the dispute between the cotton mill-owners and workers" have been criticized, and we believe, not without just cause. The analogous English Court of Enquiry (set up under the Industrial Courts Act) consisted of a legal Chairman, the Secretary of the Operative Cotton Spinners' Association and the Vice President of the Shipbuilding Employers' Federation. In Bombay we have a legal Chairman, a municipal commissioner and a mill-owner: which on the face of it shows that the English parallel has not been closely followed in the one point paramount, viz. that of ensuring workers' representation on the Committee. At the same time we feel that the Bombay strikers are too much looking upon the Committee as a Court and too little as a platform from which to broadcast the respective living conditions and remuneration of employers and employees. If they had their Ernest Bavin (the dockers' counsel), who would cross-examine mill owners on their present and past profits and reserves, and mill workers on their family budgets: we make bold to say that with judicious publicity of the facts thus elicited, such an appeal to the public conscience could be made, that even the most powerful interests of Bombay capital could not stand up against it. Lord Devon-

port (the head of the dock employers) is notorious for his cold business and inhuman rigidity; but even he quailed at the prospect of cross-examination by Mr. Bevin and thus—though an English Industrial Court of Enquiry can decide and enforce nothing—he and his fellow employers gave in on the very first day that the Court sat.

* * *

WHAT is one to say to a Legislative Council which refuses to consider so urgent and so beneficial a bill as that published in the Gazette of Dec. 6th and we dealt with it comprehensively in our issue of Dec. 27th, so that there is no need for us to enlarge again on the admirable features of this progressive piece of legislation. To have thrown out this measure, seems to us to expose the Swarajist party in the Bombay Council to a charge of refined cruelty and party malice, which will be singularly difficult to refute. Particularly would we ask our Moslem fellow-countrymen, whether they really believe that they are advantaging the cause of their religion, by using it as a never-failing stalking horse, whenever the cause of humanity is to be throttled. As for Mr. Nariman's sneer that if political prisoners received no consideration, children in the charge of bullies, thieves and prostitutes need not expect any either—it deserves to be ranked with the brilliant "Liberal" suggestion that, if the Swarajists withhold supplies, the Government should close its hospitals and let the wretched poor go and die. If the nationalist issue in India did not still overcloud all and every other, there surely ought to go up such a howl of execration at such dastardly tactics, as would close for good the political career of all implicated. At all events the *Voice of India* deserves the applause of every right thinking person for having in its leader (of the 25th Inst.) so nobly risen above mere party shibboleths and refused in any way to countenance this latter day slaughter of innocents.

* * *

SOME time last year (in our issue of July 6th) we commented on the enquiry made by the French Government into the effects of the Eight-Hour Day, made law in France April 23rd 1919. We then had before us the result of the enquiries in Paris; we now have received the result of the enquiries made elsewhere, in the provinces (Bulletin du Ministère du Travail, July—September), which amply bear out the conclusions previously arrived at, viz. that increase of leisure is directly proportionate to decrease of alcoholism. Thus the inspector from the department of La Manche reports that "at the time when a long and tiring working day was the custom, frequent interruptions took place in order that the workers might stimulate their flagging energies by taking spirits." The inspector from the Cher district states that

"the reduction of the working day, wisely limiting as it does the worker's physical effort and the duration of mental tension, has resulted in the disuse among working classes of the artificial stimulants previously used to revive their exhausted powers. The worker has resumed the family life which he lost during the course of the last century, on account of the new conditions imposed by large-scale industry. He no longer lives in and for the work-place, going home only to sleep. His life is spent in his own family circle from which he is absent only for the few hours of his working day; and his inclination for reading has become general."

The Southern region, where alcoholism never was rife (this is the wine-growing region *par excellence*), the 8 hour day "has not had the effect of encouraging intemperance" either. Lyons district confirms that "temperance is on the increase among the working classes." The inspectors of the N. W. region say that "the consumption of cider and wine [fermented liquor of low alcoholic percentage] is very considerable, whilst that of spirits [distilled liquor of high alcoholic strength] has considerably decreased." The department of the Oise records "a decided improvement from the time when the Eight Hour Act came into force. The habit of frequenting drink shops has partially given place to that of attending cinemas; and there remains not the smallest plot of uncultivated land." "The advent of the Eight Hour day," says the inspector at Nancy, "has permitted the healthy utilisation of workers' leisure and the amelioration of their moral condition", and in addition to work in their little allotment gardens (which everywhere take up most of the spare time gained by the worker) and to frequenting cinemas, he mentions development of sports' clubs and study courses. The evidence thus is once more quite clear that drunkenness is merely a means of escape from intolerable conditions, as we have previously contended, and that the rational method of dealing with the phenomenon is not, to prohibit drinking, but the inhuman conditions which give rise to it.

* * *

PROBABLY the most important event in world politics during the past week has been the further acceleration with which the *franc* is running after the late *mark*. For the first time in history the *franc* of the French Government is worth less than the *lira* of the Italian Government, which in plain language means that the chances of a French treasury bond holder, getting the gold value of his bond paid in full, are now deemed even less than those of his Italian confrere. That reflection—such is the prestige complex!—will be the most galling of all for French people to bear; and that the one man whom now even France recognizes as being the main cause of such humiliation is not summarily superseded as Premier, is only due to another prestige complex, viz. that France must not be seeming to dismiss M. Poincaré at the behest of Mr. MacDonald!

DURING THE LULL.

BETWEEN the tempest created by Sir Malcolm Hailey's speech and the tempest which only awaits Lord Olivier's announcement to break out, there is now a lull—employed by much speculation and preparation. Curiously enough, in all the recent comments we have seen on Sir Malcolm Hailey's speech we have so far come across not a single reference to what seems to us the only hypothesis which will combine the known sympathies of the British Labour Cabinet and the apparently unsympathetic refusal on the part of the Home Member to agree to any Round Table Conference or Royal Commission: viz. the announcement by Lord Olivier of administrative measures which will constitute a generous advance towards *Swaraj* without going outside the legal four corners of the Government of India Act. That such is quite possible, is an established fact: and it is a melancholy commentary on the complete pessimism with which India looks upon its government that no Indian publicist seems to have ever considered it as even imaginable, that progress by such method offers not merely the best, but even any chances at all for success. But what prevents Lord Olivier from transferring—*ex animo*—"transferred" subjects? What prevents the appointment as Home Member and Leader of the House of one who actually commands the support of the majority of the members of the Assembly? Certainly not the Government of India Act.

* * *

Meanwhile India has been cheered by the excellent "Statement" issued—we venture to hope, in advance—by the Executive Committee of the Independent Labour Party on the subject of Indian Reforms. Perhaps it has escaped notice so far that the same I. L. P. Committee passed a resolution on Jan. 25th in favour of full and unconditional recognition of the Soviet Government—a recognition announced to the world on Feb. 1st. Again, on the 20th inst. the I. L. P. has addressed the public—this time on Indian self-determination. And on the 26th Lord Olivier was to make his announcement in the Lords. As we write, we have no news of the latter, and therefore would leave it at that. Only that much would we add that the *New Leader*, the official organ of the I. L. P., on the 1st inst. commented on Mr. MacDonald's message to the *Hindu* in words which we would quote in full:

Mr. MacDonald has written a preface to the relations of his Government with India. There is much more to be said, and he will say it. It was well to utter an emphatic warning to certain Indian parties against tactics of violence or obstruction. There were, however, other sentences in the message, which will have to be underlined no less heavily, as we go on. The invitation to the Indians "to come nearer to us" was not quoted, for some reason or other, either by Signor Mussolini or the *Times* when they expressed their admiration for this message, nor have we seen much comment on the concluding passage, and its "appeal to the British authorities," that "the ap-

proach and the goodwill should be mutual." These are as much the guiding thoughts of Mr. MacDonald's mind, as the sentences which conveyed his detestation of violent methods. On these we know that his own policy will be based. So to act, in the short span of time given to us, that there will be less cause for the despair which drives men to obstruction and violence—that will be the aim of our positive policy.

* * *

In India most speculation now is concerned with the attitude the Swarajists will adopt if Lord Olivier's announcement should not commend itself to that party. It is assumed that in that case they will block the budget and obstruct generally, with all the resultant agitation throughout the country and provocation of Government; and the usual chain of action and reaction. What constructive policy should in such circumstances the Constitutionalists pursue? In this respect it is claimed that the National Convention idea of Mrs. A. Besant holds the field. Launched last year under the presidency of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, it has just held its second session. During the interval it has published much literature on the subject including several very valuable pamphlets representing much labour and research. It has also organized in England some very useful bodies to help directly or indirectly our propaganda. In fact at the present moment, when the Congress has destroyed its official connection in Great Britain and the Liberal party's machinery in that country has broken down, the Services of the British Auxiliary and the Indian Parliamentary Committee are of incalculable value. Its propaganda in India is carried on through *New India* and Dr. Besant, as General Secretary, gives her energy and organising capacity unstintedly to its work, her Theosophical friends, both in India and England, being as a rule equally enthusiastic workers in the same cause. The plan too has a good deal to commend it: constitutional, it is calculated to draw out the self reliance, the skill and genius of our people and at the same time it is likely to appeal to England. Its defect as compared with the Round Table Conference and the Royal Commission is that it is not likely to commend the support or countenance of Government. But even that only enhances the element of self-determination in this plan.

* * *

This plan may be slow and laborious and it has also another difficulty. Having to deal with heterogeneous members—Mahommadans, non-Brahmans, Zamindars, depressed classes—it may come on acute difficulties which both Round Table Conference and Royal Commission will have to encounter but which, unlike it, they would be without the established Government's authority to determine after deliberation. These communal adjustments in India are doubtless the principal stumbling block and the best solution that could be attained would certainly be by mutual understandings, without the aid of government. Of these immediately needed understandings not the least surely should be that

between this National Convention and the Swaraj Party. The very fact that the Convention is to consist primarily of elected members of the legislatures—so many of whom are Swarajists—should facilitate such understanding: in any case it is only commonsense to expect that the Convention supporters ought to give the Swarajists every facility for joining them in their emprise. Though the former do not and cannot approve of the idea of intransigent obstruction, is it commonsense for them to go on attacking the Swarajists in season and out of season and thus further to exacerbate feelings in the country?

* * * *

The one thing needed is for both to rise above mere party considerations and to turn into any avenue that will lead to unity. This spirit will be particularly necessary if a truly representative deputation is to go to England: an idea which is increasingly gaining ground. The Deputation idea of course is not an alternative, but ancillary to any of the other methods embarked upon. Whatever happens, the present British Government and friends of India in Great Britain must be kept in live touch with the course of opinion here. For whatever goodwill there may be on the part of Mr. MacDonald and his associates: it cannot act *in vacuo*.

THE CENSUS REPORT.—II. LITERACY.

To no chapter of the census report does one turn more eagerly than to that on literacy, or education as it used to be called in previous reports. We are conscious of our illiteracy being colossal, we are quite ashamed of it and long to know that it is fast disappearing. But, alas, the census report only reveals that we are progressing at a very, very slow rate, a rate which is not at all in keeping with our claims for political advancement or other national aspirations. The test of literacy was the same in the last census as in the previous one, viz. ability to read a letter and write a reply. To some extent the figures of literacy are bound to be inaccurate because there are some persons who are able to read but not able to write, like Muhammadans who have learnt to read the Koran in Arabic but cannot write in that language. It would be the natural ambition of such people to claim ability both to read and write. On the other hand, the tendency of the enumerators would be to enter as literate only those who have completed the fourth standard course in primary schools. "In the North-West Frontier Province where the sword is more respected than the pen, there is said to have been some reluctance on the part of the tribesmen to confess to so unmanly a quality as literacy". The inaccuracy introduced by these factors cannot, however, be great and as the test of literacy has been the same in the last two censuses there is nothing to vitiate comparison.

The progress of literacy during the decade revealed by the census report does not correspond with the educational statistics published by the Government of India. Ac-

ording to the Quinquennial Report for 1917-22 the average number of pupils under primary instruction every year during the decade was about 5½ millions. Supposing that a pupil becomes literate in the meaning of the census in five years, the increase of literates during the decade should be about 11 millions. If we allow a decrease of 2 millions, on account of the death of literates, which is in fact too high an allowance, there should be a net increase of at least 9 millions or about 3 percent of the whole population, or 30 per mille. What instead we actually find is an increase of only 8 per mille, from 63 to 71. One explanation is that a considerable proportion of the pupils leave school too early. Another that has been offered is that after leaving school a good many relapse into illiteracy. The latter reason cannot be operative on a large scale. These explanations are at any rate insufficient to account for the entire discrepancy. The matter needs to be enquired into carefully by the Government.

Following the practice of European countries, the present report has compared the number of literates not, with the entire population as in former reports, but with the population from which children under five years are excluded. The comparison will be still fairer if children under ten years are excluded. The following table gives the number of literates during the last three censuses in the important Provinces and States per thousand inhabitants aged ten years and over:

	Number of literates per mille all ages 10 and over.					
	Males.			Females.		
	1921	1911	1901	1921	1911	1901
India	161	140	129	23	13	9
Provinces	167	147	134	22	14	9
Burma	576	496	498	123	79	57
Bengal	210	187		23	15	
Madras	199	193	160	26	17	12
Bombay	181	158	148	30	17	11
Assam	144	117	89	15	8	6
Bihar and Orissa	114	104		7	5	
C. P. and Berar	103	87	79	10	4	3
Punjab	90	84	86	8	6	4
U. P.	85	78	75	8	6	3
States	127	107	100	29	12	8
Travancore	425	329	183	178	64	39
Cochin	355	329	302	127	79	59
Baroda	277	229	199	52	25	9
Mysore	163	142		24	15	
Rajaputana Agency	81	79	75	5	3	3
Central India Agency	76	64	68	7	3	4
Hyderabad	65	67	70	9	5	4

It will be seen that while the growth of literacy is painfully slow all over the country, except in Burma and Travancore, the rate expressed in proportion is a little better among females than among males. But the absolute increase among females from 9 to 23 in the last two decades is much less than the increase among males from 129 to 161. Of the British Provinces, Burma has made good progress in the last decade in both male and female literacy. In female literacy Bombay has progressed better than Madras and Bengal. Assam has made fairly good progress in the last two decades particularly in male literacy and is qualifying for a place among the more advanced provinces. The Central Provinces and Berar have made during the last decade considerably more progress than the United Provinces, Bihar and Orissa and the Punjab, which have advanced woefully little, especially in female literacy. Though the purdah system prevails in Bengal as rigidly as in these provinces, there is a striking difference in female literacy between that province and these.

Among the States, Travancore easily holds the first place. It should be warmly congratulated on the splendid progress it has made during the last decade in respect of both male and female literacy. Its achievement is a shining example for other States and for the British Provinces. In male literacy it comes next only to Burma, but if efficiency is considered, perhaps it should be placed higher than Burma where the schools are mostly monastic. In female literacy Travancore is decidedly the first in the field. It is instructive to see how Travancore has forged ahead of Cochin, which itself is more advanced than any British province or Indian State except Burma. In 1911 Cochin and Travancore started with the same literacy in males—329 per mille—but while Cochin reached 365 in 1921, Travancore achieved as much as 425. In female literacy Cochin started with a clear advantage—79 against 64—but at the end of the decade we find Travancore with 178 against 127 of Cochin. It is remarkable that both these enlightened States have achieved more absolute progress by means of voluntary attendance than Baroda with the help of compulsion. Indeed the progress made by the latter is very disappointing, considering what one expects of compulsion. The figures relating to Mysore also are very disappointing, Mysore, which during the greater part of the decade enjoyed the progressive administration of Sir M. Visvesvaraya. It is much behind Bengal, Madras and Bombay in male literacy and has not made as much progress in female literacy as Bombay, let alone Travancore, Cochin and Baroda. The Rajputana and Central India Agencies are behind the most backward British Provinces while Hyderabad shows the extraordinary phenomenon of a steady fall from decade to decade in male literacy. This cannot be due to heavy mortality by influenza, for everywhere it was naturally greater among the illiterate

masses than among the literate classes and has to some extent improved the proportion of literates in the population. The only explanation that one can think of is that there has been an undesirable emigration of literate people from the State, which it will do well to prevent by making life in the State more attractive by means of administrative improvements. It sounds absurd but nevertheless it is a fact that Cochin which has less than a million population has more female literates than Hyderabad which has more than 12 million inhabitants, and Travancore with a population of only 4 millions has more than double the female literates that the United Provinces have with a population of 46 millions.

The following table gives, by religion and sex, literacy per mille and literacy in English per 10,000 of all ages of 5 and over :

	Literacy per mille.		Literacy in English per 10,000	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
All Religions	139	31	160	18
Hindu	130	16	160	7
Musalman	93	9	98	3
Buddhist	554	110	97	13
Sikh	107	16	131	5
Christian	555	210	1,295	761
Jain	575	87	414	18
Zoroastrian	854	731	5,704	2,587
Tr	16	1	6	

That the Sikhs should have a lower literacy than the Hindus is surprising. It is said to be due to the conversion during the decade of large numbers of illiterate low caste Hindus. In fact on account of this conversion the literacy figure (in males) has fallen from 121 in 1911 to 107 in 1921. Literacy among Muhammadans is very low only where they are agriculturists and form the majority of the population. Elsewhere, being chiefly town dwellers, they have a higher literacy than the general population. The disparity between Jains and Christians in female literacy is striking. The high figure of literacy in English among Christian females is largely due to Europeans and Anglo-Indians. The figures for the Parsis speak for themselves. Among the Hindus there are some castes of which the males are as literate as the Parsis while others are as illiterate as the aborigines. Subsidiary Table VI (pp. 189-191) gives particulars of important castes in the several States and Provinces. The Baidyas of Bengal show the highest figures in literacy and literacy in English both among males and females. The Brahmans occupy the second place in Bengal and Bihar and a predominating position in Bombay, Baroda and South India. They are quite backward in the Punjab, U. P., Central India and

Rajputana. The depressed classes undoubtedly are the least literate, but even among them there are wide differences. Though the Census Report does not say which of the castes given in the table are regarded as "depressed", one can see the difference between the Namasudras of Bengal—with a literacy of 142 and a higher literacy in English than the Brahmans of the U. P.—and the Chamars in various parts of the country, particularly in the U. P., where there are only two literates among them in a thousand. The last figure ought to provide any amount of food for thought for all well wishers of the country.

FISCAL AUTONOMY FOR RAILWAYS.

I.

THE railways of India in which Government have a financial interest may be divided broadly into the following classes:—

Railways owned and worked by the State.

Railways owned by the State but worked by Companies.

Railways owned by Indian States, District Boards, private Companies, etc., but worked by the State along with its own Railways, or, by Companies along with State-owned railways.

Railways owned by Indian States, District Boards, private Companies and worked by themselves or by their own independent agencies.

Railways falling under the first two classes are supplied with funds from the State treasury whether for capital requirements or for working expenses; those falling under the third class are also supplied with funds from the State treasury, but only for working expenses; while in the case of the last-named class although the owners supply all the funds for both capital and revenue purposes, the State has a contingent liability for rebate or guaranteed interest. Funds required for working expenses and in discharge of the liability for rebate or guaranteed interest are found out of the revenue receipts of the country including the revenue receipts from the railways. Capital funds are provided either from surplus revenues of the State, or from loans forming part of the public Debt of India or from debentures or debenture stock raised by the working Companies backed by the guarantee of the Secretary of State for India. Borrowing is the principal method employed for raising capital for railway expenditure. The sums which can be borrowed in any given year are governed by the changing conditions of the investment market here and in London, by the necessity of avoiding any undue depreciation of the price of Government stock by excessive demands on the market and its consequent injurious effect on the credit of the country and in the case of sterling borrowings by the consideration that any rapid increase in sterling liabilities

might, in certain eventualities, prove a danger in connection with the exchange question. The capital funds thus raised have no relation to the actual requirements of the railways at the moment and in consequence these latter have to be curtailed or expanded to suit the amounts which can be made available. The complaint has always been that the funds are inadequate.

Capital expenditure on railways is frequently so closely connected with expenditure on revenue account that curtailment or expansion of the provision of capital funds directly affects the amount which can be spent on revenue account. Renewals of items of railway equipment with others of the same type fall to be paid for entirely out of revenue funds. When, however, such items are renewed with others of improved or stronger type, the case is different. Revenue funds are reasonable to the extent necessary to replace or renew an item with another of the same type, while capital funds are responsible for the portion representing the improvement. It is obvious that no work of renewal involving a substantial element of improvement can be undertaken without simultaneous provision of capital as well as of revenue funds required therefor and that curtailment or expansion of the provision of capital funds for renewals necessitates a smaller or larger provision of revenue funds. The works of improvement which can be undertaken in a year are dependent on the size of the capital funds which in its turn is determined by and dependent on, not the actual requirements of the railways but the financial exigencies of the Government at the moment. It follows, therefore, that the influence of the evils attributed or attributable to the system of providing funds for capital works on railways extends also to revenue expenditure. The principal disadvantages attributed to the system of financing capital works on railways are:—

- (1) That the monies remaining unspent at the end of the year lapse to the Treasury and are not certain of returning to the railways during the following year;
- 2) that the supply of funds is inadequate; and
- (3) that the supply varies irregularly up and down from year to year.

We are no supporters of the system of "lapse" in regard to railway business, but it does strike us that far more fuss is made about the system than it can bear. The evils ascribed to it are more imaginary than real, more theoretical than practical. The system merely "assumes the concern goes out of business on each 31st March and recommences *de novo* on the 1st April." There appears to be no reason why this mere assumption should hamper railway business any more than, say, an assumption tomorrow by a group of the most eminent scientists that the whole world goes into dissolution every night and comes into existence again in the same form the next morning, should exercise any upsetting or hampering influ-

ence on men's affairs. The real question is whether during the long course of orthodox railway finance the Railway Department has, under normal conditions, failed to get in any year an amount equal to or greater than the amount of the so-called lapse during the preceding year. Let history give a reply. It will be observed from the statement in paragraph 42 at page 255 of Volume IV of the report of the Indian Railway Committee of 1920-21 that except during 1916-17 (a war year) the grants have always been in excess of the lapses during the preceding year. Normally speaking, therefore, in actual practice the amount which theoretically lapses as remaining unspent on 31st March does come back to the railways on the following morning. The question of "lapse" was fully discussed by the Committee on Indian Railway Finance and Administration of 1907-08 in paragraph 34 *et seq.* of its report and the Committee rightly came to the conclusion that the objections taken to the system were largely due to misconception. Paragraph 55 of the report of the Indian Railway Committee of 1920-21 contains an attempt to demolish this conclusion, on the basis of the argument that not only in theory but also in actual experience the amount of lapse may not be re-allotted to railways at all and that even if and when it is so re-allotted, particular railways which had contributed a share of the total lapse may not get its share back. It has already been shown that normally the amount of lapse *does* come back to the railway. As regards the contention that the share of the total lapse contributed by a particular railway not going to that particular railway but to another railway, the fault, if any, is with those who distribute the funds, namely, the Railway Board. If any particular railway does not get its lapsed grant back during the following year, we must presume that the Railway Board consider that relatively to the needs of the other railways, those of this particular railway must give way, and that had sufficient funds been forthcoming it would have had its share back. This leads us on to the complaint of the inadequacy of funds for capital works on railways on the whole.

ECONOMY.

CONTINENTAL LETTER.

BRESLAU, 27th JANUARY.

FRENCH policy in Central Europe has for the first time since the end of the war met with a disappointment: the so-called Little Entente has shown itself unruly. The surprise is great and nowhere greater than with those people who considered themselves the future leaders of all Balkan politics i. e. the Chekko-Slovakian Government at Prague. It is well-known that Mr. Beneš the Minister for Foreign Affairs of this ambitious dwarf state, considers it as the principal duty of his country to be guided by the counsel of the *Quai d'Orsay*. Lately the relations between the two countries have assumed the form

of a treaty which has just been published. It professes of course to have none but peaceful ends in view. Everybody knows by now how extremely peaceful M. Poincaré is. What the treaty contains however shows clearly its tendency. The small state combines with the great to protect the treaties of Versailles, St. Germain etc. from being violated. That means that besides the sanction of other oppressions the "independence" of Austria is warranted by the Prague government. At the same time both parties among other things oblige themselves not to allow the restoration of the Habsburgs or the Hohenzollerns. These articles which are of course by no means a surprise show once more the reactionary tendencies of the powers that to-day rule Central Europe. For there would be no more possibility of a restoration of the Habsburg or Hohenzollern family in all eternity if the right of self-determination of the nations, which used to be proclaimed so loud by during the war, was put into practice in Austria.

The Austrian nation, pronounced its will distinctly enough when the great breakdown came in 1918: it wants to be re-united to its German brethren, from whom Bismarck's one-sided, pro-Prussian policy had severed it after a common history of thousand years in 1866. This union of all the German races might have been possible ages ago, but for mere dynastic interests. Her princes, dukes, kings and emperors have been Germany's calamity for centuries. The ninth of November 1918 however has turned more than twenty imperial, royal etc., "presence chambers" into what they ought to have been generations ago, namely historical museums. Now the frontiers between Germany and Austria too, which owed their existence to the life of the Habsburg and Hohenzollern dynasties merely, ought to have disappeared at once. A plebiscite of the Austrian nation decided for such a measure unanimously. It is one of the great political blunders the new republican government in Germany made at that time that it did not simply create an accomplished fact in inviting Austria to send her representatives to the National Assembly of Weimar. But at that time the faith in President Wilson's fourteen points was still strong in Germany and Austria and nobody believed that a deception like that of Versailles could be possible. When the curtain rose, it became evident, however, that the will of the Austrian nation had simply been counted for nothing at Paris. To keep Germany and Austria asunder has from thenceforth been one of the foremost principles of French policy. The new move on the political chess-board serves the same purpose. The nature of things favours another course of events and the real road to progress lies in the fusion of Germany and Austria, which would be beneficial to the whole world in stabilising democracy in these countries for good.

France however wills it otherwise and she finds the assistance of Chekko-Slovakia. This new treaty was in the opinions of its makers only

a commencement. Treaties with the Little Entente were to follow. The Prague press contained already detailed information about the coming arrangements. A great Slavic block was to be formed at a conference at Belgrad. This block was to put itself entirely at the disposal of France. It was at same time to serve as a bridge between France and Russia. Soviet Russia was to be recognised by the Little Entente for this purpose. Everything seemed to be prepared. The fact that Yugo-Slavia had received a considerable loan and Rumania had been promised one from the same France that as a debtor to England and America constantly pleads her insolvency, made these things appear more plausible still. But suddenly a rapid change in the political weather occurred. The situation was almost dramatic. Benesh had come to Belgrad without having evidently an inkling, that his plans might miscarry. But the Yugoslavian and Rumanian politicians it seems do not look at things through the eyes of the Chekhs. They found that the scheme that was going to be put into practice might be very useful indeed from a French point of view. For not only was the new alliance meant as a continual French threat to Germany but at the same time it served the purpose to keep Italy in awe. But what was the gain that was to be expected from it for the Balkan States? Even Belgium that is officially so much courted and flattered by France makes no secret of the deep disappointment and discontent which she feels at the niggardly and mean ways which the French government apply in their customs-policy towards them. What then have the Balkan States to expect? Besides the pretended peacefulness of France is looked upon in these parts of the world with not a little distrust. Moreover the antagonism between England and France has developed to such a degree lately that to decide for France seems to mean to decide against England. The idea however that one might in this way back the wrong horse was not reassuring. So the Conference saw a remarkable scene of surprise when the Yugoslavian premier revealed to his colleague from Prague, that, instead of submitting to the wishes of France, he had come to an agreement with the Italian government, by which a five years' feud had found a satisfactory end. The unexpectedness and spontaneity of the event is easily explained. Italian policy has suddenly taken a new turn.

For it is only a short time ago that Signor Mussolini openly boasted of his "imperialism", of the policy of extension which he was willing to pursue, and that he showed the cold shoulder to his Yugoslavian neighbours and shuddered at the treaty of Rapallo which his predecessor Giolitti had concluded with the Yugo-slavs because it tried to find a middle course between the aspirations of both countries. He has adopted an entirely different opinion now and this change is particularly noteworthy. For the main motive

of his action is evidently nothing but a pronounced fear of France. The way the French behave in Germany, their incredible attitude towards harmless and law-abiding Switzerland, the disregard they show against the whole rest of the world over its general economic recovery and, last but not least, their standpoint and high-handed behaviour in questions concerning the coasts of the Mediterranean, have influenced the Italian mentality to such an extent, that Italy sacrifices willingly some of her most cherished pretensions in order to prevent France from becoming more aggressive and overheating still by an aggrandizement of her power in the cabinets of the Balkan States. So Yugo-Slavia has got the harbour of Fiume, Italy the town, and a number of other points at issue have been definitely settled. The general impression in Europe is, that this Italo-Yugoslavian treaty is a defeat of French diplomacy that must needs serve the cause of peace. It is self evident that Rumania will not act the role which has been repudiated in Belgrad and according to the latest news it seems as if Greece too showed signs of readiness to bury the war-hatchet with Italy. Occurrences comparatively unimportant in themselves, momentous only as symptoms for the slow return of the insight, that mankind is doomed to perdition without what Cobden called: "Goodwill among the nations."

L. L. SCHÜCKING.

THE DELHI SESSION.

(BY OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.)

DELHI, 23rd FEB. 1924.

THE third and last act in the drama—which turned out to be tragedy—came to an end on Monday last. It is too much to suppose that the epilogue in the House of Lords next Tuesday will seriously alter the tragic character of the play. As a mere play, the plot was well developed and superbly acted. After the prologue of the 1st inst., came the first act, with its slow, pleasant and friendly movement, while the threats and counterthreats, uttered and discounted, by Pandit Motilal and Sir Malcolm, indicated the elements of tragedy. The plot thickened in the second act on the 8th, when the speeches of the Bhima and Abhimanya of the Swarajist Party, gave a distinctly combative and unhealthy tone to the debate which in the third act culminated in discord and strife. The official Karna's final performance was tempestuous with numerous "personal explanations," interruptions and adroit retorts and rejoinders. It was a glorious feat if it were only that. The tragedy is much too live and vast to be taken lightly. If Sir Malcolm's offer of departmental enquiry was bad enough in all conscience, it became more so when he announced that it was the deliberate view of the British Government, and that too a Labour Government. But the worst feature of the whole debate was Sir Malcolm's final speech which was in sharp contrast with his speech on the first occa.

sion. He left behind his serenity, his friendly and persuasive tone and, regardless of consequences, he rushed headlong in full armour on a career of destruction of the enemy, using all his marvellous skill, knowledge and debating power, to inflict crushing blows on his assailants. It was a desperate and unashamed effort to break up the unity of the Nationalist party, by holding up to scorn the shifting of the Swarajist position from that contained in the manifesto of October last, the weakness of the Independents in succumbing to the pernicious influences of the Swarajists, to fan the smouldering flames of communal dissensions, in short to divide the opposition along all possible lines of cleavage and thus to defeat it. It is, however, impossible to blame Sir Malcolm for the speech he made. He played the game. The policy of the Government having been made up, he had no option but to make a desperate effort to obtain some support for it. Nor was provocation wanting from the non-official opposition, despite the influence of Pandit Motilal.

But why blame Sir Malcolm at all, when even our own countrymen and responsible journals have unhesitatingly yielded to the great temptation to discredit the Swarajists for having lowered their flag? Sir Malcolm had everything to gain by such an attack, but what have the Liberals to gain thereby? Certainly it is not going to compel the Swarajists to vacate their seats in favour of the Liberals for the period of the current term.

If we cannot seriously blame Sir Malcolm, we cannot admire his conduct either. The conclusion of the debate has left the already distrusted Government further discredited; the feeble Liberals and Independents in despair and despondency and the powerful Swarajists in humiliation and bitterness which will lead them to desperate action regardless of consequences. The Swarajists created a first rate split in the Congress by their policy of entering councils, made herculean efforts at short notice to capture the seats, and when they find they are not in a majority in the Assembly, circumscribe their intransigence considerably to gain the support of the Independents. Yet when their accredited leader makes a friendly and reasonable speech which any Liberal might envy and this demand is supported by almost all the Indian members; what is the reply of the Government? Nothing but *non possumus*. To add insult to injury, Government hurl cruel taunts and pour merciless ridicule for what? For the very abatement of the demand, which would make it easier for them to grant it.

What will the Swarajists do now? Doubtless they will carry on obstruction in the Councils. Sir Malcolm's speech has to a certain extent weakened the voice that would denounce the procedure. But so far they have not followed that policy. On the occasion of the supplementary grants on Wednesday last, the Swarajists left their seats vacant but had, it seems, very gallantly agreed to come to the help of the Independents if the latter chose to

oppose any particular grant. Fortunately the Independents had no occasion to call for their aid.

Outside the Councils there might be a conference to arrive at a communal pact and perhaps devise a constitution. The National Conference idea, promoted by Mrs. Besant is ready at hand; but the Swarajists were not evident during the session of the conference now sitting in Delhi, though most Independents were there and orthodox Liberals too. At this session, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Rt. Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri and Dr. Besant were appointed President, Vice-President and Secretary respectively. A resolution was passed asking for a Royal Commission, another to send a deputation consisting of Mrs. Besant, Dr. Sapru and Mr. Sastri and a third fixed the 21st and 22nd April as the dates for the Convention to be held at Allahabad.

It may, however, be pointed out that the vital composition of the Convention consists of the elected members of all the Legislatures in India, who now are largely Swarajists. Will they join the National Convention, with its present association, and with the unabated campaign against Swarajists that the Liberals are indulging in? And further would it be necessary for them to abjure their obstructionist policy to join the Convention?

Sir Malcolm made a great point of the want of clearness in the demand of the Nationalists—did they want immediate full Self-Government and that by self-determination or only immediate steps towards Self-Government, the stages to be determined by Parliament? Pandit Motilal's amendment was a compromise between the two extremes, which could be subscribed to both by the Swarajists and Independents, but Sir Malcolm insisted to know which of the two extremes were meant, as the speeches of the Independents and Swarajists pointed differently. How much better it would have been if the Self-Government resolution, as passed by the Liberal Federation and as now passed by the National Conference, had been put forward in the Assembly also!

In my last letter I referred to some Muhammadans' view that a pact should precede a constitutional advance. On Tuesday last, a resolution was moved fixing certain proportions of seats in the councils and service appointments as between Muslims and non-Muslims. Pandit Motilal, while sympathising with the object of the resolution, said that question was to be settled by the round table conference and with the help of Mahatma Gandhi and that the Assembly was not the place nor was the day the proper occasion to discuss the matter, and that if pressed, he and he means 48 votes—would vote against the resolution. Sir Malcolm cordially agreed that the matter was one for mutual adjustments between the two communities without the intervention of Government and the motion was dropped.

The same day, there was an unedifying debate over Mr. Patel's resolution to permit Mr. B. G.

Horniman's return who was deported by the late Governon of Bombay under the Defence of India Act, which has since expired. The Govt. of India still seem to consider him dangerous to the public peace, but refused to disclose more definite reasons. Such charges as were levelled against him in Parliament Mr. Jinnah flatly denied. Pandit Malaviya accused Government of perpetuating a piece of melancholy meanness due to personal malice on the part of Sir George Lloyd. Government certainly did not come out of the debate with their credit enhanced.

On Thursday Mr. Rangachariar introduced an important Bill defining the procedure to be adopted when firearms are used for the purpose of dispersing an assembly. Dr. Gour introduced two bills, one to raise the age of marriage of girls from 12 to 14 and the other for the better management of Hindu religious and charitable trusts. But of these more anon.

REVIEW.

TILAK & THE MARATHI RENAISSANCE.

WINSLOW, J. C.: *Narayan Vaman Tilak. The Christian poet of Maharashtra.* Calcutta. 1923. 7 x 5. pp. ix & 137. (Y. M. C. A. Press. Re. 1. 4.)

THE Rev. J. C. Winslow has laid English-knowing Indians under a deep obligation by introducing to them Narayan Vaman Tilak, the Christian poet of Maharashtra. In these days of self-advertisement the Marathas are the least enterprising. Most of our scholars and literateurs hardly ever make an attempt to introduce their work to a wider public through English. A scholar of gigantic intellect like Vishwanath Kashinath Rajwade is not known outside Maharashtra. There are people in India who talk of Bankinchandra and Michael Madhusudan Datta without knowing a line of Bengali, but to those who are not familiar with Marathi the great names of Hari Narayan Apte and Keshavasuta are unknown. It would not be surprising if people were to opine that the Marathas have no modern Marathi literature to pride themselves upon. Mr. Winslow has thus rendered a distinct service to Marathi literature by introducing a melodious singer of its Renaissance to a wider reading world. The biographer has shown a rare combination of Christian zeal and tolerant catholicity; and what is most noteworthy and commendable, there is nothing in the book that will offend the Indian National spirit.

To give place among the true builders of modern India to Narayan Vaman Tilak will be considered by some as an act of unpardonable presumption on the Rev. Winslow's part; for nowadays all greatness is political. Some years ago Dayanand Saraswati was ridiculed and lampooned in Poona by a Marathi journalist of great power and greater influence. His followers today concede Dayanand's claim to greatness because the Samaj which he founded has grown

and prospered, and is today a great social and political power. Tilak worked in a humbler capacity, but he was one of the "men of faith for whom the unseen verities are far more evident and more than the passing shows of the world"; and such men who give themselves up to silent constructive work unknown to fortune and to fame are great no less than those who distinguish themselves 'in the madding crowd's ignoble strife'.

Among the Marathas, by which term I mean the inhabitants of Maharashtra, there are many who loved Tilak in his life-time and revere his memory now but who cannot think of his change of Faith without a secret pang. His was an essentially religious temperament. He had inherited it like his poetic faculty from his mother Janakibai of whom the poet says: "My mother was a woman of faith and love. Though she never talked to us of Christ, yet she taught us to fear God and to love all." Like every one that loves his fellow men he found himself in antagonism towards orthodox tradition. Caste he found simply indefensible, and image-worship derogatory to the sublimity of God. With all his heterodox views he could have remained a Hindu, if a rather rebellious one. But being personally devout and longing for God's loving communion he cast his eyes about to see if he could come across the perfect man. In Christ he found his ideal of perfection and after a period of self-imposed penance and austerities which had brought him neither peace nor spiritual illumination he became a staunch irreclaimable Christian. Hindus who read in Tilak's poetry a continuation of Namdev and Tukaram could not understand his Christianity and often thought it was a momentary impulse: his personal love of Christ they could not understand and appreciate.

In a letter to his son Tilak says "I believe that unless India follows Jesus Christ, all her efforts to improve her status will ultimately fail." Hindus and Mahammedans who believe in the power of their religious to live and to minister to the growing needs of the present will attribute the above remark to the proverbial fanaticism of the convert. But the non-Christian friends of Tilak bear ample testimony to his having been absolutely free from all fanatical zeal. He had embraced Christianity; but nothing could denationalise him; nay, he endeavoured to naturalise the Christian church in Maharashtra. "Thirty year ago", says Mr. Winslow "it had the appearance of being a foreign Church. It lived on foreign money; it dressed in foreign clothes, it worshipped in foreign buildings and sang foreign music. It thought in foreign ways and had even a debased language of its own, known as Christian Marathi. These things are fast changing today, and to no one is the change due so much as to Narayan Tilak."

His greatest service to the Christian Church in Maharashtra was to endow it with a golden treasury of exquisite devotional lyrics; and that brings us to

his position as a poet. Tilak's mother was a poetess, a ready composer of women's songs, from her he believed to have inherited much of his poetical faculty. Just as he was a Pandit before he became a Christian missionary, so he was already an imitative versifier before he became a Christian poet with a distinct personality. He is said to have denounced idolatry and polytheism long before he became a Christian but in his early poetry we find 'naman' made to various deities. But just when his inward restlessness was drawing him slowly but surely toward Christianity, study of English lyrics opened a new vista of poetic beauty to him. His was an age of translations of English lyrics into Marathi verse. Vishnu Boreshvar Mahajani had brought out *Kusumanjali*—a book of feeble and free translations of English lyrics into old Marathi metres. Keshavsuta too was trying his hand at translation, and Tilak came out with his version of Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*. The influence of Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* on the development of modern Marathi poetry has been incalculable. Love of Nature both for her ever fresh and everchanging beauty and for her secret teaching was a new thing. Nature poetry before connoted a catalogue of names of trees, flowers, fruits, birds—brought together with little regard for artistic portrayal or scientific accuracy. Of the early poets of the Renaissance Keshavsuta and Tilak readily imbibed the new spirit. Of the two, as Principal Patwardhan has said, "Keshavsuta was the bolder and hardier innovator." The third poet of the time Vinayak Karandikar had the most powerful genius of the three, but he had little education and less culture, and that is why his poetry, unlike that of the other two, does not show gradual but sure transition from old to new. Just then Dattatreya Kondo Ghate of 'Nagar was beginning to give promise of his essentially lyrical poetic gift with his short pieces published in the *Bal bodhmeva*—of which the one beginning with "My dear little accomplished Tai" will never be forgotten. Tilak lived in the midst of these literary changes and naturally and unconsciously grew to know himself. His "Flowers everywhere" is a beautiful lyric; "The Poet's Request" is equally beautiful and has pathos and righteous indignation. But Tilak except in his devotional lyrics is argumentative and didactic. His 'Hermit Flower' and 'Bombabomb' bear testimony to this trait.

But when we come to his *Abhanganjali* we touch his inmost soul. He is in the true lineage of the bhakti saints, it was his hope and desire that he might become the Christian Tukaram of Maharashtra and we may confidently assert that he did achieve his ideal. His *abhangs* are so simple, and yet so touching and profound that the present writer has seen many Hindus as much moved by them as Tilak was moved by those of Tukaram. Mr. Winslow's rendering of an *Abhang* of Tilak's deserves to be given here:

"The more I win Thee, Lord, the more for Thee I pine;

Ab, such a heart is mine.
My eyes behold Thee and are filled, and straightway then,

Their hunger wakes again!
My arms have clasped Thee and should set Thee free,
but no,

I cannot let Thee go!
Thou dwellest within my heart. Forthwith anew the fire

Burns of my soul's desire.

Lord Jesus Christ, Beloved, tell, oh tell me true,
What shall Thy servant do?"

His position as an Indian is made clear in the following *abhang*:

"Pack up your baggage quick and get you gone,
All whom the land of India pleaseth not!
Think not that money or authority
Can save us;—'tis a false and vain conceit!
Fathers and godlings, we desire not these;
Come, let us knit the bonds of brotherhood!
Saith Dasa, be the time that's past forgot,
And a new mind put on in this new day!"

He did not take a very active part in politics. He was a member of the Home Rule League; but when he grew suspicious of the intentions of the extremists he resigned his membership and believing that India could best fulfil her destiny within the British Empire wrote a series of articles in the *Times of India*, which earned him a special letter of thanks from Lord Willingdon, then Governor of Bombay.

The book is very well got up and is doubly useful on account of its careful index.

M. T. PATWARDHAN.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

From Arya Samaj, Calicut:

SWAMI DAYANANDA SARASWATI. A CRITICAL REVIEW OF HIS CAREER, TOGETHER WITH A SHORT LIFE SKETCH. Being a collection of articles written by several distinguished men. Calicut. 1924. 7x4½. pp. xxii and 118. (As. 10).

From Superintendent, Government Printing, Calcutta.

THE ARMY IN INDIA AND ITS EVOLUTION. INCLUDING AN ACCOUNT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE IN INDIA. 1924. 9¼x6. pp. xi and 353. (Rs. 2/8).

From Theosophical Publishing House, Madras:
HARINDRANATH CHATTOPADHYAY: GREY CLOUDS AND WHITE SHOWERS. Madras. 1924. 9¼x7. pp. 31. (Rs. 1.).
" : ANCIENT WINGS. 1923. 9¼x7. pp. 47. (Rs. 1.).

From Sunshine Publishing House, Princess Street, Bombay:

HOUGHTON, BERNARD: THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER IN INDIA. 1924. 6¼x4½. pp. iv. and 125. (Rs. 1/8).

From Servants of India Society, Madras:
(PANDURANG) KODANDA RAO: MALABAR TENANT PROBLEM. 1924. 7x4½. pp. 48. (As. 2.)

From H. M.'s Stationery Office, London:
IMPERIAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCE: RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS AND DOCUMENTS. 1924. 9¼x6. pp. 620. Cmd. 2009. (5s.).
IMPERIAL CONFERENCE: APPENDICES TO THE SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS. 1923. 9¼x6. pp. 157. Cmd. 1983. (2s.).
COMMITTEE OF IMPERIAL DEFENCE: REPORT OF SUB-COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL AND IMPERIAL DEFENCE. 1924. 9¼x6. pp. 36. Cmd. 2029. (6d.).

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