

# THE Servant of India

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## CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
TOPICS OF THE WEEK ... ..	473
ARTICLE :—	
Reorganisation of the Police Service ... ..	475
SPECIAL ARTICLES :—	
India's War Finance and Peace Time Problems.—II. By Prof. V. G. Kale ... ..	476
Franchise in the United Kingdom. By R. S. R. ... ..	479
A LETTER FROM LONDON ... ..	480
LETTERS FROM THE PROVINCES:—	
Madras ... ..	481
CORRESPONDENCE :—	
Mr. Kelkar and Lord Willingdon. By N. C. Kelkar and Prof. K. R. Kanitkar ... ..	482

## TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

THE issue of the press note in which the Bombay Government declares "scarcity" in eight districts is hardly expected to allay the serious disquiet which has been caused throughout the presidency by the failure of rains. The press note elaborately sets out the details by which Government "tests" and "observes" the distress, and how after the preliminaries are gone through it declares "scarcity" or "famine" or neither. The public are not concerned to understand these mysteries of the Famine Relief Code; what they are anxious to know is that Government is alive to the needs of the very grave situation that has arisen and is prepared to take bold and prompt measures of relief. The press note that has been now issued fails to give the reassurance which they sorely need. The grants of *tagavi* are miserably small, and this is the only tangible form of relief that the press note speaks of. That test works have been opened but do not fill does not necessarily mean, as the Government seems to do, that distress is not acute. It is no wonder if the wage given on these works does not attract people now, when the prices have mounted up so many times the normal prices. If the rules of normal times are persisted in, test works may never be converted into relief works, and "scarcity" may never advance into "famine." Government must now revise its tests also; for there cannot be a shadow of doubt that, by whatever name Government may call it, acute distress is felt over large tracts of the presidency. People will appreciate detailed information of relief measures much better than such a bald press note.

THE visit of the Foodstuffs Commissioner to Burma has, it would appear, considerably brought down the price of rice in that province, and the speculators and profiteers feel balked of their prize. The large surplus of this year's crop and the bumper crop expected next year will, it is estimated, supply the deficiencies of other provinces: Bombay and Madras, and sufficient shipping, Mr. Gubbay is of the opinion, will be regularly available. The essential points in the scheme of control which he has evolved with Bombay shippers are understood to be :

(1) The fixation of the quantity which may be shipped to various approved destinations; (2) the licensing at destination of importers who have agreed to comply with the direction of the local authorities as regards terms of purchase; (3) the fixation at port of export of a price at or under which alone export business may be effected and (4) the restriction of tonnage and of export licenses: to those only who comply with conditions set out in (2) and (3) above.

Local Governments have fixed the margin of profit which is allowable to importing merchants, the Madras Government having allowed a maximum net profit of annas 8 per bag of two maunds. Retail dealers have to take out a license and sell their stocks at controlled rates.

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MR. GUBBAY has also announced that forward contracts for the coming crop will not be recognised for the purpose of granting export licenses, which will effectually check speculative dealing in it. What Sir Alexander Cardew told the Madras Council, however, on behalf of Government does not seem to be correct, that exportation of Burma rice to foreign countries has been stopped. From Mr. Gubbay's notice, on the contrary, it would appear that such export is allowed, and that requirements of foreign countries are also considered while making the allotment. It is announced that exports to oversea countries are being restricted to moderate quantities and in the main to continue where there is a resident Indian population. With the rice market in Burma and the wheat market in the Punjab wisely controlled, the present situation will be greatly eased.

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IN spite of the much-talked of change in the angle of vision in recent years, the Bombay Government's attitude in the way of showing preference to Europeans and neglecting to give opportunities to Indians shows little change. In answer to a question by the Hon. Mr. Paranjpye, Government had to admit that the Rev. Mr. Darby

whom they have appointed as Principal of the Secondary Training College, has had no experience of such work. Another question of the same honourable member elicited the fact that, in the whole history of the Government of Bombay no Indian has ever held the post of a Secretary or Under-secretary to Government. In this respect the Bombay Government is miles behind the other provinces in India. At this very moment Madras and U. P. have Indians occupying a Secretary's place in the persons of Mr. R. Ramachandra Rao and Mr. A. C. Chatterji, and both are admittedly very successful officers. Similar appointments have been made in Bengal, Behar, the Punjab, C. P. and even the Government of India. The Government of Bombay alone cannot find an Indian for such posts. A third example of a similar nature is the acting appointment of Mr. Sisson to the Principalship of the Karnatak College. Nearly two years ago, Government gave an undertaking that, in spite of a badly worded press *communiqué*, the Principalship of that College was not for all time to be reserved for Englishmen. Now when an acting vacancy occurs, a European officer of about five years' standing and of no outstanding literary or scholarly reputation has been preferred to many senior members of the Provincial Educational Service. A change in the mode of making such appointments and especially a little less regard to the colour of the skin would be welcomed by the public.

It is but natural that, when the successful conclusion of the war has won for the civilised world the glorious right of freedom, there should be an insistent call here for the application to India of the principle of self-determination, for which President Wilson stands sponsor. The Bombay Provincial Congress Committee at its last meeting prayed that effect should be given to this principle at the Peace Conference, and similar resolutions have been passed at other meetings. The expression 'self-determination,' however, conveys different meaning to different people. The wide scope of this formula has not been appreciated by any public body so well as by the National Union of Bombay. It recognises that even the grant of full self-government does not constitute the true application of the principle of 'self-determination,' which really consists in allowing the people themselves to determine their future constitution. In view of this principle now holding the field, the National Union calls upon the people of this country to put by the official reform scheme, and concentrate their effort on 'the altered views of world politics' being applied to India. Another public meeting in Bombay, at which the principal speaker was Mr. Horniman, also asked for 'self-determination' the other day, but it attached to the word a far more restricted sense. It seems to be satisfied that India would be allowed to self-determine if she was represented by an elected Indian at the Peace Conference. However liberally or narrowly the phrase may be

interpreted, it is clear that to say, as the *Hindu* does, that India must accept whatever is offered to her because of her present subjection, is the very negation of the principle of 'self-determination.'

FROM the letter of Mr. Kelkar published elsewhere two facts stand out as beyond question, and they should exert some influence on the Bombay oppositionists. First, his was the initiative in the movement for giving an address to Lord Willingdon on behalf of and in the name of the people. The inference is plain that his estimate of Lord Willingdon's administration is such as to deserve and even require a public recognition of his services. Second, he paid a tribute of very high praise to His Excellency's genuine and deep sympathy with our political aspirations. We cannot appreciate the quibbling by which Mr. Kelkar seeks to differentiate between his capacity as publicist and that as municipal president and cannot imagine a state of things in which Mr. Jinnah, *e. g.*, will head a movement for voting an address to the Governor in the Corporation and simultaneously lead another campaign against it as politician outside. Whatever one may think of Mr. Kelkar's making light of the famous self-imposed interdict supposed to lie on the members of the Home Rule League, of which he is the principal executive official, it must be said to his credit that in not letting any particular incident of His Excellency's administration dominate his verdict on the whole *regime*, he has shown a commendable breadth of vision and sanity of judgment, which his Bombay leaders may well emulate. We have no doubt that Lord Willingdon's administration has been progressive on the whole, and may well be commemorated in a suitable manner.

OF the Governor-designate of Bombay Mr. Cotton writes: "Bombay is to be congratulated on the choice which Mr. Montagu has made of Captain G. A. Lloyd, M. P., as its new Governor. No one who listened to the speech made by the Hon. Member for West Staffordshire during the debate on the Indian budget on August 6 could fail to be struck by the note of warm sympathy with the political aspirations of Indians. He may be counted upon to give hearty support to the scheme outlined in the Montagu-Chelmsford report; and unless I am much mistaken Bombay reformers will find in him a wise counsellor and sincere friend."

MR. LAJPAT RAI, in a letter to the *Nation*, puts in a vigorous defence of the scheme of reforms against the attacks of retired Anglo-Indian administrators and thinks that Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford are among the people who have saved the Empire from the danger which threatened it from the Sydenhams. Their report, he says, has for the time being lifted the Indian nationalist from the lowest depths of despondency and despair into an atmosphere of hope and confidence.

## REORGANISATION OF THE POLICE SERVICE.

It has just been announced that the opinions of most of the local Governments on the recommendations of the Public Services Commission in regard to the Police department have been forwarded to the Government of India. What these opinions may be like it is not known; but the Bengal Government at any rate has put its hand on the table and published its provisional views on the subject for public criticism. This is certainly a commendable procedure, but the Bengal Government's views do not seem to have undergone any drastic change required by the altered time-spirit. The proposal in the Montagu-Chelmsford report of an immediate increase in Indian recruitment for the I. C. S., over and above what was recommended by the Commission, and of an annual increase in this proportion, clearly shows how utterly out of date the Commission's recommendations have fallen. The Government of Bengal, however, pays no heed to "the changed conditions" to which the Secretary of State and the Viceroy have made such pointed reference in their report and has made proposals the net result of which will be, if they are carried into effect, to worsen the position of Indians in the Police service. It is notorious that, as things stand at present, the English door to the higher ranks of this branch of the public service is closed to Indians, none but British subjects of European descent being permitted to sit for the qualifying examination. Such a restriction, amounting to an open violation of the statute of 1833, the Commission could not maintain, but sought to achieve the same result in a more ingenious way without coming into direct conflict with the parliamentary pledges. It nominally threw open the examination to Indians and Eurasians, but by restricting it to such as have received education in the United Kingdom for five years prior to the examination, it no less effectually closed this avenue to all but pure Europeans. The age-limit for the examination being 19-21, it was obviously impossible for any appreciable number of Indians availing themselves of the channel, opened by the Commission only in the abstract. As proposed by Mr. Abdur Rahim in his dissenting minute, the Bengal Government proposes that this qualification should be removed, and the English examination thrown open to all on equal terms. This is no doubt an advance on the Commission's recommendations, but the element of racial discrimination cannot disappear till the examination is held simultaneously in England and in India and the age-limit raised, as suggested by Sir M. B. Chaubal, to 21-23. On the proposal of simultaneous examination the Bengal Government pours ridicule, and if the object of the present system is to keep down the percentage of Indians, as is sometimes bluntly confessed, its objection is also intelligible, since the English examination is none too severe.

But the Bengal Government has its price for its seemingly liberal proposal as to the removal of existing restrictions. It must have one of the two channels of recruitment in India for the imperial service closed altogether, and the channel it would close is just that which the Commission rightly considers to be the more important one, *viz.*, that of direct appointment. If the requirement of five years' previous training in England is dispensed with hereafter and thus opportunity is afforded to a larger number of Indians to come in through the door of the competitive examination, the Bengal Government thinks it but fair that promotion from the provincial service should be the only road open to Indians for an entrance into the imperial branch of the police department and the Bengal Government does not certainly care to be accused of overgenerosity. Now how many of the superior posts would this Government have reserved for members of the provincial service? The Commission has recommended 10 per cent. to begin with, and 20 per cent. ultimately. The Bengal Government apparently thinks that such a headlong movement would be dangerous. It favours the policy of 'wait and see'—see if the Indian proportion cannot be reduced! "If it were found that Indians were entering the service in larger numbers by the competitive test in England, it might be necessary to reduce the percentage of recruitment in India." "The existing proportion of superintendents' posts open to the provincial service is 5 per cent., and it would seem best to increase the percentage cautiously and gradually, in order to afford time in which to test the effect of the contemplated changes on the administration." So, in return for the paltry improvement the Bengal Government suggests in the matter of the English examination, it wants direct appointment in India stopped altogether and no percentage of superintendents' posts set apart for provincial service men. It is easy to see what a set-back this involves, on the whole.

At this point mention may be made of the express recommendation in the Montagu-Chelmsford report, in para. 317, that the percentage of Indian recruitment and also of the annual increase in it should be definitely fixed on the lines of the recommendation in the joint report as to the Indian Civil Service. The authors of the report say: "We have dealt only with the I. C. S., but our intention is that there should be in all other services now recruited from England a *fixed percentage of recruitment in India increasing annually.*" Apart from their inherent injustice, the proposals of the Bengal Government contravene the above provision in the reforms report in the most explicit terms and must on that account, at any rate, be superseded. This Government has also devoted a paragraph in its resolution to a consideration of the standing of deputy superintendents in relation to that of assistant superintendents in the police service. It has always been maintained by pro-

vincial officers that they are entitled to a position of equality, and they base their claim both on the report of the Police Commission of 1902 and the Government of India's resolution of 1905 containing orders on this report. The Commission proposed that deputy superintendents "should have the same departmental status as assistants," and the India Government's order stated that "their functions and their departmental status will be similar to those of assistant superintendents," and they further expressed the hope that the class of deputies "will furnish the source from which Indian district superintendents may eventually be drawn." The Public Services Commission however cast doubt on the validity of this claim, and the Bengal Government, going much further than the Commission, absolutely repudiates it. It maintains that the class of deputy superintendents was created simply because a sufficient number of assistants could not be found exclusively by means of the English examination. "No claim of complete equality can be admitted," therefore, as the deputies "were recruited for assistants' (not superintendents') work," and indeed, the Police Commission itself "did not contemplate *liberal and absolute equality* between junior officers of the imperial service and provincial service officers." We do not think that the terms of the Police Commission's recommendation and the Government of India's resolution can be thus explained away. Justice requires that the deputy superintendents, engaged in exactly the same duties with the assistants, should enjoy the same status and should have, as suggested by Mr. Abdur Rahim, substantial chances of promotion. The Bengal Government, in the concluding portion of its resolution, touches on the question of salaries and advocates large increases in the existing rates of pay of the superior forces. The Commission refrained from suggesting any substantial addition to the salaries in this service, as the latter had undergone reorganisation only in 1905. But the passage of time since then and even "the recent political developments" have, so it appears to the Bengal Government, completely changed the situation. It is superfluous to say that any proposed increases in the present scales of pay, though they find support in the joint report, will be resisted by Indians to the utmost of their power. We have no hesitation in saying that the Bengal Government's proposals, taken together, must be characterised as distinctly retrograde.

## INDIA'S WAR FINANCE AND PEACE TIME PROBLEMS.

### II

#### ON THE OUTBREAK OF THE WAR.

LITTLE could Sir William Meyer dream when he presented his first financial statement to the Supreme Legislative Council on 2nd March, 1914, that the voyage of his five years' financial administration was destined to encounter the fearful storm of the greatest war known to history. As it

turned out, within a few months of the presentation of his budget, the conflagration of war started, and having raged for a little more than four long years was not brought under control till he retired from office. Naturally little anticipating the perils that were to beset his course, Sir William opened his speech expounding his budget arrangements with an appeal to the Council for indulgence and consideration in view of the fact that even in the most favourable circumstances it would have been no easy task to take over the reins of financial administration from such a competent and popular predecessor as Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson and of the further fact that the economic outlook was not quite satisfactory on account of the failure of September rains and the disturbance of commercial conditions caused by the banking crisis through which the country was passing. He paid Sir Guy no mere conventional compliment when he observed that 'his intimate knowledge of English and Indian finance was reinforced by a practical sagacity and a genuine love of India and her peoples which won confidence and esteem in this Council and the country generally.' The diffidence Sir William felt was thus justified by the less favourable conditions by which he was surrounded and by his accession to office as a successor to such a capable and popular Finance Member as Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson.

The situation was not, however, desperate, nor were the prospects gloomy. They only suffered by comparison with the prosperous years which had preceded. Sir Guy's last complete year of office had closed with an aggregate imperial and provincial surplus of over £ 7½ million, and on the usual calculation that the season would turn out to be normal and after making contributions towards local administration and social advance, he had been able to budget for an imperial surplus of about £ 1½ million for the year 1914-15. But things did not shape themselves as anticipated, and the year 1913-14, when completed, was not going to leave behind it any unexpected surplus to be distributed for outlay on social reforms and to enable the Finance Member to introduce into his budget such attractive features as had become customary during previous years. The revised estimates showed almost the same imperial surplus as the budget, the provincial deficit, the result of the provinces drawing upon their reserves with the Government of India, was reduced by more than a million and the nominal deficit in the budget was converted into a surplus of half a million. The budget estimate for 1914-15 provided for an imperial surplus of £ 1¼ million and a provincial deficit of £ 3¼ million and, therefore, an aggregate nominal deficit of about £ 2 million. There was little that was extraordinary about the budget except that it did not provide for any considerable grants to provincial Governments. The balances of the latter with the Government of India were steadily growing as their spending capacity was limited, and they were perhaps conserving their resources

for financing well-thought out programmes of educational expansion and sanitary and medical improvements.

The budget for 1914-15 provided for capital expenditure on railways up to the high level which had come to be regarded as essential, *viz.*, £12 million a year. The exchange position was satisfactory, and the circulation of currency notes was steadily increasing. The Gold Standard Reserve was growing up year after year, and the bulk of it was invested in England. To meet the total capital outlay of £17.9 million, £3.3 million was to be raised by a rupee loan and £6.2 million by sterling borrowings. The rupee loan of 5 crores which was proposed was a record demand on the Indian loan market; but Sir William stated that it was justified not merely by 'the general considerations which prompt every country to keep as much of its public debt as possible in the hands of its own people,' but by the fact that it had then become more economical to borrow in India than in London. Another source to which Government looked for assistance, though not available immediately, was the deposits in the Postal Savings Banks. They, therefore, decided to raise the limit on annual deposits in these banks from Rs. 500 gross to Rs. 750 net and also to raise the total amount that could be held by a depositor, from Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 5,000. As regards the banking crisis, Government increased considerably their interest-free balances with the Presidency Banks as soon as it arose and later, decided to make loans to them at a moderate rate to enable them to render assistance to banking institutions which might apply to them for accommodation owing to monetary stringency. As the budget had no striking features about it, the discussions which took place in the Council on resolutions connected with it or in the course of the annual debate, were also of the usual type and went along the familiar lines. Hon'ble members wanted larger amounts to be spent on education and sanitation, and they were told that provincial Governments already had more funds than they could lay out. Financial assistance was solicited on behalf of certain provinces for measures of reform, but Government saw no reason to modify the settlements already made with the Provinces. Certain members objected to unnecessarily large surpluses being provided in the budget and were told in reply that caution and foresight were then essential. The high standard of the railway programme came in for adverse criticism, but was justified with the usual arguments.

It is unnecessary to describe here the circumstances in which the war broke out, nor to say how Great Britain was compelled to unsheath her sword. Equally needless is it to state how when the armies of the Allies were not sufficiently numerous and organized to resist the calculated and well-prepared rush of the enemy into Flanders, Lord Hardinge, our Viceroy, offered to His Majesty the King-Emperor, with perfect confidence and pride, 'the fine and largest military force of British and

Indian troops for service in Europe that has ever left the shores of India.' At the meeting of the Supreme Legislative Council of 8th September, 1914, Lord Hardinge read His Majesty's message to the Princes and peoples of India and referred to the loyal and enthusiastic response made by them. The Hon'ble Sir Gangadhar Chitanavis then moved a resolution giving expression to India's feelings of devotion to the King-Emperor and to her keen desire to share in the financial burden imposed on the United Kingdom by the war in addition to the military assistance that was being afforded. The resolution was warmly supported by the Council and accepted by Government; and the Viceroy stated that 'we should accept such portion of the cost of the expeditionary force as would have fallen upon India had our troops continued to be employed in this country under normal circumstances.' The cost, roughly calculated to the end of the year, was put down at one million sterling. Lord Hardinge emphasised the value of the assistance India was thus giving to the Empire. India had placed a large portion of her army at the disposal of His Majesty's Government—an army primarily maintained for the defence of the country—and at the same time she was making a contribution of a million sterling at a time when the war was likely materially to affect our budget arrangements. 'A contribution more liberal than this,' said the Viceroy, 'would not be fair to the Indian taxpayer.' Another resolution of loyalty and devotion to His Gracious Majesty the King-Emperor was passed by the Council on 24th February, 1915.

The modern mechanism of exchange is so delicate that even the rumour of war is sufficient to derange it. The belligerent countries experienced great difficulties in this connection during the war, and various devices had to be resorted to to keep the machinery in working order. The Indian currency system with its gold exchange standard imposes on the Government the responsibility of maintaining the exchange value of the rupee at the legal level, and the demand for remittance abroad has to be met by the issue of gold or the sale of bills and transfers on London. The Government of India had obtained ample experience of this exchange trouble in the crisis of 1907-08, and even before Great Britain actually entered upon the war, they had formulated the necessary measures, having announced on 3rd August their readiness to support exchange by all means in their power. The recommendations of the Royal Commission on Indian Finance and Currency, whose report had been already published, were a guide to Government, and they shaped their policy in accordance therewith. They announced their intention to sell sterling bills or 'reverse councils' on London up to a maximum limit of £1 million a week, and telegraphic transfers also were to be sold for the greater convenience of the public. By the end of the year, 1914-15, bills and transfers had been sold to the extent of about £8¾ million. The sums re-

ceived in this country by the sale were credited to the Gold Standard Reserve as they were withdrawn from the Reserve in England by the Secretary of State to meet bills and transfers. Government likewise gave effect to the suggestion of the Chamtberlain Commission that £4 million of silver held in the gold reserve in India should be exchanged for an equivalent quantity of gold previously held in the Paper Currency Reserve, thus strengthening the gold position in this country.

But the effects upon the Postal Savings Banks and Paper currency were more serious. Public confidence had been shaken by the failure of a large number of joint stock banks, but postal savings banks had ever been popular. The deposits in them had materially increased on account of the liberal conditions which had been announced in March of the previous year, amounting, by the end of July, to Rs. 24½ crores. But the wild rumours which floated in the bazars about imaginary reverses sustained by the Allies and the pranks of the mischievous *Emden* which seemed to lend colour to the absurd stories, created a panic condition of mind among the ignorant classes, and there was a heavy run upon the banks. During the months of August and September alone there was a net withdrawal of about 6 crores. In such an excited state of the public mind the most effective remedy is to make prompt payments in response to the demand and thus to help in the restoration of confidence. This the Government did with admirable resolution and promptitude, and though the banks had lost about Rs. 10½ crores by the withdrawal of deposits by the end of the official year, the panic steadily subsided and normal conditions were restored. A similar policy was adopted in connection with the encashment of currency notes. The demand for cash in return for notes was very heavy and abnormal in Bombay. Ignorant people were in a hurry to realise their assets as they thought the paper in their possession would lose all its value, and they ran frantically to currency offices to encash notes. Government not only met the demand fully and promptly, but gave special facilities for encashment, and the panic soon subsided. Shortage of shipping due to the use of vessels for military transport purposes, caused a depression in the jute and cotton markets. In the case of cotton and other staples, Government decided to facilitate an extension of credit which would assist in the holding up of existing stocks where necessary. Tea and groundnut were also similarly affected, and the local prices of wheat having abnormally gone up, drastic restrictions were imposed upon its export.

Though there was a deficit to be faced in 1915-16 and the capital programme had to be reduced the Finance Member refrained from resorting to fresh taxation on the ground that the difficulty was of a temporary and exceptional character. The decision of Government not to levy additional taxation was hailed with satisfaction by

the people who had thought that the impending deficit could not be met with the existing sources of revenue. The budget programme provided for the renewal of the temporary loans of £14 million, for fresh borrowing to the extent of £9½ million and for drawing upon balances to the amount of £4½ million, thus making up of a total of £28½ million. In deciding to make up the deficit caused by an excess of expenditure over income on purely Imperial account by borrowing, Government took their stand upon India's excellent credit, the accumulation of large balances in her various funds, the extremely small dimensions of her unproductive debt and the temporary character of the adverse financial conditions. It will look like being wise after the event to suggest that special war taxes should have been imposed to meet the deficits the war had caused and was likely to cause in the succeeding years. But few thought at the time that the war would be prolonged into its fifth year and that heavier sacrifices would have to be made in consequence. Without disputing the wisdom of the 'no additional taxation' policy which was adopted by Government when the end of the struggle did not appear to be very distant, one would, however, have liked to see funds made available for the prosecution of schemes of social reform whose progress was arrested by the economy and retrenchment which the ways and means position of the Government of India imposed upon the provincial Governments. Additional taxation would have been preferable to the slackening of the speed of advance which was much too slow even at its best. If provincial Governments had been left free to spend out of their balances as much as they regarded necessary, Government of India's resources would indeed have been subjected to a strain at a time when every available million was needed to adjust the financial position to the urgent requirements of a difficult position. The only alternative to additional taxation was a reduction of expenditure on comparatively less urgent and less important items. This aspect of the problem did not escape the notice of the members of the Supreme Legislative Council, and a resolution was proposed by the Hon'ble Mr. Dadabhoi recommending that the allotment for railways should be reduced by Rs. 50 lakhs and that the amount so freed be allotted to the provincial Governments for the development of education and sanitation. But the suggestion was not accepted on the plea that after all, the railways were not receiving a large allotment and that education and sanitation were not likely to suffer to any appreciable extent,

Three resolutions moved by the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, one asking for a provision of 12 lakhs for the promotion of industries, another for the reduction of the working expenses of the railways by 10 lakhs, and the third for the cutting down of the budget provision for capital expenditure on railways by 25 lakhs, fared the same fate. Apart from the merits of the sugges-



tion embodied in these resolutions it must be stated that they showed the keenness of the representatives of the people that the cause of social and economic development should not have been made to suffer. In spite of the sympathy the officials feel for that cause, they cannot appreciate the intensity of the desire of the people that the progress of their country should go on unhampered and at a rapid pace. This is the secret of the divergence of view that emerges at every turn whenever questions relating to measures of advancement and a liberal outlay of funds therefor come up for discussion. It was, however, a most gratifying circumstance that Sir William Meyer stood up to defend India and to vindicate the liberality of the contribution she was making to the prosecution of the war. But for her financial sacrifices there would have been no deficits in 1914-15 and 1915-16, and what was of greater value, India gave her trained soldiers in addition to money. When the contribution of India was compared to that of the Colonies to the disadvantage of the former, the Finance Member said:—"My Lord, I do not want to be thought to belittle the Colonies in any way; but I love the people of India. I have served here for a generation, and I cannot bear anybody to belittle India, and to speak as though the part played by India in the war and her contribution to it, were in any way inferior to that of other parts of the Empire."

V. G. KALE.

### FRANCHISE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

To help our readers to form a correct estimate of the franchise prevailing in the United Kingdom, we deem it necessary to give in brief the history of electoral reform in the last century. For this purpose, a knowledge of the unreformed House of Commons is indispensable. As long as England was essentially an agricultural country, her country squire was the best representative of the people of the county. It is seriously doubted if any other person would have been sent, even if wide franchise had been granted. But as a result of the Industrial Revolution, the towns in the north grew in number and population, while those in the south decayed. While the latter continued to return members, the former were given no representation at all. Parliamentary representation had long become an illusion on account of "the disproportion between the representatives of the counties and boroughs, the creation of numerous rotten boroughs by the Tudors and the Stuarts, the decay of many ancient towns returning members." The new social and political influences that were at work throughout Europe have had their effect on England. The growth of democratic ideas was the result. The evils of Parliamentary representation, which had resulted in placing a great number of seats in the hands of the Crown and a greater number in the possession of private persons, were seen in their true colour. Cry for "the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill," was raised all round. The opinion in favour of reform, which would make Parliament truly representative of the mass of the people, slowly gained strength, and by 1832 it was so strong that no amount of cajolery on the part of the sovereign

or those whom it affected most could induce the reformers to give up their cause.

In the reign of Queen Anne, property qualification was fixed at £ 600 in land for county members and at £300 a year for borough members. Though this was not strictly followed, all the provisions relating to it were not repealed till 1858. As regards electors, the county franchise was restricted in 1430 to residents possessing a freehold worth forty shillings a year. Residence restriction was removed in 1774. The borough franchise varied greatly and the boroughs were left to choose their own mode of election. "Though modified in themselves, and combined with one another in various ways, four sorts of franchise appear distinct in character if not in origin," says Anson. They are tenure, residence, incorporation and corporate office. Each of these admitted many varieties. As a result of all this, it is said that electors in small boroughs were very few, and in 1780, 6000 electors returned a majority of the House of Commons. In 1801, it is computed that out of 658, no less than 425, members were returned "on the nomination or on the recommendation of 252 patrons."

The Reform Act of 1832, accomplished the wholesale redistribution of seats by depriving the decayed towns of their representation and granting that right to centres of population hitherto unrepresented. Besides retaining the freehold qualification, it denied the franchise to freeholders "whose freeholds were worth 40 shillings but less than £ 10, if their estates were (a) not estates of inheritance, (b) not acquired by marriage, marriage settlement, devise or promotion, and (c) not in their own occupation." £10 copyholders and long-leaseholders and £50 short leaseholders and occupiers of an estate of that value or rent were granted franchise. A person occupying a tenement at a rent of £50 was to have the vote no matter what the character of the tenancy was. By the act of 1867 representation was reconstructed. Many corrupt boroughs were disfranchised, representation for some was increased, while for some it was lessened. It effected reform in two ways. It reduced the property qualification to £5 in all cases where the act of 1832 required £10 (copyholders, long leaseholders, and persons holding estates for life except in the circumstances mentioned above). (2) In the second place occupation franchise was reduced from £ 50 to £12. In the case of boroughs, by the Reform Act of 1832, all complications were removed, and one uniform £10 household suffrage was introduced. While preserving all individual electoral rights vested at the date of the passing of the Act, it made a clean sweep of all old franchises retaining (a) the forty shilling freehold qualification in towns which were counties subject to all the provisions in force in the case of counties, and (b) qualification enjoyed, by a freeman of a chartered town in which these qualifications already existed. But the second was put under many restrictions. The Representation of the People Act of 1867, created the household and the lodger franchises. "The former can be claimed by any man who has been for a year an *inhabitant occupier* as owner or tenant of any dwelling house within the borough, has been rated to any poor rate made during that period and has paid his rates. The latter can be claimed by any man who for a year has occupied as lodger the same lodgings of the clear yearly value of £ 10 if let unfurnished, and who has resided during the whole qualifying year." Stress is laid on resident occupation of a dwelling house worth £10 a year.

Coming now to the Act of 1884, we find that a great change was brought about in the scheme of

representation. The household qualification, the lodger qualification and the £10 occupation franchise introduced into boroughs by the Act of 1867, were extended to counties also. Provision was made for exercising the right of vote in counties and boroughs by servants, who live in the house of the master but not in the same dwelling in which the master lives. By making occupation qualification uniform in counties and boroughs, it lowered the qualification in counties, which was £12. It was also extended to any house, warehouse or other building. In spite of all these changes, the occupation qualification was not the same in both the boroughs and counties, for residence in, or within seven miles of, the borough was required of the borough voter, from which the county voter was free.

It is important to know how the various Reform acts affected the franchise in Scotland and Ireland. By the Scottish Reform Act of 1832, not only was fresh representation granted to some boroughs and counties, but the qualifications also were lowered. Certain classes of leaseholders and property holders of £10 a year were granted franchise in the counties. As in England £10 household suffrage was extended to boroughs. In 1868, again increased representation was provided. The county franchise was extended to "owners of lands and heritages of £5 yearly value, and to occupiers of the rateable value of £14; and the borough franchise to all occupiers of dwelling houses paying rates, and to tenants of lodgings of £10 annual value unfurnished." In Ireland, the Irish Reform Act of 1832 enlarged the county constituencies and £10 householders were given franchise. In 1850 while making additions to county franchises, an £8 household suffrage was granted to boroughs. A slight increase in the number of Irish representatives was also effected. In 1868, while county franchise remained unchanged, "the borough franchise was extended to occupiers of houses rated at £4 and of lodgings of the annual value of £10 unfurnished." The franchise till the time of the passing of the Electoral Reform Act of 1918, may be briefly stated thus: (1) holding of lands in life tenure of the annual value of £10 both in Scotland and Ireland, (2) estate held in lease of the yearly value of £10 for a period of 57 years in Scotland and of the same value for a term of 60 years in Ireland, (3) estates held on lease of the annual value of £50 for 19 years in Scotland and of £20 for 14 years in Ireland. As in England, the occupation franchise is applicable to both, but in Scottish boroughs it is associated with 12 months' residence.

The Electoral Reform Act of 1918, has enfranchised a great number of people. As this is the basis on which the coming election is to be held, we take liberty to give a summary of its chief provisions relating to franchise:—

**Qualifications for a vote:—Men:** Twenty-one years of age, must have resided or occupied business premises of an yearly value of not less than £10, in the same parliamentary borough or county or one contiguous thereto for 6 months ending on Jan. 15, or July 15. As regards Ireland, the latter date is only applicable.

**Women:—(a)** Must be 30 years of age and must be entitled to be registered as a local government elector in respect of occupation of premises of an annual value of not less than five pounds or of a dwelling house. As regards Scotland, if they are deemed to be so registered, that is sufficient. The qualification for the local government franchise is six months' ownership or tenancy of land or premises.

or (b) She must be the wife of a husband entitled to register as a local government elector.

(c) lodgers in unfurnished (but not furnished) rooms if otherwise qualified.

**University:** "The qualification for this franchise is the attainment by a man or woman within the above age

limits of a definite standard, which in England and Wales is the taking of a degree. A woman is also qualified to vote for a university which does not admit women to degrees if she has fulfilled the conditions for the admission of a man to a degree". In the case of Ireland and Scotland, other scholastic attainments are admitted as qualifications.

**War Service:—**The act provides for the registration of Naval and Military voters as parliamentary electors for the constituencies for which they would have been qualified but for such service. Male voters who have served in war will be qualified at the age of 19 years.

**Dual voting:—**No person can vote in the General Election for more than two constituencies. For these he must have different qualifications e. g. residence and university qualifications.

**Restrictions:—**Franchise is restricted to all British subjects, the receipt of poor relief or other reforms no longer standing as a hindrance. Apart from other disqualifications such as lunacy etc., "conscientious objectors who do not fulfil certain conditions as to the performance of war work or other work of national importance, to the satisfaction of the Central tribunal are deprived of the power of voting for the period of the duration of war and five years thereafter."

The principle of 'P.R.' is to be applied to university constituencies that return two or more members. By this only 11 seats are affected. A limited scheme of 'P.R.' for the election of 100 town and county members is to be prepared by commissioners, and that is to come into effect on the approval of the both Houses of Parliament.

Though the act of 1885 sought to remove anomalies of representation, still some persisted. This act of 1918 also provides for redistribution of seats on the basis of one member for every 70,000 population in Great Britain and one for every 43,000 in Ireland (by a separate bill). The House of Commons after the next General Election will consist of 707 members. The following tables will show the progressive growth of membership as well as of electorates:

#### I MEMBERS:

1700—513 (England and Wales).

1707—558 (after Union with Scotland; 45 for Scotland).

1801—658 (after Union with Ireland; 100 for Ireland).

1885—670

1915—670 (495 England and Wales; 72 Scotland; 103 Ireland; 377 Counties; 284 Boroughs; 9 Universities.)

1918—707 (372 Counties; 320 Boroughs; 15 Universities; 528 England and Wales; 74 Scotland; 105 Ireland.)

#### II THE ELECTORATE:—

1832—500,000 new voters (middle class.) Total on register 1,000,000 (1 in 24 of population).

1867—1,000,000 new voters (working class in the towns.) Total on register, 2,500,000 (1 in 12 of population.)

1884—2,000,000 new voters (agricultural labourers etc.) Total on register, 5,000,000 (1 in 7 of population.)

1918—8,000,000 new voters (6,000,000 women, of whom 5,000,000 are married, and, 2,000,000 men.) Total on register, 16,000,000 (1 in 3 of population.)—*The Times*.

R. S. R.

## A LETTER FROM LONDON.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

LONDON, OCTOBER 1.

### COLLAPSE OF TURKEY.

THE events of the last ten days are, perhaps, the most significant in the whole history of the war. In Palestine, a tremendous and terribly overwhelming blow has been dealt to Turkey's military forces, and her losses, both in men and material, are irreparable. To-day's papers announce that British forces are at Damascus, and the French are on the way to Beyrout. This means Syria should be ours very shortly. Whether an attempt be made to drive towards Aleppo, it is, of course, not possible to say, but it is quite clear that no further



danger is to be expected, either on the Mesopotamian or Palestine fronts, and in this splendid result, Indian troops, as is now known had the largest share. These troops we learn from Lord Islington, have been drawn not only from the military peoples of India, but from those areas and peoples which have been officially reported as without military traditions. Thus has another fetish been destroyed.

#### BALKAN STATES AND THE CENTRAL POWERS.

Still more significant has been the break through on the Balkan front by the Serbians, who have at last come into their own, with the result that yesterday at noon Bulgaria surrendered. The full effects of this striking event have not yet been witnessed. The first immediate consequence is that direct communication between the Central Powers and Turkey has been cut off, for, by the terms of surrender, the Allies have secured control over the Bulgarian railways, and the Berlin-Baghdad route has been ruptured at its most vital point. But the secondary consequences may be even more important, for the Allies are empowered to conduct warfare, in so far as it may be necessary, on and from Bulgarian soil. This however, implies the complete isolation of Turkey, for the only means of communication will be through Roumania and South Russian ports on the Black sea. Any help that Turkey may expect from these sources will be necessarily quite ineffective, and she will now have to face an enemy, instead of an ally, on her northern frontier, and it is by no means sure that Bulgaria may not yet turn against her former ally with whom she has been on terms of scarcely veiled hostility for some time. In consequence, it will not in the least be surprising if Turkey is also out of the war within the next month. Indeed, Bulgaria is said to have taken her present step in anticipation of the possibility of Turkey's getting ahead. In that event, large forces, at present occupied in Mesopotamia and Palestine, may be withdrawn for service in other and more productive fields. What can Germany do? She is faced with the liquidation of the Brest-Litovsk treaties. The border subject-states are seething with revolt. Roumania is in such a state of unrest that it will be with the utmost difficulty that Germany can prevent an uprising if she retains all her forces at present in that territory. How, then, can she attempt to prevent the reconstitution of the Eastern front? It is possible that she may risk everything in Roumania by depleting her forces there and transferring a portion of them to northern Serbia and Northern Bulgaria. With Austria's left flank in the air in Albania, she will have to take up a new line in Serbia, and must withdraw some of her troops from the Italian front, which she can hardly afford to do having regard to her immense commitments there, the growing strength of the Italian army, and her own growing internal difficulties. Germany may transfer some of her divisions from the Western front, but this must inevitably mean a shortening of the line there. She will then have to evacuate north-eastern France and the greater part of Belgium, if she does not have to retire still further. What the effects of all this will be upon public opinion in Germany, it is impossible, at present, to estimate. For the first time Germany is beginning to realise how desperately hard pressed she is at every point. Her Eastern dream is vanishing into thin air, her famous Hindenburg defences are crumbling at many points, she is beginning to shrink back within her legitimate boundaries, and is finding herself daily more isolated. With Bulgaria out of the war, Turkey is of no more use to

her; and with Austria paralysed by internal decay and disruption, the dream of Central Europe is also vanishing.

#### PRESIDENT WILSON ON PEACE.

It is at this stage that, following upon the Allies' immediate repudiation of the implications of the Austrian "peace" note, President Wilson has laid down five conditions upon which America will make peace. "Impartial justice," he says, "must involve no discrimination between those to whom we wish to be just and those to whom we wish to be unjust, and equal rights to the several peoples concerned must be secured. No special interest of any nation can be made the basis of any settlement which is not consistent with the common interest of all. There can be no alliances or covenants within the the League of Nations. There can be no selfish economic combinations within the League, and no economic boycott except that wielded by the League itself, as a means of discipline. All treaties must be made known in their entirety." And Mr. Wilson calls upon Allied statesmen to confirm his statement of the irreducible minimum conditions of peace.

#### END IN SIGHT.

It seems quite clear that the beginning of the end has come, but when the end will be, no one knows. Yesterday Mr. Bonar Law indicated the possibility of peace within the next financial year, but it will be rash to prophesy. Germany will no doubt make every effort to avert her inevitable fate. She will endeavour to sow discord between the Allies and create internal unrest wherever possible. There are people in this country who are certainly not pro-German, but who act in every respect as though they were. In spite of the example of Russia and the Brest-Litovsk treaties, they seem to feel it their duty to play the German game. They are so fanatically disposed towards the class war, that they cannot see that with a weakened England, or a strengthened Germany, there can be no possibility of hope for the masses of the people under the militarised system of Government that circumstances will necessitate in the future unless Germany is decisively defeated.

## LETTERS FROM THE PROVINCES.

### MADRAS.

*Madras, 23rd November.*

#### THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The Madras Legislative Council met on the 19th inst. It was an important meeting in many respects. The two questions that figured most prominently in its deliberations were the Madura incident of the 27th October, and the food situation. On a rough estimate it may be said that out of 154 questions that were asked, nearly 30 or 40 dealt with these two questions. Of course, the official reply to them was about as satisfactory as ever they were. Besides these questions, there were two resolutions also moved on these two subjects but the fate of these resolutions was no better than that of the interpellations. What a contrast was this to the perfect ease with which our non-officials carried resolution after resolution in the very previous session. The summary official disposal of the notorious Madura incident of the 27th of October is not at all calculated to strengthen the confidence of the public in the justice of our Government. On the 27th of October, the police fired on the crowd in Madura which had collected in the Court compound to watch the progress of the legal proceedings instituted against Dr. Varadarajulu Naidu and caused the loss of two innocent lives and grievous hurt to many persons. It is admitted by Government that no order to fire was given by any one. Then why did the police open

fire? Who fired the first shot? The accident theory seems to an after-thought as an Honourable member shrewdly observed. Even supposing that it was only an accident, is it not the duty of the Government to find out who was the person or persons from whose neglect such dire consequences arose and to punish the guilty person or persons adequately as the seriousness of the case demands? After all, what objection—I mean reasonable objection—could the Government have to open a fresh and searching inquiry into this unpleasant episode? The plea that such an inquiry will “keep the grievance going”—is nothing but a very lame excuse. It amounts to a refusal of natural justice on the score that a wrong once perpetrated is a settled fact. And that, I think, is the surest way of “keeping the grievance going”—the sore open and bleeding.

But I really cannot find words to describe the scandalous attitude of our Government on the question of questions that is engaging the attention of all, high and low and rich and poor at present—that of food supply. A resolution was moved that the Government should control prices, but the Government are not prepared to do it yet, even after the bitter experiences of unrest and riot and looting, which we have witnessed recently. Are they waiting for a fresh outbreak of lawlessness? That is the question now on everybody's lips. Why, judging from the nonchalant nature of official replies, it almost looks so! When will our Government wake up to the tremendous moral responsibility that rests on them in this vital matter? The stock of rice, the staple food of the population, has run out or is running out in the city and in several places in the mofussil. It is either not available or where it is available, it is monstrously dear, selling at 2½ measures per rupee, a figure far above the means of the poor and the poor constitute the majority of the population. The high prices of salt, chillies, kerosene oil and other bare necessities of life and the abnormal rise in the price of cloth are all facts too well-known to need any reiteration here. Profiteering is the main cause of all this, as even the *Madras Mail* has admitted. It was profiteering, uncontrolled, unlimited profiteering—that drove the people to despair, made them desperate and led to all the acts of lawlessness and violence which this unhappy presidency recently witnessed. All of us had hoped that after that at any rate our Government would take steps to control the prices of cloth and food-stuffs though they had failed to do so before. I cannot describe the feelings of anger and astonishment with which the people learnt the result of the resolution above referred to. Our Government will not control prices even now! Controlling prices is impracticable in their opinion! What was practicable in Bombay and Mysore is impracticable in Madras! Why? Where there is a will, there's a way. Does it mean then, that the will is lacking and that the Madras Government do not care as much for the population under their almighty protection as the Mysore and Bombay Governments care for their subjects and that the former are prepared to see their people perish from want without the least concern or compunction? If they really care for the lives—I do not say, the well-being—of their people, it is high time that they established an effective and all round control of prices as soon as possible, as delay may prove disastrous and may lead to a second epidemic of panic and rioting for all that we know. Will they do it before it is too, too late? We hope—“Hope springs eternal in the human breast,” as Wordsworth sings—and yet we live in fear. I may also mention here that the non-official and official members of our Legislative Council have unanimously passed a resolution congratulating His Majesty's Government on the satisfactory conclusion of armistice. Their resolution may be taken to represent the feelings of relief and joy with which the people of this province learnt that the Great War was over.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### MR. KELKAR AND LORD WILLINGDON.

#### MR. KELKAR'S REPLY.

SIR—I was greatly amused to read my friend Mr. Kanitkar's attack on me in the last issue of the *Servant of India*. Mr. Kanitkar has let the whole cat out of the bag in the very beginning of his letter, by complaining in a sorry disguise, that all the power in the Poona Municipality has passed into the hands of my nationalist friends in Poona with myself as President. I must supplement this *naïve* half truth by informing your readers that Mr. Kanitkar was almost the captain of the party who moved heaven and earth to oppose my election to the Presidential chair to the last moment. I, however, won the contest and Mr. Kanitkar lost it, and I cannot blame him for seeking to have his revenge on me by trying to discredit me with self-seeking or self-aggrandisement. And what was it after all that I am alleged to have sought by all this? Nothing more precious than having an opportunity or two to shake hands with the Governor. But, may I tell him as well as your readers that I have had ample opportunities of the kind even before this? The *prize* was never so far above me that I should consider it as the one thing to have lived for in this world. A shake-hand with the Governor is, I think, cheap enough in these days. Probably Mr. Kanitkar's chagrin lies in the fact that Lord Willingdon did *not* refuse to shake hands with me or boycott me for my political opinions as Mr. Kanitkar might have wished. But he obviously has no sense of proportion or is woefully ignorant of the psychology of the heads of administrations. No doubt Mr. Kanitkar did not like that a nationalist should be allowed to share in the commonest courtesy even in a governor, which in his opinion should be the rightful monopoly of Moderates who pose themselves, as the pillars of the administration. But he felt cut up by Lord Willingdon's shaking hands with me; well it is his Lordship's fault, not mine. As for myself I am capable of leaving a War Conference as a protest against Lord Willingdon's high-handed conduct towards me at the meeting, and capable also of not refusing to shake hands with him, if he offers it to me when we meet.

As for the function in connection with the Influenza Hospital and the Municipal address the facts are these. One of the first things that fell to my lot as soon as I became President of the Poona Municipality was to close the Hospital. The Hospital was an undertaking of the Municipality and as President of that body it was my duty to take the opportunity to enable the new members of that body, if possible, to meet His Excellency, as the personnel had been changed, a week or two before by the triennial-elections. Moreover, any one who has read my statement made before Lord Willingdon on the occasion, will observe that I had therein glorified my opponents, Mr. H. N. Apte and Mr. Kanitkar, rather than myself. If I was to have the mere handsake of His Excellency, shared in by fifty others, Messrs. Apte and Kanitkar were alone to be lionised as heroes of the day, the one for having started the hospital and the other for having captained the social service volunteers. Mr. Kanitkar blames me for making a ceremony of the closing of the hospital. Perhaps he thinks the opening of an hospital to be a more festive occasion! But I leave him there with your readers in the matter. By an irony of fate Mr. Apte himself gave Mr. Kanitkar a prospective rebuke when, while thanking His Excellency, the former evoked a good-humoured laughter from the assembly by a well put antithesis about the absurdity of anything like the opening ceremony of a hospital and asserting that the closing of it could alone be a more proper function as between the two. If Mr. Apte could be guided by the aesthetic taste of Mr. Kanitkar he would have, I believe, invited Lord Willingdon to *open* the hospital; the only objection on the part of Mr. Kanitkar to the event would perhaps have been that the

material was not yet ready to base thereupon a glorious panegyric upon himself as the *grande* Captain of the social volunteers and the author of a hundred heroic exploits in the war of solemn trifling against the dread demon of the influenza!

Then I come to the municipal address. Here again Mr. Kanitkar perversely misrepresents things in sheer malice and spitefulness, perhaps natural in a crushed opponent. To an address to Lord Willingdon by the Municipality Mr. Kanitkar takes no objection. The only fault he has to find in the matter is with myself. He alleges that I pressed the proposal for an address at the Municipal meeting with unsuspected warmth. Now this is an unmitigated falsehood. I distinctly told the meeting that a proposal for an address was naturally under discussion between the Collector and myself in view of Lord Willingdon's public departure from Poona and the Municipality might do what they liked with the proposal. If as Mr. Kanitkar himself admits that I was not pledged to any such address, there was hardly any reason for any warmth on anxiety on my part. In fact no one in the meeting opposed the proposal for an address and the only question discussed at the first meeting was one of the expense to be incurred on it. I had also told my colleagues at the very first meeting that the address would be given at the steps of the Municipal building, because the Governor would be receiving it in a public procession already decided upon. The idea that this was not in keeping with the dignity of the Municipality was a pure after-thought born in the mischievous fertility of somebody's brain; and the so-called trouble even on this score was only the trouble made by an impotent minority whose sole delight and solace lay in the futile tactics of petty-minded obstruction by which, it was hoped, alas a vain hope, that myself would be worried in the presidential chair. Eventually the address was given as originally arranged and Mr. Kanitkar soon so far forgot the 'dignity' of himself and the Municipality that he hastened in time to sign the address and be included in the party present at the steps of the Municipal building. The veneer of offended dignity was not even skin-deep upon the punctilious Mr. Kanitkar!

As for the allegation that the resolution passed by the Bombay meeting about the attitude of Home Rulers towards Lord Willingdon prevents me from even presenting to the Governor an address on behalf of the Municipality of which I am the President, I would only say that I do not hold this view. In the first place the resolution does not operate as personal oath against me. But even supposing that it should so operate ordinarily, I think a more liberal construction would have to be put upon it in view of the fact that I necessarily hold a slightly different capacity as President of a Municipality from the one I hold as the office-bearer of a Home Rule League. Only those interested persons who are actuated by malice seek to make the two capacities fully co-extensive, the rest of the people can have no difficulty in appreciating the distinction. I maintain, therefore, that Mr. Kanitkar's allegations against me are totally unfounded. He would not have made them, I am sure if he had not bitterly opposed my election as President, and what is more important, had not been defeated in the contest.—Yours &c.

N. C. KELKAR.

#### PROF. KANITKAR'S REJOINDER.

SIR,—The fact that I myself and everyone else of my party voted for Mr. Kelkar and unitedly supported his candidature for presidentship should have, I thought, forbidden the insinuation that the criticism levelled by me against his acts as a public man proceeded from spite, malice or revenge. I will, however, pass silently over these charges, leaving them to refute themselves. Let me also say that I do not grudge him any benefits that may flow to him from the Olympian heights: I wish him all joy of this contact with the official

world which, we are assured, is by no means of recent date. I can well believe him when he asseverates, with a trifle too much emphasis, that he will not even in the future shrink from shaking hands with Lord Willingdon "if he offers it to me when we meet." What I did not expect him to do was to lay himself out for such meetings. That he should go out of his way in quest of opportunities is what struck me as very curious. Why should Mr. Kelkar have thought it his "duty," as president of the municipality, "to take the opportunity to enable the new members of that body, if possible, to meet His Excellency," I wonder, when the hospital had practically closed its work and there was nothing to show? Again, as to the address. It seems to Mr. Kelkar the most ordinary thing in the world that he should originate the proposal with the Collector and practically decide upon it before coming to the municipality. The question was 'naturally' under discussion between the Collector and myself,' he pompously declares. As regards his commitment in the matter, Mr. Kelkar knows as well as anybody that there are many ways, short of a definite pledge, by which an understanding is reached in such matters, and it was apparent to all at the meeting that only the form of giving the municipal board's *imprimatur* had remained to the members after what had passed between Mr. Kelkar and the Collector. The suitable mode of presenting the address Mr. Kelkar had no time to consider. That this was not an afterthought is proved by Mr. Kavade's protest at the meeting itself that in such circumstances the address might as well not be given. Not that I support this view; all that I have to urge is that Mr. Kelkar brushed aside such objections summarily and got passed with unbecoming haste the understanding to which he had privately come with the Collector.

I must confess, however, that I should not have thought of giving publicity to such things if Mr. Kelkar's brother-nationalists had not started the anti-Willingdon movement in Bombay. It is of the party that I wish to speak. Mr. Kelkar comes in only incidentally. But I must say that I am amused considerably to find that Mr. Kelkar defends himself by denying that the oath taken by certain people in Bombay has any binding character for him. Indeed! not binding! The men belonging to his party may so resent the affront received by Mr. Kelkar at the hands of Lord Willingdon that they may vow never in their life even to attend a meeting associated with His Excellency; Mr. Kelkar may all this while keep quiet and impliedly approve of this course of action. But still for his part he is free—not to attend a meeting at which Lord Willingdon may preside—but to seize the first occasion to invite Lord Willingdon and offer praise to him; nay even to create an occasion for such a purpose with the co-operation of the Collector and without the knowledge of his colleagues; and to vote an address to the very person, ill-treatment by whom drove Nationalists, on Mr. Kelkar's account and with his acquiescence and apparent encouragement, to register a vow of boycotting His Excellency. If Mr. Kelkar's party tolerates such a thing, there is no reason why he should pay any regard to the oaths taken by them. But I daresay any other intelligent body of persons would treat their leader somewhat differently. Again, another piece of subtle casuistry, with the help of which Mr. Kelkar seeks to wriggle out of the situation of his own creation. Even if the oath were binding upon him, he argues, his duty as president of the municipality would make it void. There is no duty that I can conceive of which will make one present an address to the person whose presidency at public meetings is to be avoided as the very devil. Sooner than be guilty of such gross inconsistencies, one would renounce the position of chairman which imposes such unholy duties. Perhaps—and that is my real point—Mr. Kelkar does not at all share the feelings which actuate those who are now conducting a movement against Lord Willingdon and those who pledged themselves to taboo him. But was it not incumbent upon Mr. Kelkar in that case, for the sake of his own moral being, that he should have publicly expressed his real opinion at the time of the aftermath of the Bombay War Conference? He is Secretary of the Home Rule League, which laid upon all its members the prohibition which Mr. Kelkar himself is the first to disregard in such a defiant manner. There is something very incongruous in all this.—Yours, etc.

K. R. KANITKAR.

[ This correspondence will now cease.—Ed.]

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