

# THE Servant of India

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## TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

**The Labour Budget.** THE Labour Government in Britain has further enhanced its reputation for ability and statesmanship by its excellent budget proposals. Mr. Asquith warmly congratulated Mr. Philip Snowden and declared that his budget was thoroughly sound. Its chief feature is the reduction of import duties on food articles to the extent of £ 24 million, the wisdom of which will not be questioned in any quarter when there is so much unemployment in the country. Protective duties on certain articles of luxury like motor cars have been abolished in pursuance of the policy of free trade for which the Labour Party stands and on which the election was fought. Economy in expenditure on defence has been effected by the abandonment of the Singapore base and the Conservative policy of Imperial Preference has been knocked on the head. These latter measures have naturally created a feeling of bitterness in the colonies, but the Labour Party is not to blame, as it was not represented at the Imperial Conferences and could not therefore be expected to support their resolutions against its own principles. When it will take part in these deliberations and the resolutions will accordingly be modified, the colonies will have no cause to complain against the Labour Party in Britain.

**Akalis and Vaikoms.** A dozen Akalis have gone from the Punjab to Vaikom to open a free kitchen there for the passive resisters. We dare say this is meant as a brotherly act, but otherwise there does not appear to be any justification for it.

The volunteers were not experiencing any special difficulty about food; nor were local organisations, Congress or communal, so indifferent as to make it necessary for a party to go all the way from the Punjab to Travancore to look to the physical needs of the volunteers—whc, by the way, have not been asking for food but for permission to starve. If it had not been Akalis, who are even fanatically zealous of ridding Sikhism of all distinctively Hindu characteristics, but a body of Arya Samajists, we could have easily understood this action, for no one is keener than the latter for the removal of untouchability and other unsocial customs and practices from Hindu society. We do not know that the volunteers would accept food more readily from the hands of the Akalis than from those of Muhammadans or other non-Hindus. The only way in which their presence in Vaikom would be helpful is by inspiring the volunteers with courage and determination. But even that moral service is now quite unnecessary—and we hope it will never become necessary. On the other hand their presence may stiffen the back of the Travancore Durbar and prejudice the cause of the prohibited castes in the eyes of the Government of India, who wield such great influence with the Durbar for good or evil. The Akalis will therefore be doing their best service to the volunteers by leaving Vaikom and blessing them from a distance.

\* \* \*

E. African  
Federation.

IF Indians are opposed to the scheme of a federation of East African territories because the spirit of Kenya will in that event spread to the whole of East Africa, the Europeans themselves have little sympathy with the proposal, for if given effect to, it will still further reduce the proportion of the white population to the native inhabitants and thus still more weaken the former's claim to a position of domination. Now the Europeans number 10,000 in a country populated by 2½ million natives: if all these countries were amalgamated they would perhaps be a thousand or two more in the midst of 12 million Africans. Their claim to a paramount position, already so untenable, would be utterly ridiculous if all the countries of East Africa were brought under one administration. The *E. A. Standard* has the sense to see the logical result of carrying out this scheme. It says: "At the present moment Kenya bases it hopes on ultimate self-government and its Highlands—the geographical centre of any federation—are peopled by the largest white community in the whole of the huge area of country

affected by any change in policy. In Kenya, the economic and political influence of a European civilisation and settlement in the midst of 2,500,000 Africans is very great. It is the central fact in the future of Kenya. But will 10,000 Europeans exert the same influence and be accorded the same importance in a huge agglomeration of 10,000,000 Africans? And will the aim of self-government and the destiny of Kenya as a "characteristically British Colony" be submerged or changed vitally in the effort to create one huge Dominion, nine tenths of the area of which is unsuitable for white settlement?"

The only parts where the whites can settle, besides the Kenya Highlands, are the Kilimanjaro country in Tanganyika, the railway strip of Northern Rhodesia and the Shire Highlands of Nyasaland.

**Native Interest:** IN the debate that took place in the House of Commons on April 8 on the subject of the proposed federation of East African countries, everyone complained that much too little was being spent upon the education and medical services in Kenya on account of the natives. Mr. Thomas still remained as uninformed as before, and maintained that one-fifth of the total receipts from direct taxes on natives was returned to them in the shape of these services. The hut and poll tax are estimated to yield this year £508,850. Of these it is intended to spend £28,310 on education of the natives, and this figure, it has to be noted, includes the salaries of European officials—two Headmasters on a salary of £500 each, two Assistant Headmasters on a salary of £400 each, two Chief Technical Inspectors on the same salary, Carpentry and Masonry Instructors, etc. And, of the total estimated expenditure on medical departments of £126,374, Mr. Thomas imagines that as much as £90,000 is meant for the benefit of the natives, as his reply to Sir R. Hamilton's question on 31st March shows. In giving these figures, he is egregiously at fault. Of the £126,374 for which provision is made in this year's Budget, only £5,250 is to be spent specifically on medical work in native reserves. So this is undoubtedly all for native benefit, and the question is how much of the rest is attributable to native purposes. It would appear that the money spent on native hospitals and the material required therefor must be added to the above amount to ascertain how much is disbursed in the native interest. The exact figure is difficult to disentangle, but certain figures can be given: for the upkeep of native hospitals £3,850 is provided, and medical and surgical stores get £9,250. But of this by far the greater portion is undoubtedly appropriated by the European hospitals. As regards the emoluments of officials, etc., more than half, or £73,640, is absorbed by it, and of this £51,477, is spent on Europeans. And it is admitted by the whites themselves that all these Sanitary Inspectors &c. really minister to the Europeans, and the natives are left severely alone. In face of these facts it is monstrous for the Colonial Secretary to maintain that as much as £90,000 of the medical vote is devoted to native interest. One tenth of this amount would be far nearer the truth

than he has given, and it should be remembered in this connexion that the Government themselves admit that at least £700,000 are derived from native taxation, direct and indirect.

**The Mangalore  
Depressed Classes  
Mission.**

YOU cannot do better than help a deserving institution like the Depressed Classes Mission of Mangalore, which recently published its report for the last two years. It has been built up by the untiring efforts for over a quarter of a century of Mr. K. Ranga Rao. On account of advancing age and failing strength he has recently handed over its management to the Servants of India Society who felt bound in duty to respond to his call and have deputed a worker to be in charge of it. The Mission maintains 6 day schools and a night school, at the most important of which a free mid-day meal is given to the children. It maintains a free boarding home in which there are at present nine boarders. It has an industrial side in which carpentry and weaving are taught. The carpentry section turns out quite good work and is well patronised by the public. It was awarded a gold medal last December by the District Exhibition for the excellence of the furniture turned out by it. A special feature of the Mission is its colonies, families being settled in decent huts by the Mission on land obtained by it from Government. Near Udipi the Mission is assigned about 35 acres of good land which could be turned "into a productive garden, giving shelter, sustenance and honourable living to many a poor family," if sufficient capital be forthcoming. The Mission has a claim for greater help both from Government and the public than it has been receiving.

**Inexcusable.** WE understand that Mr. G. V. Bhawe, an official in the Post Office, who had asked for permission to start a monthly magazine in Marathi for the benefit of low grade employees in the Post Office, has been refused such permission by the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs. Mr. Bhawe's magazine was by no means a political organ, but was intended to supply to workers in the Post Office news about postal unions, and to provide matter calculated to increase their efficiency by enlarging their mind and broadening their vision. We know Mr. Bhawe for a person fully conscious of his responsibilities and one thoroughly to be trusted to work with a single-minded devotion for the improvement of the postmen's conditions. To discourage the disinterested efforts of such a man is to throw the ignorant postmen into the arms of others who adopt methods of a questionable character. Nor is it the practice of the Director General to refuse sanction to all newspapers conducted by men in the service, for there are already such organs, and it becomes therefore altogether inexplicable, and in our eyes inexcusable, that Mr. Bhawe should not have been accorded the permission he sought. We still hope that the Government will rectify the mistake committed by the Director General.

## THE BOMBAY EXCISE COMMITTEE REPORT.

THE report of the Bombay Excise Committee which was appointed in January 1922 has just been made available to the public. If it has been inordinately delayed—for which delay the members of the Committee are not mainly responsible—it has the merit of being an exhaustive report, to which the student of public affairs, not only in Bombay but in other provinces as well, will gladly and frequently turn for information and guidance. Of special value to him will be the introductory Historic section which in four chapters deals respectively with the use of liquor and restrictions on it in important foreign countries including the British Isles and the United States of America, the use of liquor in India in pre-British days, the excise policy of the Government of India and the excise administration of Bombay Presidency.

The Committee have strongly recommended a change in the excise policy of Government which at present is claimed to be that of not interfering with those who use alcohol in moderation and making due provision for the needs of such persons, considerations of revenue being absolutely subordinated to this policy. After carefully examining the evidence of Government officials and representatives of the liquor trade on the one hand, and non-official witnesses on the other, the Committee have come to the conclusion that this policy has only very partially justified itself and recommend that, excise being a transferred subject the policy of the Government should accord with Indian public opinion, which very clearly is in favour of prohibition. In a very interesting chapter (VII) they answer almost every objection that has been urged against prohibition for India, though it is not to be expected that anti-prohibitionists will be satisfied with those answers. To a common but important objection they reply:

"It is however, often maintained that there is a very large non-articulate population who would not agree with the prevailing view placed before the Committee and who themselves belong to the 'drinking classes.' The few witnesses from these classes that gave evidence before the Committee did not—if we exclude some Parsis—support this opinion. In the case of a mill (gardner) from Poona and a weaver from Ahmednagar District the testimony given was to the effect that even these classes would rejoice to have the temptation to drink removed from them and would vote that it should be removed, if the opportunity was given to them. Other evidence in regard to the habits of mill workers when they return to their villages on holidays, as well as the fact that such movements against liquor drinking as that which has appeared among the Kaliparaj people of Gujerat, confirms the view that the sentiment against indulgence in liquor is very widespread among all classes of Hindus and Mahomedans and can be described as prevailing throughout the whole province, even where it is not given effect to in practice."

The Committee therefore recommend that Government should declare the total extinction of traffic in liquor and drugs as the goal of their policy, to be reached in due course but within a reason-

able period of time, so that there may be no financial or administrative dislocation, and that immediate steps should be taken in the direction of further restriction of the traffic, the most important among them being the continuance of the rationing system with progressive reduction of the quantity issued to each shop in urban areas, then non-issuing of new licenses for shops, the prohibition of "on" sale, that is, for drinking in the shops, and the enlargement of the functions and powers of excise advisory committees. As the present rationing system, which applies only to country liquor, has led to the increased consumption of cheap foreign liquor, the Committee recommend that the Government of India, who have reserved for themselves the control of foreign liquor, should be approached to permit the imposition of all restrictions upon it which the local Government chooses to impose on country liquor, as otherwise their whole policy of restriction would fail.

More important than these restrictive steps, however, is the achievement of the goal of prohibition. The means suggested for this is local option which is to be instituted by a piece of special legislation. "Government should pass legislation to grant option to the people of a definite area to declare their intention to stop the liquor and toddy traffic in that area, and such legislation should provide for a reasonable time for Government to take action to carry out the intention so declared. It should be laid down in the local option law that such delay was due to financial and no other considerations." The intention of the people of any area is to be declared by a direct vote of all adult males and females in that area. The direct vote is preferred by the Committee as their object is to make local option educative and popular. This is no doubt attended with the administrative inconvenience of preparing a list of all eligible voters and providing booths for their polling, but the Committee are prepared to put up with it in view of the educative value of the provision. The option given to a locality is only to go dry. Once it has chosen to go dry or becomes dry by the operation of other measures, it cannot vote itself "wet" again. "If a locality has by majority decided to continue the liquor or toddy soap, it should be given a chance to decide again, the vote being taken at fixed periods in such localities"

The Committee recognise that no proposal for prohibition can be practicable unless it is accompanied by suggestions for meeting the loss of excise revenue. They estimate that loss to amount, by the time complete prohibition could come into force, to Rs. 3 crores. They propose that it should be met by the imposition of the following taxes, which they expect to yield "on a conservative estimate" the amounts shown against each of them:—

1. Succession duty	...	Rs. 50 lakhs.
2. Tatalizstor	... ..	" 20 "
3. Taxation of "futures"	... ..	" 50 "
4. Increase of local fund cess.	... ..	" 30 "
5. Tobacco tax	... ..	" 5 "

6. Employee tax	...	...	..	40	..
7. Transit tax	...	...	..	20	..
8. Terminal tax	...	...	..	50	..

In addition, they propose an increase in Court fees, the proceeds of which, however, they have not established. These taxes, they believe, will yield more than they have estimated and will easily meet the loss of excise revenue. The local fund cess proposed is a special levy of one anna per rupee on land revenue. The tobacco tax is to be a licensing fee on shops allowed to sell *bidies* and cigarettes. The employee tax suggested is one rupee a month on every employee in an organised industry. The transit and terminal taxes are recommended to be levied mainly on railway and steamer passengers in large urban areas. The Committee recommends that the same legislation which provides for local option should also authorise the imposition of these taxes, though they may be actually levied only later as found convenient.

It is idle to expect that these recommendations, particularly the financial ones, will meet with easy acceptance. Dissent is expressed by several members of the Committee against one or other of these taxation proposals. By the very nature of the subject much divergence of opinion is to be expected. But that does not in any way lessen our indebtedness to the Committee, whose earnest recommendations form an excellent basis for discussion.

## RETROCESSION OF BERAR.

### I

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.

THE sovereignty of Berar has been a matter of dispute for centuries past, and from the point of view of the people of Berar, the question has always been a vexed one, occasioning anxiety, creating uncertainty, and hampering the natural growth of the people and the development of agriculture and industry.

Upto the beginning of the 19th century, both the Nizam and the Marathas had separate officers all over the province for the exaction of such revenue, or rather the extraction or extortion of such quantities of money and gold as they could obtain peacefully or otherwise, from the people of Berar. The Nizam who had set at naught the authority of Moghul Emperor, though he came to the south as his Viceroy and the Subhedar of the Deccan, claimed to be the 'de Jure' proprietor of Berar, and the Bhosla not only styled himself as the Raja of Berar, but was described as such even by the British and the Nizam in the treaties they conjointly made with him. It was only in 1803 that the Bhosla of Nagpur was compelled by the terms of the treaty of Deogaon, to withdraw his officers from a portion of the province, and the same was recognized by the British as belonging to the Nizam; but a considerable portion still remained with the Marathas and of this they were not deprived till 1822. During the period the authority of the Nizam was

at best only shadowy: the Deshmukhs and the Dehsbandes of Berar openly flouted the Nizam's authority, and conducted themselves more like small independent chiefs than as officers of a state. And after 1822, a system of farming out for purposes of revenue was what was substituted by this "sovereign liege and lord" for a system of administration, resulting in distress compared to which perhaps even the unsettled condition of days gone by was happiness itself. A settled administration bringing with it peace and opportunity of development was vouchsafed to the people of Berar only in 1853, but within 20 years Sir Salar Jung raised the question of retrocession. Thirty years after, in 1902, Curzon secured the permanent lease, and again within 20 years thereof the present Nizam presses for a reconsideration of the whole question. Indeed this question is being agitated upon by the Nizam since some time in 1921, when Sir Ali Imam visited England as His Highness's delegate and interviewed a number of British politicians. A lot of money has been spent for this object since 1920, but to no purpose so far; and it is believed that all previous attempts made in the manner in which such attempts are usually made—through the confidential files of the foreign and political department and private interviews—having failed, His Exalted Highness has now adopted the attitude of a political agitator and has begun to use the press for the attainment of the object; and undoubtedly the press is being skillfully used.

But let us examine the question raised and the arguments advanced one by one.

### II

#### THE PROMISE OF AUTONOMY

The concluding portion of the letter which is addressed by His Exalted Highness to H. E. the Governor General declares that should success meet the attempt for the redemption of the Province, H. E. Highness would insert in the Instrument of Restoration, or any other state paper that may be drawn up, "definite clauses for the conferment on the Beraris of a constitution for a responsible government with absolute popular control" of the internal affairs, and complete autonomy in administration, excepting matters relating to the British Government, and H. E. Highness's Army department, under a constitutional Governor appointed by H. E. Highness as his representative.

Sir Ali Imam in the introductory letter says that if real and genuine autonomy is secured to even a small province of our country, a beginning will have been made of the ultimate realization of the goal that inspires political groups over the whole of India.

This is the temptation held out to the people of India and to the people of Berar for the purpose of disarming the natural opposition to the return of the province to the rule of an autocratic Indian prince. The beginning of the ultimate realization of the goal of India's politicians is promised, but Indian politicians cannot and will not forget

the difference between their goal and the promised autonomy.

In the first place, the retrocession even with autonomy would mean complete isolation of Berar from British India. It is partly to avoid isolation, that Berar members of the last council refrained from demanding separation of Berar into a sub-province. Isolation under the Nizam would be far more complete than under the British Government as a separate sub-province. Berar would be cut off entirely from contact with the rest of India and would cease to be influenced and to influence the social and political movements in India. In the field of politics matters relating to the British Government will be definitely excluded from its influence. So far Berar has occupied a prominent position in the public life of India, and in the Imperial and provincial Councils which Beraris would be unwilling to sacrifice.

The offer of autonomy comes at a time when it is not a very strong temptation; as the belief is not unreasonable that provincial autonomy under the administration of the Government of India is not very distant; and the latter would be far preferable to autonomy under an Indian state for a variety of reasons. A Governor, appointed by H. E. Highness and as his representative, can stand no comparison to a Governor drawn from the public life of England, trained in the management of democratic institutions. A representative of British democracy with a broad outlook, with the first hand knowledge of the Western world, and with ideas of individual liberty and social freedom prevailing there, will stimulate the province to draw in a line with the advancing world; a representative of H. E. Highness instead of being a help will, with his eyes fixed on Hyderabad, be a drag on all manner of progress. Further, in case of differences between the Governor and the representatives of the people, Berar can, on the one hand, look to public opinion in India and England, and a powerful press, for help and support; on the other, to the person of H. E. Highness alone. The Governor is bound to have large powers under the constitution howsoever framed and, a discussion of the exercise of such powers will be barred, the decision by the Nizam being final. And the Governor being the Nizam's nominee, personal predilection will operate to the prejudice of the people. The ultimate sanction in the one case is democracy in India and England; in the other, the unvarnished autocracy of an Indian state.

Nor is the proposed insertion of clauses securing responsible government to Berar in a state paper likely to be of any use. It would substitute in place of direct interest on the part of the Government of India in the government of Berar, merely the right to exercise diplomatic pressure on the Nizam, depriving Berar at the same time of the means of inducing or compelling the British Government to exercise such diplomatic pressure. Diplomacy is peculiarly susceptible to influences

which are available easily to princes and potentates but not to a people. Its action is secret, unknown and unknowable. It can never be trusted to befriend a people. British and Indian democracy, accessible through the press and the platform and operating publicly, would be far more dependable as a friend of the people of Berar than British diplomacy. And, if the British Government is to be the guardian angel of the liberties of the people of Berar, why take away from that angel the right to shelter Berar under its own wings and lead it on to self-government? If Berar is asked to trust Britain to guard with anxious care, and be prepared always to defend with all its might its constitutional rights, why should Berar not trust that very Britain to grant those very constitutional rights as a member of its own Commonwealth? In short, the promise and the suggested safeguard go ill together, and a conclusion that both are illusory is unavoidable.

Sir Ali Imam's enthusiasm for real and genuine autonomy and responsible government even in a province, howsoever small, is a revelation to many. As the trusted Minister and counsellor of H. E. Highness, with his burning enthusiasm for autonomy and responsible government, the idea that he must have striven for such grant to the people of the Dominions of H. E. Highness can not be expelled from the public mind. If he has so striven and failed, the safety of the rights promised to the Beraris is at least questionable if not positively precarious. But even this question is raised only as a side issue. The claim to restoration is based on right and justice. Let us look into that.

(To be continued)

R. R. JAYAVANT.

### TARIFF BOARD REPORT.

It is a pity that the present report draws its inspiration from the report of the Fiscal Commission to which it refers as the source of all its first principles and basic axioms. As the report of the Fiscal Commission is itself only moderately protectionist, the Tariff Board report has to follow suit, as the terms of reference prevent the Board from going beyond the ambit presented in the resolution of the Legislative Assembly. The terms of reference state clearly that "regard must be had to the financial needs of the Government and to the dependence of the Government on import duties for a large part of its revenue" and that "the principle should be applied with discrimination." Now when revenue needs are to be considered paramount the policy of protection is bound to be a timid and halting policy. True protection not only sacrifices revenue but stultifies itself if it does not do so, as the object is to shut out all competition from foreign goods.

However, we must judge of the performance of the Tariff Board by what it could do within the limits of its competence. The Board is convinced



that "at the present level of prices and with the present cost of production the manufacture of steel at Jamshedpur is unprofitable" and that without protection the steel industry cannot be established in India. The pioneer manufacturing firm ought therefore to be propped up, unless the idea of steel manufacture in India is to be abandoned altogether. The Board is also convinced that the third condition laid down by the Fiscal Commission is satisfied and that eventually the industry will face world competition without protection. In our opinion the third condition is too stringent and we would advise the continuance of protection even for fifty years, if it builds up and keeps alive such a vital industry as steel. "The extreme importance on national grounds of the existence of steel manufacture in India was demonstrated over and over again during the war."

In these words the Board has admitted the importance of the industry from the point of view of national defence and yet it cannot shake off the idea of its eventual freedom from protection as if protection was something evil and only to be tolerated for a time.

After a careful investigation of all the factors the Board arrives at the figure of Rs. 180 a ton as the cost price for the steel manufactured by Tata Iron and Steel Co. or any other company equally situated in every way. The recommendations of protective duties are all based on this figure. The duties proposed are such as to make the underselling of Indian raw steel products impossible.

Coming to the industries affected by the price of steel, the Board recognizes that the engineering industry is suited to Indian conditions and it deserves protection. They recommend a duty of 25 p. c. *ad valorem* on most of the engineering products. In the case of wagon-building they recommend bounties in the place of protective duties, as the latter are sure to raise railway costs. The wisdom of this can readily be appreciated by all who know the tremendous burden of post-war railway costs. A duty of Rs. 60 a ton on tin-plates and wire nails, and 25 p. c. on agricultural implements is proposed to complete the list of industries using steel as raw material.

All this is quite satisfactory from the point of view of moderate protection. It is no use protecting steel and making it dear and then leave the industries that fabricate steel to the tender mercies of foreign competition. It also reveals the wide outlook that the Government of India have taken in the case of the steel industry. But there is nowhere in the report any suggestion that new works should be started or at least encouraged by the State. Everywhere the existing firms and their maximum output are considered, but no suggestions are given to capitalists with a view to invite them to undertake new enterprises. In the absence of these the progress by the aid of existing organizations is bound to be slow.

The Board has declared its inability to make

any proposals for giving protection to the only company started for manufacturing locomotives, on the ground that the market for its goods is restricted and hence no economies in production are possible. Here again the remedy is not to sit on the fence but to start new companies. In the worst case bounties may be given to an extent sufficient to the fill up the gap between the price of an imported locomotive and an Indian locomotive. The report says, "If protection were given now, the country would carry a heavy burden for the next five years and at the end progress would be insufficient to justify the sacrifice." We think no sacrifice would be too great for assuring the consciousness that India can make its own locomotives. The moral gain would be so great that material loss ought not to weigh in consideration of it.

This brings us to the general question of the loss to the consumer as a result of protection and its extent and the desirability of incurring the loss in view of future gains. The loss on fabricated steel is nearly Rs. 86 lakhs; adding to this the loss on sheets, bars, tin-plates, wire etc., the total loss is Rs. 1 crore and 64 lakhs. But the loss is more than made up by the increased demand for labourers that would be created as a result of protection. In any case some sacrifice has to be made in order to build up national industries; and 9 pies per head is not a large sacrifice to make for assuring the existence of the steel industry.

We would have been tempted to discuss here the general question of free trade *versus* protection with respect to the loss of the consumer, but the Board is debarred from discussing that question by its terms of reference, and we cannot offer any criticism on anything which was beyond its purview. In spite of this we must remark that the resolution of the Assembly recommending the policy of protection makes too much of the "well-being of the community" meaning clearly the interests of the consumer in the main. But consumers may also be producers and a general policy of cheap prices all round would be detrimental to producers. This solicitousness for the consumer is good so far as it leads to checking the tyranny of the producer by charging monopolistic prices. But if it leads to the substitution of the foreign producer for the home producer it is inconsistent with the the true well-being of the community.

One vital objection to the protection for steel was brought forward by Mr. Piloher and by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and it amounted to this: The duty on steel would affect all industries prejudicially and in particular the railways and coal-mines. The Board has skillfully parried the blow. There is every ground for supposing that production costs will fall substantially during the next few years. High duties do not mean perpetual high costs. With large-scale production and an assured home demand prices are bound to fall gradually. The only important items affected by higher cost of steel for the railways are wagons and rails. For the rails the Board recommended suba-

stantial bounties and for the wagons moderate bounties; so that railway costs need not be appreciably affected by the increased cost of steel. As for machinery, all machinery that is not produced in India is excluded from the operation of the duty. The Board estimates that only  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the total burden will fall on all industries combined. This works at 60 lakhs of rupees for all industries and is in our opinion a trifle. The objection, however, reveals the strong bias for Free Trade entertained by those interested in maintaining the *status quo* in industrial matters. The Board eloquently describes the consequences of withholding protection from the steel industry: "The complete collapse of the greatest single enterprise in the country would put back the clock for twenty years at least."

On the whole the report may be regarded as fairly outspoken, considering that the hands of the Board were tied down by the terms of reference, which in our opinion were too narrow. It is bound to disappoint ultra protectionists who regard the development of national industry worth securing at any cost. But it would satisfy moderate protectionists who would hold the balance even between the consumer and the producer.

It is to be hoped that no time would be wasted before giving effect to the recommendations of the Board. By the time of the next budget the necessary preliminaries should have been completed, so as to embody the recommendations in the Finance Bill. In another article we will discuss the significance of some of the detailed statistics given in the report.

V. N. GODBOLE.

### TANGANYIKA AND KENYA.

The Indian public very probably know but little about Tanganyika Territory, at least not as much as they do about Kenya. They have heard so much of Kenya—thanks to the last White Paper and the agitation to vindicate our national rights in that colony. However, people may yet remember the famous hartal of fifty-four days carried out with un-exemplified unity and tenacity by Tanganyika Indians as a protest against the profits tax and trades licensing ordinances promulgated on the 1st April 1923, when Indians closed down their shops to a man and refused to open them until they were assured that their grievances would be heard and considered. Beyond this one incident, however, Tanganyika has not been much in the public eye.

Until recently this was a German colony, and within the British Empire one hears so little about other nations or their possessions. Germany came to possess this colony about the same time as England became owner of Kenya (formerly East Africa). Soon after Livingstone, Stanley & Co. discovered central Africa, the great powers made up their minds that all this was no man's land; and then there was an indecent scramble to grab as much

as each could. Each power began to send out its own exploring expeditions, in some cases—with printed forms of treaties to be entered into by the party with native Sultans and Chiefs. Most of the interesting history of this scramble, however, lies safely locked in the Foreign Office archives of the several powers, and only a small part of it has been allowed to see light of day.

As has been observed above, this Territory up to a few years ago was a German colony and came into the hands of the British as spoils of war, practically in the middle of 1916 when most of the coast was conquered and the small German force was driven into jungles to keep company with wild animals. This small force, however, kept on harrassing the British troops by guerrilla warfare and did not surrender, although reduced by hunger and privations and greatly depleted, until the Armistice was signed in Europe. All honour to the German general Von Letow Vorbeck to whom homage has been paid by his enemies. What should interest us most is that there were a very large number of Indian troops in this Territory helping to conquer the colony. And a Maratha heart may swell with pardonable pride that in one of the most memorable actions, that is, the battle of Tonga, one Maratha regiment fought brilliantly to its ever lasting glory. This happened early in November of 1915. But on this occasion by some fatal mistake or misunderstanding of signals the British troops retired giving up their hard won positions. The Germans were not slow to take advantage of this blunder in generalship and cut up and shot down the retiring troops. And so a battle was won and yet lost. The British did not again make any attempt at landing from the sea, but came and conquered overland after a laborious and costly preparation in 1916. Details of military operations, however, are not our present concern.

From the occupation of the colony up to July 1920, the administration was of military character although civil rights were protected. By the peace treaty and the League of Nations' Covenant it was decided to give the conquered colonies over for administration to certain nations, and accordingly Tanganyika (with other colonies) was entrusted to England. The terms and conditions under which England is to govern the colony are embodied in what is called the mandate. This mandate in fact is the power of attorney given by the League to England. And England's authority is defined and limited by the this mandate.

This term mandate as well as the status created by it is new to international law. We had protectorates and spheres of influence and frank annexations before, but the peculiar position created by mandates has no precedent. In the case of mandates, the suzerainty appears to remain with the League and apart from the mandate granted by it, the mandatory has no right to occupy or govern the colony; so that, whereas in a crown colony the authority of the sovereign power is

limited by nothing except its own law, whereas in protectorates its authority is practically unchecked and the protected Sultan &c. has little power although the relations between the sovereign power and the Sultan &c. are regulated by treaties,—the mandatory acknowledges the authority of the League and merely governs as agent of it.

This, however, is legal position only. In practice mandates, protectorates or crown colonies, all amount to the same thing. The term 'mandate' and all that it means was invented, it appears, to get round the principle of "no annexations" of President Wilson. A mandate, however, is little short of honest annexation if at all. It cannot even be assumed that a mandatory will ever give up the mandate willingly and without the use of force.

Therefore it may be confidently asserted that Tanganyika is now as much a part of the British Empire as formerly it was that of the German, and that it will be subject to the colonial policy of the Empire builders, modified perhaps to some extent by the terms of the mandate, of which in detail hereafter.

It is intended to make here, however, a few general observations. It is generally feared by Indians residing in this colony that the Indian policy in Kenya will reflect in some measure on Indians in this colony. It is not desired here to maintain that these fears are altogether justifiable, yet it cannot be definitely asserted that such fears are absolutely baseless. And the history of the colonial Indian policy points rather to the fears of Indians being more likely to be justified than otherwise. One has only to remember the history of the struggle of Indians in S. Africa, Fiji, Mauritius, Canada and Kenya. British policy moves slow and with hesitating steps, but the progress is sure and the direction almost always certain. Therefore it behoves us to be forewarned and to watch every move made and every proposition suggested by the imperial architects and the local masons, lest we should be caught napping.

So the Indians apprehend that it will be very difficult if not altogether impossible to escape the adoption of a considerable portion of the Kenya Indian policy in this colony, the pious platitudes of the League of Nations mandate notwithstanding. Whether Indians in this colony will submit to such adoption of the Kenya Indian policy without a protest is another matter. Things have not come to that pass yet. But a fifty-four days unprecedented hartal, consequent on the introduction without consultation of the public opinion of certain abnoxious ordinances, has given us a foretaste of what may be expected.

Yet it is almost certain that a very strenuous attempt will be made to apply the Kenya Indian policy, whatever that may happen to be ultimately, to all the British East African colonies and there is very little chance of Tanganyika becoming an exception to this, unless strong influence is brought to bear from now on the powers that be by the In-

dian Government and Indian public in India and in this colony, to make the terms of the mandate effective.

Here it may be made clear that the status assured by the terms of the mandate to Indians in this colony is the same as that assured to nationals of other states which are members of the League, i. e., full equality of treatment and opportunity. Nationals of all members of the League, must be treated without distinction of creed or colour. A warning note may not be out of place here that the Indian Community in this colony at any rate will not consent to their rights, as assured by the mandate, being tampered with. And it is equally certain that Indian opinion in India also will support us wholeheartedly in the preservation of our rights of equality in this colony, whatever may be the ultimate fate of Kenya Indians. However, let us hope that the Kenya problem also will be solved finally without fear or favour, and that our fears about danger to our inherent rights prove in the end to be unjustifiable if not altogether unfounded. Later on it is hoped to discuss the mandate itself in some detail, and then some indications will be given to show that our misgivings are not altogether unfounded.

M. P. CHITALE.

#### TONGA, EAST AFRICA.

*Note:*—After the above was written news came of the resolution to be moved in Parliament that it is desirable to create an East African federation including Uganda, Kenya, Tanganyika, Zanzibar Nyassaland and Rhodesia. This shows the direction of the policy. If the federation comes, will it be possible to escape a uniform policy all over the federation? And what will the uniform policy be? So far as Indians are concerned it appears probable that Kenya Indian policy (whatever the final settlement) will be adopted all over the federation. What happens then to the equality assured to all nationals of members of the League under the terms of mandate of Tanganyika? Of this, however, more later?

M. P. C.

### INDIAN LABOUR LEGISLATION.—II.

#### INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE.

NOBODY can know for certain what action Manchester would have taken had the war time prosperity of the Bombay mills come about at any other period. But partly owing to the more powerful forces that were engendered during and after the great struggle, and partly owing to the decreased influence of the Manchester Chamber on the Secretary of State, and of this latter on the Government of India, this old lever for securing public action in regard to labour has ceased to exist. But fortunately for this country, its place has been taken by another more powerful but less objectionable, agency. The great world war caused many searchings of the heart on the part of the leading statesmen of different nations as regard the means-



of stopping the repetition of such disasters. One of the greatest obstacles in the way of international peace was then thought to be the presence in each nation of a discontented labour force, whose sympathies were always on the side of disorder. Internal peace, upon which alone could be based the greater international brotherhood, could be secured by doing away the common disabilities of the workers in every land. Not only were all the important countries interested in securing this end, but in its general outline the problem to be faced in every part of the world was the same. Moreover, great faith was then attached to the efficiency and desirability of international action in all matters of public policy. These considerations prevailed upon the framers of the Versailles Treaty of 1919 in adopting as an integral part of their work the establishment of an International Labour Conference, which was to hold annual sessions, and was to have a permanent executive on which the representatives of the eight most important industrial countries of the world were to have seats. Though the claim of India to be numbered in these eight was not granted till 1922, still from the very first session of the Conference which was held at Washington in October 1919, this country played a prominent part in the various discussions.

The Washington Conference advocated a draft convention which embodied the minimum all round improvement in the position of labour which it was desirable to secure in every country. The hours of work were to be reduced to eight in Europe, America and the White colonies, while in the East the limit was placed at ten. The securing of healthy conditions for the labourer was also kept in view and provisions against humidification and lead poisoning were adopted. The employment of women by night, under unfavourable hygienic conditions and before and after child-birth were also to be prohibited. Besides, the Governments of the various nations undertook to start public employment bureaus whereby local unemployment could be relieved. The representatives of India were signatories to this convention, and when it was presented to the Government of India, and by it to the local Governments and interested public bodies, much discussion took place on the whole subject of bringing the position of Indian labours in a line with that in the West.

The Manchester Chamber no doubt must have derived great satisfaction at the course of these events, but one great difference between the present ameliorative movement on the part of Indians and the former restrictive action of Lancashire is that whereas the latter was dictated by an interested outsider primarily for his own benefit, the former represents the vigorous action of an awakened sense of national responsibility toward industrial labour. It was this consciousness of social solidarity that moved even the Indian industrialists to lend their support not only to the Factory Act of 1922, which represents the first attempt

on the part of India to adopt in practice the Convention of Washington but also to the Indian Mines Act and the Workmen's Compensation Act, which are further steps in the same direction. As will be shown on an other occasion, much remains to be done for improving the position of Indian labour at least to the limit of the average civilised standard, but this sympathetic mood of the employers is a great source of encouragement to the friends of labour.

The Washington Conference of 1919 was followed by the Genoa session of 1920 where the question of seamen's labour was the main subject for discussion. As unfortunately India has no navy and no marine to speak of, the recommendations of this session affected only to a small extent the position of Indian seamen. The third and all further sessions of the International Labour Conference have been held at Geneva the seat of all the activities of the League of Nations. In October 1921 the question of the agricultural labourers was the main head of discussion. But the process of putting the agricultural industry on the basis of free contract and open competition having scarcely begun in India, the recommendations in this respect had practically no application to this country. In the meanwhile the claim of India for being recognised as one of the first eight industrial nations of the world was forcibly put forward and finally granted in 1922. This result not only increased the prestige of India by securing for her a seat on the Governing Body of the International Labour Organization, but its responsibility for carrying out the decisions of the Conference also increased. The sessions of the year 1922 and 1923 were more or less concerned with the work of consolidation, and with reviewing the extent to which recommendations till then made had been carried out by the various members. In this examination, it is satisfactory to note that India was found to be much ahead of many progressive western nations. This rapid acceptance of the suggestion of the Conference would not have been possible had it not been for the generous sympathy of Indian employers, who even forestalled the action of the Government of India by introducing the Ten Hours day of their own accord, before it was enacted by the Factory Act of 1922. It is this spirit that has led them to support the Mines Act and the Compensation Act, and any improvement in these measures, as also some new measures that are being suggested, may well count upon the sympathetic support of the capitalists so long as they do not exceed the possibilities of the Indian industrial position.

#### THE FACTORY ACT.

The Factory Act of 1922 made an advance in two directions. In the first place the Act was applied to all Factories where mechanical power was used and where more than twenty persons were employed. Local Governments were authorised at their discretion to extend the Act to places where no mechanical power was used or where more

than ten persons did work. By this provision not only were the small sweating establishments brought under control, but the big plantations which were notoriously the places of hard driving were for the first time dealt with. Side by side with this extension of the scope of the Act, its provisions were made more stringent. The draft convention at Washington had recommended that the minimum age of child employment in British India should be 12. This was adopted in the Act of 1922, which places the upper limit at 15. The provision of the Act of 1911 in regard to the fixing of the hours of adult male labour at 12 per day applied only to the textile factories. The new Act not only reduces the weekly labour in all factories to 60 hours, but during no one day can the regular work exceed 11 hours. Moreover, after each period of a continuous labour of five hours one hour's rest is to be allowed. Overtime, when specially allowed by the local Government, is to be paid for at a rate of wages at least twentyfive per cent above the regular rate. As the conditions of different industries and of different places vary with each other, the local Governments have been authorised to modify or exempt the operation of any of these provisions.

#### THE MINES ACT.

The case of the mining industry was, however, thought to be somewhat peculiar. Not only is the labour thus employed more arduous and more dangerous, but its supply also has been drawn from a more restricted area. This question was, therefore, tackled by a special Mines Act of 1923 which, though based in principle upon the Factory Act of 1922, made certain variations of detail to suit the peculiar requirements. Children were defined as persons between the ages of 13 and 15, and they were not to be employed in underground work at all. A similar restriction upon the subterranean labour of women has been pressed upon the Government and the mineowners. But these latter contend that out of a total labour force of 2,49,000 as many as 90,000 are women and hence any sudden restriction of their labour will disorganise the industry. This objection has been upheld for the moment by the Government and, provided the mine owners sincerely move in the direction of substituting male labour for female in underground employment, it might be expected that within three years' time the restriction will be embodied in the law itself. The weekly labour of the underground workers at the mine has also been limited to 54 hours.

#### WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT.

Though the special dangers of the mining industry were thus dealt with, still there were certain other dangers of accident, of poisoning, of sickness, which are common to all the industries. As there is a very obvious danger involved in the industries where white lead and zinc are used, the employment of women in them was altogether prohibited by the Act of 1922. But accidents, and occasional contraction of serious diseases were

found to be fairly common in the other industries also, and for this injury sustained during the working hours the worker was justified in claiming a compensation. Naturally the employer who runs a thousand and one other risks of his industry was the only person who could be called upon to make that compensation. Moreover, if the employers take all possible care for safeguarding their workers from accidents, these would no doubt be rarer. The various Factory Acts had made the provisions regarding supervision and penalty more and more stringent. But the employers in such a vast country as India could count upon the extreme improbability of a too close supervision and hence the number of accidents and the extent of chronic sickness was much larger in the Indian factories than it should have been. This truth was perceived not only by the friends of labour but also by Government officials and some of the more enlightened employers. Conviction naturally led to action, which is represented by the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1923, which is to come into force from July 1, 1924. The Act applies to a small number of specified industries. These are: (1) Tramways; (2) Registered Factories; (3) Mines; (4) Ships; (5) Docks; (6) Building; (7) Telegraph and Telephone laying and repairing; (8) Underground sewers; (9) Fire brigade and (10) Railways.

It will be perceived that some of these industries employ only a small number of workers and it is expected that the total number of workmen affected by the measure would not exceed three million. It must also be remembered that the compensation is only for accidents, the contraction of any disease attributable to the industry being included in that term. Compensation is a liability of the employers who can be sued either in an ordinary court or before a special Commissioner to be appointed for the administration of the Act. The Act also lays down certain limits within which the liability extends. Thus in case of fatal accidents if the victim is a minor his guardian gets 50 Rs. but if the victim is a major his dependents are to be paid an amount which equals the wages of the dead person for thirty months, provided that this amount does not exceed Rs. 2500. If the accident results in a complete disablement of the worker, the injured person, if a minor, gets 84 months' wages, and, if a major, 42 months' wages are to be paid. In no case, however, can the liability exceed Rs. 3500. Where the accident results in only a partial disablement of the worker a tariff has been drawn up whereby the compensation to be paid is a certain proportion of the compensation fixed for total disablement, the extent of the proportion being dependent upon the nature of the disablement. As chronic illness is not included within the scope of the Act, compensation in case of disablement, always begins after the expiry of ten days. This Act differs in many important respects from similar measures in other advanced countries and it requires to be reformed, along with the two other measures mentioned above.

D. G. KARVE.

## A LETTER FROM THE PUNJAB.

## SERVANTS OF THE PEOPLE SOCIETY.

I AM rather late in writing this letter. During the month and a half that has elapsed since I wrote my last letter, many events of outstanding importance have happened. L. Lajpat Rai sailed for Europe in the beginning of this month but not before he had put the affairs of the Tilak School of Politics in order. A regular constitution has now been evolved and the School has been renamed the Servants of the People Society. I am glad to tell you that through the efforts of L. Lajpat Rai the Society has been put on a strong financial basis.

Before leaving, L. Lajpat Rai with the generous donation of L. Diwan Chand, M. L. C., of Amritsar, formed a committee for work among the depressed classes. It is most encouraging to find that both the Principal and the Vice-Principal of the local Sanatan Dharma College have accepted seats on this committee. The work among the depressed classes is growing apace. Two members of the Servants of the People Society have been touring, as I told you some time back, in the United Provinces and another went round some districts of Jammu and Kashmir states. L. Ram Pershad, B. A., late editor the *Bande Mataram*, is the Secretary of the Depressed Classes Committee and we hope that he and his organisation would be able to achieve something substantial. Meanwhile a forward step in this direction has been taken by the foundation of a Ved Mandir at Lahore, a place of worship open to Hindus of all shades of opinion and belonging to all classes, untouchables included. May this institution justify the hopes that are animating its founders!

Whatever else the Sikhs might think, I believe that at present the question of the management of the Khalsa College, Amritsar, is more important than many problems that loom so large in the public press at this time. It is right that the Sikhs should claim the right of managing their premier educational institution, but it is unfortunate that in this claim the management, owing to some rather unconnected reasons, have not been able to enlist the vocal sympathies of the Sikhs. However, it is reassuring that elections held towards the end of the last month have resulted in the retention of office by almost all the old members of the managing committee. We hope that this would help the Sikhs in solving their problem.

The Joint Parliamentary Committee recommended that all classes of revenue should be brought under the authority of the Legislative Council. The Punjab Government has been promising a bill to give effect to this recommendation for many months past, but surprise was sprung at the too credulous among us by a recent resolution of the Government which by an executive order raised the water rates in the Punjab just when they are being lowered in some other provinces. I wonder how far these tactics of the Punjab Government can be justified. But this province has rather been barren in producing constitutional conventions and therefore let us hope and wait.

The appointment of a committee by the Governor in Council to explore the problem of the management of the Gurdwaras is another piece of unconstitutionality that the Punjab Government has been guilty of. Gurdwara reform is a transferred subject and the appointment of a committee thereon by the reserved half of the Government is rather unfortunate, to say the least of

it. Or has the subject of religious endowments been transferred back to the reserved Government after the failure of the last Gurdwara bill? Of course the question of the Kirpan is also to be dealt with, but anyhow that is no reason why the announcement should be made by the Governor in Council. I wonder why a soldier has been appointed to preside over this committee. I do not know much to the credit of General Birdwood, but I should like to know what qualifications a soldier like him possesses for solving the Gurdwara problem.

## MISCELLANEA

## THE THIRD BOMBAY PROVINCIAL LIBERAL CONFERENCE.

The following bulletin has been issued by the Reception Committee:—

As already announced the Third Bombay Provincial Liberal Conference will meet at Ahmednagar on the 21st and 22nd of May in Bagde Theatre, which is a well ventilated and well-lighted building, sufficiently commodious to accommodate a large number of delegates and visitors. Residential and boarding accommodation for delegates has also been made at Rs. 2 per day in the Vishram Bag High School Hostel close to the town with a commanding open space all round. Mr. B. S. Kamat, has been elected President of the Conference. Ahmednagar is not so hot even in summer, as it is generally reported to be, showing as it does a temperature much lower than most of the Northern districts. A visit to Ahmednagar even from the historical and political point of view will be both interesting and instructive to those who take a delight in the study of history and politics. But there are other considerations of much greater importance which must needs induce Liberals from various districts to attend the Conference even at some sacrifice of time and money. Since they met at the last session of the National Liberal Federation held at Poona, political events, both in England and India, have assumed a phase, never before experienced in the history of Indian politics. Now is therefore the most opportune time to meet together for a fuller discussion of subjects concerning India, that have been recently opened in British Parliament, as well as for consideration of those complications, that the policy of obstructionists has created in Indian legislative bodies. It may perhaps seem presumptuous to enter into the merits or demerits of that policy, but be it said the credit of the obstructionists that they have a more perfect organisation, a better party discipline and a greater cohesion amongst themselves than some of the Liberals claim to possess. It will not therefore be too much to ask the Liberal friends to meet together for a fuller discussion of a scheme for effecting better organisation amongst themselves. There is not a policy of obstruction, and yet they cannot let the public mind be impressed with a false notion that they are co-operators with Government in whatever policy the latter pursue, whether productive of good or evil. Efforts should, therefore, be made to remove this false impression and convince the public that they are equally strong in demanding full responsible government and Dominion Status for India at the earliest possible date. A Deputation consisting of the Right Hon'ble Shrinivas Sastry, Dr. Besant and others has proceeded to England to make such a demand, and it is in the fitness of things that the Conference consisting of representatives from various parts of the Presidency gives it a whole-hearted support.

Will the Liberals kindly respond to the invitation from Ahmednagar and attend the Conference in large numbers?

It is also resolved to hold the Provincial Social Conference on the 23rd May and arrangements are being made for holding gatherings of ladies and depressed classes.

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