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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

THE game of bluff which some members of the new German Government were playing had led some good people to entertain fears about the probability of a renewal of hostilities. We hope all those fears are set at rest now that the agreement for a renewal of the armistice has been signed. It was difficult to see how Germany could have thought of war last week. The military situation had not improved from the German point of view. No serious differences and dissensions were to be observed among the Allies on which the Germans might have built up their hopes. The internal condition of Germany, on the other hand, has been going from bad to worse. Berlin has been the scene of Spartacist activities for some time past. Now that spirit appears to have spread to the second Kingdom in the Empire. The Bavarian Premier has been assassinated, and there are conflicting reports about the state of affairs at Munich. With all such troubles on her hands, it would have been madness for Germany to think of renewed hostilities against the united Allies.

THE motives of the would-be assassin of M. Clemenceau must not be investigated. The morbid mentality which leads to such outrages is common enough in some of the European countries. It is not the first time in France that such an attempt has been made. The lives of even the Presidents of the French Republic have been in danger and more than one has fallen a victim to the revolver shots of anarchists and nihilists in France. At the present moment the French Prime Minister is holding an important place in the eyes of the world as President of the Peace Conference, and important business before it will have

to be held up on account of his being confined to bed. The reports about his condition continue to be favourable, and it is expected that he will soon recover and be able to discharge his duties as President of the Peace Conference. [It is anticipated that he will preside at the meeting of the Conference on the 27th inst.]

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IN reply to a question by Col. Wedgwood in the House of Commons, Mr. Montagu stated that Lala Lajpat Rai would not be permitted to come to England at present, but that his case would be reconsidered when peace was signed. This news has such an evil significance that every Indian, without distinction, will be simply astounded to hear it. One cannot believe, from whatever quarter the suggestion comes, that there can be anything in the great patriot's activities which can be supposed, in ever so slight a degree, to make his presence in England undesirable even in a state of war; and the implication contained in the Secretary of State's reply will not fail to create deep resentment throughout the country. Indians have a right to ask that Government shall fully explain the circumstances which, in its opinion justify Lala Lajpat Rai's detention or even give it a colourable excuse for such a monstrous step.

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WHILE the recommendations of the Public Services Commission with regard to increased employment of Indians, which had already fallen out of date before they were published, are being yet considered, its recommendations relating to increased salaries of the European-manned services are being carried into effect, and are being improved upon. Sir Charles Cleveland complained to the Commission that, in spite of the recent increments, the police were required to live amidst "genteel poverty" and pleaded for an all-round increase in their salaries, but the Commission could not agree, as "the evidence was clear that considerable enhancements were given only a few years ago as the result of the report of the police commission (1902)." Still the Commission recommended, for assistant superintendents, the scale of Rs. 300-50-400-50/2-600 a month. Now the Secretary of State starts them on Rs. 350. The scale for deputy inspectors-general, recommended by the Commission, was Rs. 1,500-100-2,000. It had previously been recommended by the police commission also, but was disallowed by Government as more liberal than was justified. But the Secretary of State make

it Rs. 1,600-100-2,000. While no doubt this increment will tend to remove the "genteel poverty" of the police ranks, has the Government considered whether it is what the economic condition of India warrants? We cannot help considering that it is not.

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MR. B. C. PAL, in a lecture delivered in Madras on the 18th inst., hotly contested the proposition that any latitude was left to the Congress deputation to negotiate with the authorities. It was incumbent upon all the members of the deputation, he urged, to press for full provincial autonomy; and none had the authority, individually or collectively, to lower the demand or to commit the Congress to accept a compromise. To authorise the deputation to negotiate on behalf of the country was, in his opinion, equivalent to selling the country's rights, and if the people only realised the significance of this, they would strongly protest against it. Not only was the Congress deputation absolutely bound by the mandate given to it, but even the Home Rule League deputation, he pleaded, ought to be given an equally binding mandate. It is clear from Mr. Pal's speech that the country is not in a mood to fall in with the wishes of Mr. Jinnah that the Congress resolution should be understood in a sense contrary to its plain meaning and that the deputation should be given not only some but full power to conduct negotiations with Government. And from Mr. Pal's reference to the Home Rule League deputation, even that deputation does not promise to be in smooth water.

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THE story which the *Hindu* put about that the 'moderate' members had reached a compact with the Government, whereby they had agreed to accord support to the sedition bill in return for its being limited to three years, has received from many quarters a categorical denial in every particular and in all its variations. The Hon'ble Mr. Banerjea has nailed the lie to the counter by an authoritative contradiction which was sent over the wires by the Associated Press, though the *Hindu*, which set afloat the myth, did not think it befitting its noble traditions to give publicity to the message. Dr. Sapru and the Rajah of Mahmudabad have also contradicted the story in explicit and emphatic terms. The 'nationalists' will perhaps consider the Rajah's contradiction as most convincing, for he was even more uncompromising in his opposition than Mr. Patel, who asked only for a postponement of the measure, instead of its abandonment outright. The Rajah of Mahmudabad gives the assurance that the Moderate leaders have not agreed to a compromise with the Home Member and that they are as free to oppose the bills as ever. None of these communications has as yet found a place in the *Hindu*.

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WHAT could be the possible basis for the story put into currency by our kindly contemporary? It is only this, that Babu Surendranath Banerjea

objected to the permanent character of the measure and expressed his feeling that it would be an improvement to make it temporary; and that the non-official opposition to the second bill, after the duration of the first was limited to three years, was not so strong as the opposition to the first. On this narrow basis the *Hindu* has erected a truly magnificent structure. On the first count, Mr. Banerjea must plead guilty; for though he objects to the measure as such, he is free to confess that a temporary measure of that character is better than a permanent one, and those who hold the contrary view may well be angry with him and Dr. Sapru, and also Mr. Jinnah, for it is believed that it is mainly the speeches of these three gentlemen which were responsible for the immediate climb-down on the part of Government. Mr. Jinnah indeed made it a specific ground of attack that the bill was of a permanent character and not temporary, intended to deal with a temporary emergency. As regards the alleged weakening of opposition to the second bill, the moderates were certainly not more to blame than the nationalists, for though Mr. Sastri was unable to speak to that motion, having to attend a meeting of the reform committee, Dr. Sapru is said to have made a much better speech than most of the nationalists, while we do not find Mr. Jinnah among the speakers. This is the sole foundation in fact for the *Hindu's* romance. Now, whatever support may be derived from these facts for the inference that the moderate party will support the bills, they certainly do not avail against the explicit statement of Mr. Banerjea that their opposition remains. This should have given to any responsible critic a pause, even while engaged in the grateful task of denouncing the moderates, but the intrepid *Hindu* is not a paper to stick at such a trifle.

* * *

IT is of course true that the moderates did not refuse to sit on the select committee; but this is equally true of the nationalists also, and if the position of the country has been compromised by that, the nationalists are not less responsible for it than the moderates. The *Hindu* asks, where is the earthly use of participating in the deliberations of the select committee when the outcome of such a proceeding is predetermined? The event has in the first place shown that the *Hindu's* forebodings were slightly more gloomy than they might have been; nor is it clear that the retirement of the Indian members would have brought about an instant withdrawal of the bill, as is confidently asserted. But if this reasoning is right, one may as well object to the participation of the members in the debate on the first reading. Their refusal to associate with the consideration of the bill at any of its stages would certainly have even a more dramatic result, if that is desired, than walking out at a later stage. That would have been far more eloquent than the strongest speeches which even Messrs. Khaparde and Patel could deliver. For our part, we are convinced that the

instinct of these nationalist leaders was right in their agreeing to serve on the select committee as well as in their opposing, by speech, the first reading of the bill.

* * *

IT is well known that the *Hindu* has a great passion for unity. It is never so inspiring as when it preaches a homily to the moderates on the mischiefs that spring from disunion. While we are thankful for the instruction it has set itself unweariedly to give us, we shall perhaps be better edified by our contemporary telling us how to avoid differences than by its expatiating upon the virtue of unanimity. If the advantages of unity are to be secured even at the expense of suppression of one's opinions, one does not see the precept practised by the *Hindu* towards Mrs. Besant and others, who experience a difficulty in agreeing to the resolution of full provincial autonomy. One's surprise is greatly enhanced, when one is assured, as by Mr Pal, that the difference between the Bombay and Delhi resolutions is trifling, to see that the *Hindu* and its like still persist in their opinion in opposition to that of Mrs. Besant. If honest differences are to be reprobated, the differences created by misrepresentation cannot be praiseworthy; and the differences sought to be made out by the *Hindu* between the two wings of the national party as to their attitude to the Rowlatt bills are of the latter description. We say nothing of the fact that the *Hindu* did not find room for Mr. Banerjee's forceful speech on the Emergency Powers Bill, which was telegraphed to it by the press agency along with that of Mr. Jinnah. Our contemporary is master of its space, and no one has a right to complain as to its disposal. But Mr. Banerjee's message giving the lie to the story of the *Hindu's* own creation certainly stands on a different footing. Whatever unavoidable differences there may be, our contemporary may at least be true to its teaching in so far as to cease deliberately putting a gulf, by perverting facts, between politicians who should as far as possible be united.

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REFERRING to Mr. Pal's accusations against herself, Mrs. Besant says: "It is, I think, time that all politicians who care for cleanliness, decency, honour, and good manners in Indian public life, should decline to work or to associate with those who besmirch it by constant and vulgar insult flung at all with whom they disagree in opinion. . . . If things continue as they have been going for the last year or two, public meetings will be left to rowdies and will lose all weight. We have too many Vivians in our public life." Again: "Public life in Madras is being made intolerable by rowdyism, and by insult to men respected by all who value nobility of character and selfless service to the Motherland. . . . Unless some check is put on this shameless insult, constantly levelled now-a-days at every one who is not prepared to yield to every gust of ill-informed opinion, Madras audiences will find themselves addressed only by

such speakers who find insult and abuse easier to compass than reason and courtesy. Neither truth nor honour seems now to be demanded from those who mount on our platforms, and the more honoured the name, the fouler are the insults levelled at it."

* * *

WE pointed out in our last issue how the pamphlet on self-determination published in England by Mr. Tilak's Home Rule League was self-contradictory, and we said that the scheme of self-government propounded in it was rather obscure as to the steps it immediately required of Government. The *Hindu's* London correspondent, acknowledging, from the point of view of abstract justice, the full force of India's claim to self-determination, in the widest sense of the term, says, while commenting upon this pamphlet:

Is there not, however, a slight inconsistency between the claim that India is alone qualified to determine the spirit and the form of her own political institutions and the statement on page 14 that "the British Parliament should enact a complete constitution for India conceding autonomy within the British Commonwealth?" On the ground of strict logic this seems to be rather giving the case for self-determination away as it acknowledges the right of an external body to 'concede' and to draft the scheme of self-government to which the Indian people are entitled. But there is no need to labour that point here. I only raise it to show that even the self-determination demanded in this pamphlet is not so complete as that which is being claimed for other nationalities at the present time. The correspondent further points out that the scheme of autonomy advocated by the Home Rule League is rather singular. "It is not put forward by any organised body of opinion in India. It is certainly not what we commonly speak of as the Congress-League scheme, and I am afraid it would scarcely be fathered at the present juncture by any responsible party in this country."

* * *

WE congratulate the Mysore Government upon the courage it has shown by its recent order that no school which closes its doors to the members of the depressed classes can look for Government aid. It was rather cheeky on the part of those who started a 'national' school in order to provide for the children of parents who boycotted State schools, because the latter admitted 'untouchables,' to go to the State for financial help. A 'national' school, indeed!

* * *

WE find that the adverse comments that appeared in *New India* some time ago on the draft manifesto which has been prepared by certain prominent lawyers of Madras do not represent Mrs. Besant's view. She approves the policy of the draft and has only "a few unimportant verbal alterations" to suggest in the preamble.

* * *

MR. AUROBINDO GHOSE, while expressing an opinion on Mr. Patel's bill, says that the change proposed by it amounts to no more than a reversion to an old custom. It would appear that the difficulty created by the legislature can only be removed by a resort to legislation. If it is so, the bill has Mr. Ghose's approval.

THE EXCESS PROFITS TAX.

COMMERCIAL and manufacturing interests in the country had, for months, carried on such a persistent agitation against the Government of India's proposal to levy a tax on war profits that it appeared at one time that the idea would be abandoned in deference to the wishes of the powerful interests concerned. But the demands of the exchequer were inexorable, and Government have decided to stick to their resolution to proceed with the proposed tax. The opposition to the Excess Profits Tax Bill, which was introduced by Sir James Meston in the Supreme Legislative Council last week, came mainly from the representatives of commercial interests, as was indeed to be expected, but the case which they tried to make out against the measure was absolutely unconvincing. Before going to the legislature, the Finance Member had consulted commercial bodies and discussed the question of the new tax with them and felt satisfied that there was no suitable alternative to the tax on excess profits which had long been contemplated. The unexpectedly early cessation of hostilities, the consequent disturbance caused thereby in the markets and the grim prospect of a widespread and serious famine covering a large part of the country, imparted some plausibility to the arguments of the opponents of the taxation proposal, but the only alternative suggestion that was offered was the one about the threatened deficit being made good by means of a loan, and it was entirely unacceptable. Public borrowing is a method of raising funds that always appeals to people who do not want to pay a tax directly and immediately, and we were never impressed by the formidable-looking arguments which were marshalled against the prospective tax on profits, contemplated in September last.

The unfavourable condition of new indigenous industries and the needs of the economic development of the country have been actively exploited to bolster up a case against the new tax. What may be called a preliminary objection has likewise been raised against the Government proposal. It is contended that, the war having terminated long before it was hoped that hostilities would cease, the whole question of the onerous financial responsibilities assumed by India in September last in anticipation of a prolongation and intensification of the struggle, ought to be reconsidered, and in view of the radical change which has come over the conditions and outlook of the country, the imperial Government ought in justice and fairness, to be asked to come to the rescue of India and to relieve the people of the burden which they can hardly bear. Such reconsideration of the whole position was promised by Sir William Meyer in the event of certain things happening, and it is said that Government must now carry out that undertaking. We must frankly say that we do not believe that the country can fairly and consistently ask Government to disclaim its responsi-

bility on account of the termination of the war or the prevalence of famine conditions. Hostilities have certainly ceased much earlier than expected, but our financial responsibility has also diminished in proportion. And again, through the war has happily ended, military expenditure on its account cannot immediately stop but must be incurred till normal conditions are restored. Having made large sacrifices for the victory of the cause, for which the Empire and its Allies fought for more than four years, it is neither honourable nor expedient for the people of India to refuse to bear their share of the burden of responsibility directly associated with those sacrifices.

Granting then that, as Sir James Meston explained in introducing the Excess Profits Tax Bill, the necessary expenditure of Government would exceed its revenue by about £6 million in the coming year and that the deficit would have to be squarely met, we have to consider what would be the most suitable method of raising the additional amount required. Even the most obstinate and ingenious opponents of the proposed tax on excess profits cannot seriously propose instead any impost that is calculated to fall upon the mass of poor consumers in these hard times, though some have not hesitated to hint at such taxes, and a large public loan has been offered as the most suitable remedy for the apprehended deficit. It is plausibly argued that without doing harm to any class of people a loan will enable Government to tide over its difficulties; and representatives of commercial and manufacturing interests have come forward with a laudable generosity to try their utmost to make the loan of next year a great success. While feeling grateful for this generous offer, the public cannot help asking why the huge profits which have been indubitably earned by certain classes as a result of war conditions should not be taxed in the first instance, because a loan involves payment of interest and, therefore, taxation of the country and diminishes the fund out of which the capital requirements of Government have to be met.

The proposed tax on excess profits will certainly cause hardship and inconvenience in certain cases, and it is likely that some newly started industries may be adversely affected by it. But we have the assurance of the Finance Member that such cases will be carefully considered, and all sorts of concessions will be granted. We have no doubt that in the select committee the bill will undergo suitable modifications and that provision will be made to give relief where it is deserved. Every tax must be just and equitable, and it must be so assessed and collected that it will not hamper the industrial development of the country. With these precautions taken, the tax on excess profits will be rid of its undesirable features and no one can fairly take objection to it. The agitation against the tax has, however, been mainly against its principle, and we are constrained to observe that many of those who have led the opposition have been carried away by the interest

of a small class in disregard of the interests of the public as a whole. It is to be hoped that when the bill emerges from the select committee stage, it will prove acceptable to the Council and that its passage will be smooth except for any criticism that may be offered on details. The bill may be said to be somewhat of a test by which the public will judge the principles which animate non-official members of the Viceregal Council in the matter of financial legislation, and we hope the public will have no cause for complaint in this matter.

APOLOGISTS OF REPRESSION.

THE European Association has again appeared upon the scene—this time to moralise on the united Indian opposition to the Sedition Bills, and its statement on this occasion is of a piece with its statement on the reform scheme. Indeed, the views expressed in either are so individual to the Secretary of the Association that it may well be doubted whether they are shared in any degree by the non-official European community in general, for whom the Association professes to speak. We feel confident that the Europeans in India will as a body disavow the preposterous opinions propounded in this document, if the question is put to them, and still one wonders that no responsible person from among them has as yet repudiated the monstrosities perpetrated in their name. The accusations levelled in this manifesto against Indians as a whole are too contemptible to require any detailed refutation and may well be passed over in silence, but in ignorant quarters, where the standing of the so-called European Association is not known, it is likely to create mischief, and it may therefore not be amiss to notice briefly what it has got to urge against India's politicians.

It appears to the European Association that "the fitness of these Indian leaders to take a larger, and eventually a predominant, share in the administration of India, may fairly be inferred from their attitude towards this obviously and urgently necessary legislation." It may be observed in passing that even Sir William Vincent did not make this a test question to measure India's fitness for self-government; he only pointed to the possibility of the non-official attitude to the bills being taken for a test in some quarters; but the European Association has no hesitation in making it a touchstone of India's loyalty and her readiness to assume serious responsibilities. Well, be it so; but it is manifestly unjust to assume that the proposed legislation is "obviously and urgently necessary," and then to infer therefrom the incapacity of Indian leaders to grasp the realities of the situation and to discharge duties which, though odious, are in the highest degree essential for the preservation of peace and order. Here the whole question at issue is whether the measures introduced into the Viceroy's Council are so urgently

necessary, and the leaders of Indian public opinion have advanced many arguments to prove that they are unnecessary in the existing circumstances. No one, not even the extremist councillors, denied the existence of anarchy in the country; but candidly admitting its presence, they proceeded to show how it would be wrong of the executive to arm themselves with such discretionary powers as are outlined in the bills. It is therefore not true to say that they "have derided the Rowlatt report." The Hon'ble Mr. Jinnah accepted as true the findings of the report on facts, and there was no disposition in the council to challenge the accuracy of the report in substance. But it does not immediately follow as an irresistible conclusion from the admission of disaffection among a small section of the people that the whole populations of India should be saddled with a special legislation of the kind proposed.

The complaint of the non-official members has been that the possible effects of a liberal measure of reform on the temper of the people are altogether left out of account by the official class, and in a feeling of helplessness the officials propose a coercive legislation which, though calculated to suppress anarchical crime, may suppress also lawful political agitation along with it, besides exacerbating popular feeling and adding to the volume of disaffection. In the statement of the European Association, this contention is not even noticed. In the European scheme of things reforms have no place, but only repression. And if the Europeans oppose reforms, root and branch, that is not to be a test as to whether the privileged position which they are occupying should be maintained, but only when Indians oppose repression they are to be weighed in the balance and pronounced deficient in a sense of responsibility. The fact that Nationalist leaders like the Hon'ble Mr. Jinnah promised, in case reforms had no material effect in reducing seditious propensities and crime continued to rage as before even after a large transfer of power to the people, that they would themselves come forward to propose such special measures as occasion might require. But this is not enough to convince the European Association that the Indian politicians are responsible-minded; they will become so only if, when Government propose legislation unheard of in the whole civilised world, they forthwith accord their wholehearted support to a piece of coercive legislation affected by the ruling class. The secret sympathy felt by Indian leaders for political crimes and criminals, which the Association tries to make out, is beneath contempt, but one cannot understand why the Association should, with a lofty air, laugh to scorn the plea of the Indian politicians that the measures, if allowed to pass, might easily prove destructive of political life. The bills are no doubt designed against terrorists, but is there any guarantee that legitimate liberties will not be crushed under their guise by overzealous officials? If the executive could be trusted to wield such extraordinary powers

discriminatingly, every country may well keep ready this kind of legislation against any possible emergency, but how does it happen that though India does not hold a monopoly of revolutionaries, no legislature has made a present of these or like drastic powers to those responsible for the preservation of peace? The salutary mistrust of all extrajudicial powers, which we are only just beginning to imbibe from the example of constitutional countries, may be misinterpreted by the European Association as unreadiness on the part of Indian leaders to undertake responsibilities and even covert sympathy with seditionists. That is a matter of no concern to us, and we are convinced that Indians will not be terrorised by such a perverted reasoning into giving their support to any special legislation till a clear necessity for it has been established and till adequate safeguards against the misuse of executive powers are provided.

The unanimous resistance of the Indian members in the Viceroy's Council, in which be it remembered even the Hon'ble Mr. Hogg joined in so far as he supported the Hon'ble Mr. Banerjea's amendment, only serves to emphasise the European opposition to the reform proposals, for it gives occasion to the European Association to dwell upon the inadequacy of the safeguards which the official scheme contains. Is it safeguards for the maintenance of peace and order which the Association has in view? Why, the Government will under the scheme administer this subject with all its present autocratic powers or nearly all. The administration need not suffer from the besetting vices of popular government, so far as that subject is concerned. Will not Government be able to carry through its measures in the new régime just as assuredly as in the present, if it is so minded? Whether the measures so passed in the face of popular opposition will not be devoid of all moral force is another matter, but that Government has the power to give legislative expression to such an "unlawful law" admits of no doubt. The European Association also jeers at the political bankruptcy of nationalist India, supposed to be demonstrated by the fact that it could not produce a scheme of reforms less unworkable than what the Congress-League scheme has been authoritatively pronounced to be. If nationalist India is utterly bankrupt of practical statesmanship, because of the unworkability of its scheme, equally bankrupt must be the Government whose scheme is pronounced unworkable by the European Association. Is not the M.-C. scheme denounced in far more violent terms by the Association than was ever the Congress-League scheme by the Secretary of State and the Viceroy or by anybody else? Does not the official scheme embody a principle of diarchy, which is absolutely new to practical politics? If the European Association thinks that nationalist leaders deserve condemnation in equal measure with the authors of the Government scheme, we are content to leave it at that. But Government can well understand the

inwardness of the European Association's criticism from this part of its statement. It is high time that the European community dissociated itself from the views which are expressed in its name; it cannot be that the community to which the reforms report looks to second the efforts of officials in maintaining British ideals of government in India is so averse to political progress.

THE INDUSTRIES COMMISSION'S REPORT.

IX.*

THE Commissioners say, in their Report, "Local Governments naturally desire to have control of the scientific officers working in their provinces; they believe their interests are not always sympathetically considered by the heads of the imperial departments, and the problems awaiting solution are so numerous that no imperial scientific department, as now under-staffed, can satisfy the demands of local Governments." This is the only reference to the opposition—in some cases strong opposition—not only of the local Governments but many non-officials to keep the control over these scientific officers in the hands of a Government located for six months out of the twelve in the distant heights of the Himalayas. It is the usual practice of an advocate not to ignore the grounds of the opposing party but to refer to them in his own terms and thus whittle down their strength. The Commissioners, in this case, have acted like advocates and not like judges. They say all that can be said in favour of their proposals, but do not take the trouble of *carefully* examining the grounds of opposition to the same, nor the merits of the alternative proposal of having provincial scientific services. If they wanted to hold an even balance to judge between these two alternative schemes, they should have found out what reasons the local Governments had for "believing" that their interests had not been properly served by the existing imperial services, and to see whether these reasons were valid or not. They should not have prejudged the case of the opposition by cleverly inserting the phrase "as now understaffed" to show that there would have been no cause for complaints if the existing imperial services had been properly staffed. What was required of the Commissioners was a thorough sifting of the evidence, and not merely clever drafting to brush aside alternative proposals. One would like to know if the Commissioners had satisfied themselves that the complaints of the provincial Governments were merely due to the understaffing of the existing imperial departments. Have they not heard—what is so well known to those who are in touch with this question—that there is not much love lost between the officers of the imperial branch and the provincial branches of some of the existing imperial services, *e. g.*, the agricultural service. It is an open secret that some of the officers of the Pusa Research

* Previous articles on this subject appeared in the issues of Nov. 21, Dec. 5, 12, & 19, Jan. 2 & 16, and Feb. 6 & 13.

Institute consider themselves as persons superior to these officers of the provincial branch of equal capabilities and qualifications and doing equal if not more important work of teaching students in agricultural colleges. So long as this feeling exists, or is likely to exist in similar cases in the future, very little practical good work will be done by the offices of the scientific services that are proposed to be created as they will not be able to secure the co-operation of the men working directly under the local Governments, and such co-operation is absolutely necessary for practical good results. The problems that will come up for solution before these services will be local ones; information about the different qualities of the raw materials as well as about their quality can only be had through local men; better and more efficient control over these officers and their work can be kept by local Governments, than by the Government of India, and the officers will be much more accessible to persons interested in the solution of these problems if they are located in the provinces where these problems arise than in distant places like, say, Pusa or Bangalore.

Moreover, at a time when almost everyone is talking of provincial autonomy, it is rather strange that the Commissioners have made recommendations entirely opposed to the general trend of public opinion on this question. One would not have minded their going counter to public opinion if they had been able to prove their case on "industrial," if not on "political," grounds. The only plausible grounds in support of their proposals are (1) that there is no danger of overlapping, and (2) that an imperial service will be able to attract a better class of men than the provincial services on account of the better terms that the former can offer. As the problems in the various provinces will vary according to the raw materials produced therein and also according to the existing industries, there is really speaking very little danger of the same class of work being done by two or more officers in the neighbouring provinces. Even if there do arise some problems common to two or more provinces, the Directors of Industries can easily arrange to give the work of solving the same to persons most suitable for the purpose. The only thing necessary to prevent overlapping is for the Director of one province to be in constant touch with the work done by his colleagues in the other provinces, and it is not a very difficult thing to bring about such an arrangement. The second difficulty, that the local Governments will not be able to offer attractive salaries to induce really good men to join their service, seems at first sight to be a strong argument in favour of creating an imperial service. We may grant that, theoretically speaking, the larger number of appointments in an imperial service may be an inducement to a better class of scientific men to come out; but in practice we find, in the case of the existing imperial departments, that the imperial service men are not much superior to

the provincial service men. The scientist who is keen on research work cares more for the quality of work to be done than for remuneration, and, in the present days of specialisation in various branches of chemistry, it would not be possible to have a graded service for all scientists. The best thing would be to fix a time scale of pay for the scientists whom we are to import, and then these men will care very little whether their service is called "imperial" or "provincial."

The suggestions for the recruitment of men from outside the country are likely to evoke a good deal of opposition. The Hon'ble Panditji has referred to the inconsistency of the Commissioners' remarks made in para. 122, and I cannot do better than quote some portion of that minute. He recognises that the Commissioners appear to restrict the importation of scientific men in the following terms: "And that the senior and experienced men who will be required to initiate and direct research work should be obtained on special terms from England when such are not available here." In the same paragraph, after some six lines after the above, the Commissioners say, "Recruits for these services, especially chemical services, should be obtained at as early an age as possible, preferably not exceeding 25 years." I am not able to understand whether these men of 25 are the very men referred to as "senior and experienced" men in the beginning of the paragraph. Perhaps some persons less obtuse than myself will be able to explain this seeming inconsistency. Moreover, if only a few "foreigners"—I do not mean any offence—are to be imported, why are the Commissioners so overanxious to have an imperial service for these few men only?

I hope I have been able to prove that the grounds in favour of the creation of a service under the direct control of local Governments are more valid than those given in the Report in favour of an imperial service, and that the methods of recruitment suggested in the Report are quite at variance with what has been said about only "senior and experienced men" being imported from outside the country. Is it any wonder that the Panditji gets suspicious and as a result brushes aside the proposals for the creation of new chemical services?

L. S.

A LETTER FROM LONDON.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

LONDON, JANUARY 27.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE.

THE Peace Conference is now getting into its stride. Having, first of all, forbidden publication of its proceedings, very much like the House of Commons did in days gone by, it has come to realise that, in the interests of open diplomacy, the only safe way to ensure public respect for its operations and its decisions, is to give to the public as full reports as possible of its proceedings. In

securing this right of publicity, the British and American Press have rendered useful service. Of course, there are newspapers that cannot be trusted to free themselves from contaminating influences; the garbage-hunters and sensation-mongers of the Press are to be found in all countries. Their activities, where pernicious, should be dealt with by the ordinary punitive agencies, or left to public opinion. On the other hand, most of the great journals of Europe and America have a reputation to maintain, and they will take care to be represented on great occasions, at any rate, by men in whose sense of discretion confidence can be placed. It is a recognition of this fact that has eased the somewhat strained situation, created by the original *fiat*. An appeal to first principles, to common-sense, and to common decency soon resulted in a happy solution, and the old diplomatic guard was once more driven back into its favourite cobwebs of concealment.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

The Peace Conference, or Congress as it will probably come to be called, has commenced well by placing the creation of a League of Nations right in the forefront of its programme. President Wilson, in an eloquent address, eloquently seconded by the British Prime Minister, moved the adoption of a resolution in favour of a League. A little while ago, Mr. Bernard Shaw, with that happy knack of the sardonic and the sub-acid that is one of his principal characteristics, suggested that the current conversation of the time reminded him of the well-known poem of Tennyson, commencing with the words, 'Half a League, half a League.' President Wilson, however, will not be content with half a League. He wants the whole one, and he won't be happy till he gets it. The statesmen of Europe appear to be falling over each other in order to give him his heart's desire. He claims that the function of the Peace Congress will be, not that of satisfying the world's Governments, but of contenting and rendering secure the common people of the world. The subject of a League of Nations has been referred to a special sub-committee, upon which, of course, this country is specially represented, and the basis of its discussion is likely to be the scheme elaborated by General Smuts on behalf of the British Government. Perhaps the two most remarkable figures in the British Empire are Lord Sinha and General Smuts, and it is strange to think that they are the most significant figures representing portions of the British Dominions, that were, just before the commencement of the war, engaged in a fierce and bitter conflict with each other. Perhaps General Smuts' career is even more remarkable than that of his Indian contemporary. Born in the Cape Colony, and receiving his higher education in this country, where he became a graduate of Cambridge University and was called to the bar, he returned to South Africa and became State Attorney of the Transvaal under the Republican regime. He is said to have been the draftsman of the famous ulti-

matum of the Boer Government that precipitated the three years' war. During that war, he proved himself a brilliant soldier, and his experience in that capacity proved of the utmost value years later when he organized the South West and East African campaigns against Germany. He is a man of tremendous energy, remarkable ability, statesmanly foresight, and great political acuteness. Undoubtedly he is the biggest political figure that South Africa has produced in this generation, and the sum of his work is not yet ended. Dutch diplomacy is world-renowned, and his gifts in that direction are of a very high order. It is easily to be understood how the Prime Minister has selected him to be one of the prominent representatives at the Peace Conference, after having made him a member of the British War Cabinet during the war.

DISPOSAL OF THE ENEMY COLONIES.

The Conference has taken a number of most important decisions. The first of these is to invite a conference of representatives of the contending Governments in Russia. What will come of this is very uncertain. Most people seem to be very dubious of the practicability of such a conference. The fact is, everyone is afraid of Bolshevism. It is agreed that it can be smashed by force, but no one seems to know where it may spring up again nearer home. And there are many elements in Europe helping to create a breeding ground for the dreaded scourge. The second decision is in regard to the question of the disposal of the German colonies. Great Britain is faced with a position of some difficulty. She in the main has contributed the whole of the energy resulting in the deprivation of Germany of all her colonies. I include, of course, all the lands that go to make up the British Empire. But she wishes to be able to say that she has not fought chiefly for material advantage. Nevertheless, the possession of the German colonies is likely to be claimed by some part or other of the Empire. South Africa lays claim to replace Germany in South West Africa, and undoubtedly that Dominion has shed her blood to obtain security of her borders, and she is certainly more to be trusted with the welfare of the native population than Germany. Australasia, again, claims the Pacific islands, in order that her interests may be made secure and not threatened, at some later date, by hostile power developed in hostile harbours. The principal bone of contention is East Africa, and it is believed that this territory will be handed over to Great Britain for administration as the mandatary of the League of Nations, which will have the final disposal of all the German and Turkish territories that have been conquered, including Turkey in Europe.

THE IRISH SITUATION.

The Irish situation is remarkable. Sinn Fein has organized a "Parliament" in Dublin and a secret Cabinet of its own, and has notified the world of the independence of the Irish Republic. Nobody is prepared to take the circumstances very

seriously, but the situation needs very careful watching. Meanwhile, Capt. Stephen Gwynne, one of the few Nationalist members to be returned to Parliament at the General Election, has formed what he describes as a centre party to which many moderate Irishmen of standing have been drawn. I understand that the basis of its work will be the demand for the operation of the Home Rule Act, with certain necessary modifications, in the light of new experience. The Irish Unionists have split asunder. The Ulstermen demand that Ulster should separate from Ireland politically and become attached to England. This the Southern Unionists, led by Lord Midleton, regard as a fatal step, and they have now definitely seceded, their programme being non-separatism and a warning against the peril of Sinn Fein. It would be interesting to know exactly how many Irishmen can accurately analyse the present situation in Ireland. Meanwhile, the country is wealthier than it has been for years. Prosperity has poured in upon it during the last ten years, owing largely to the work of the co-operative credit societies and co-operative agricultural organizations. And the war has largely added to the wealth of the country. But it ought to be borne in mind that Labour is going to be Sinn Fein's great competitor in the political control of Ireland. The conditions of labour in Belfast and Dublin are very bad, and unrest there is perennial. Strikes are proceeding there at this very moment. If Labour gains control, the literary dreamers of Sinn Fein will be rudely swept aside, and it is quite within the bounds of possibility that then will come the testing time of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland.

INDUSTRIAL UNREST.

One reads of your great mill-strike in Bombay. But at least the rest of India is quiet and peaceful so far as labour troubles are concerned. Whether that is a healthy sign, it is not for me to say. But here there are strikes going on all over the country. Dock-workers, shipwrights, railway men, miners, and heaven knows who else, are all on strike or threatening to strike, and even the police may follow suit in a short time. The fact is, industrial unrest is everywhere prevalent. A demand conceded in one area for one occupation is quickly put forward in other places, and unless concession of terms is quickly made, without more ado the workers "down tools." One may have the utmost sympathy with them if one only knows what it is all about, but one very seldom does until all the mischief has been done, and feeling becomes still more bitter than before. With or without provocation, agreements are broken sooner almost than the ink of the signatures has become dry, and the labour-leaders are simply ignored when they wish to call off a strike. That is one of the most dangerous elements in the labour situation. If the labour leaders lose control of their men, there is no one to negotiate with; in fact, it is the very situation that the Allies have dreaded as regards

Germany. There is no doubt that there are forces at work playing upon this feeling of unrest, fomenting trouble, and increasing suspicion, in order to upset the social organization to its very foundations. It may need radical reconstruction, but to blow it up, so to speak, with gelignite, and then attempt to rebuild with such fragments as may then be left is hardly the height of statesmanship. Nevertheless, the masters are not by any means blameless, for they seek to interpret agreements in a mean and stupid spirit, and it is quite clear that they have not learnt, most of them, some of the most fundamental lessons of the war. If industrial chaos supervenes, it will be largely owing to the fault of the employers, who, of course, will go under without the possibility of saving themselves. The danger is already seen. Whether it is possible to take effective steps to avoid it remains to be seen. But the greatest faith is placed by thoughtful men in the natural good-sense of the average Britisher.

SELECTION.

THE GOKHALE ANNIVERSARY.

TRIBUTES BY MRS. BESANT AND MR. ANDREWS.

At a meeting held in Madras to celebrate the fourth anniversary of Mr. Gokhale's death, Mrs. Besant paid the following tribute to his memory. She said:—

"Looking at Mr. Gokhale's speeches—and they lie before every student of politics—and considering his character, his line of work for his country, the point that was put by Mr. Ramaswami Aiyar of his magnificent equipment, is one which cannot be too highly regarded or more strenuously imitated by those who would follow in his steps; never to speak on a subject which one has not studied, never to express an opinion until one founds it on serious thought and careful consideration. Those are the qualities which make the reliable leader of a Nation, when it is possible for him to join in the great work of building a people. It is true, and Mr. Gokhale recognised it, that many a blow has to be struck at abuses. You will find in his speeches how thoroughly he realised the injustices under which Indians suffer, and you know how he resented the inferiority that was constantly thrust upon them. But you will also find that his work was not only destructive work, but also constructive. While indignation may destroy, knowledge and wisdom alone are able to construct. Mr. Gokhale had a singular combination of qualities thought to be opposite; of dauntless courage and yet of remarkable caution; of power to inspire and power to restrain. I remember how in 1914, looking with an eye of long experience on the political position of the time, he spoke of coming days in which the leaders of the people would have to guard the more enthusiastic of their followers, who would otherwise like to rush into mischievous and dangerous activity; for like all great men he calculated carefully the forces that were opposed to him. He did not think that courage was shown by disregarding the obstacles in the way, but rather in a careful calculation of the various difficulties that had to be surmounted, a careful turning of means to an end, a knowledge of when to stop and when to rush forward, for the struggle in the country in his day was and still more in our day is, a struggle in which generalship is wanted as well as courage, and in that quality of generalship, Mr. Gokhale seems to me to have been one of the remarkable men of his time. Just in the same fashion as you see in the late struggle between the Central Powers and the Entente Powers they could not win

while their counsellors were divided, and they could not make progress until they pitted against the generalship of the German High Command a generalship which they found best exemplified in Marshal Foch, so in our political struggles we have also to look over the whole field of battle, we have also to seek unity of counsel, we have also to prepare carefully and fully before we step forward on the path, we must understand the goal which we intend to reach; and so it was with Mr. Gokhale in his great struggles. He realised that the path of very very rapid and enthusiastic action was inevitable, that which would attract younger men of the time, and one of the things he said to me in 1914 was that we ought to form a band of men who would be ready to face not only the opposition of antagonists but the opposition of their supposed friends, that they should stand together so that the advance might be steady and not simply a wild rush forward certain to be defeated; and I never thought more highly of him than at the time when he said that he was willing to sacrifice even the apparent love of his younger countrymen in order that he might save them from a peril which they were not experienced enough to understand. That quality of caution as well as enthusiasm you find in this greatly spiritual man. The eyes of Mr. Gokhale were always fixed on the goal at which he was aiming, but he was not so unwise as to overlook the difficulties that studded the path which led to the goal. While he realised that at which he aimed, he was also ready to choose his steps on the path of attainment, willing to compromise, because he knew that just in so far as he could gain one step in advance so he had a fresh step off to further progress. Naturally that caution of his made some persons impatient, but it is often the case that steady and cautious advance reaches the goal before the wild rush forward and tumbling over the precipice that the enthusiastic person advancing has not taken time to see. In our present struggle in which many forces are contending, the more, I think, that we can study the spirit and emulate the example of that great Indian patriot, the more surely shall we advance to our goal. There was one other point that we specially found in this great Indian leader. He never forgot the lessons of courtesy even to his bitterest opponent. He was essentially a man of honour, of strength, of courtesy, and that quality of courtesy is too much forgotten both in his days and in ours. [Here follows a compliment to the editor of this paper in all too flattering terms.] Surely, in our public life we might try to emulate something of that dignity, of that courtesy, of that good manners, which used to be the mark of Indians and which now seems to be in danger of falling entirely out of our public life. If we are to have amongst us men whom it is a pride to follow, men who can represent us in the forum of the world, then we ourselves must try to emulate his example of full equipment, of careful speech, of courage joined to caution, of perfect courtesy to opponents as well as friends, and then perhaps we may grow to be worthy to be numbered amongst those who have carried on his great work. And we shall realise that in the sky lit by the stars of Indian patriots there is perhaps no star—certainly there are few—that can shine with the glorious lustre of the man whose life-work we are commemorating to-day." (*New India.*)

II.

At Madras Mr. C. F. Andrews was the principal speaker. He said that he was ashamed to be obliged to speak to them in a foreign tongue about one whose own heart blood was shed for India herself and whose anniversary that day they were for the fourth time remembering. He wished he could speak to them in Tamil so that he could bring home to their minds the wealth of goodness and sacrifice in Mr. Gokhale's life. But he must try to speak to them in English and out of love's own sake to tell something of that spotless life which was lived for India and given for India. His only reason for standing on this platform was that he had been personally acquainted with Mr. Gokhale and he could tell out of his own experience some of those little personal things which after all were the most interesting to hear and might move their hearts. It was very many years ago soon after he first came out to India that he met Mr. Gokhale for the very first time. He had just then written in some magazine about him expressing his great appreciation of the statesmanlike qualities and powers of leadership of the man. When he met Mr. Gokhale and before a few moments had passed, Mr. Gokhale said: "I read, Mr. Andrews, what you wrote about me and I want you to ask one thing. Don't please put me forward as a leader; I am only among the younger men of the servants of India and it would be unfair for me to take a leading part at such a time as this when there are older men with greater experience than I who are the natural leaders of the people. Please don't put me forward as anything like a leader." This was a very simple incident, but it showed to him at that first acquaintance the utter humi-

lity of the man and his sense of selflessness. Mr. Gokhale had no wish for ever to come forward and he felt it always to be a burden to take the lead. He would much rather minister than be ministered unto, much rather serve than be a master; and this was one of the very greatest traits in his character. When he founded his Society and called it "The Servants of India," that word was simply a representation of the ideal of all life.


Mr. Andrews saw Mr. Gokhale at another time when he was at the very height of his popularity, when the crowds in India in every city went frantic as he passed through, when students in their thousands flocked to him to carry him through the streets refusing to allow his carriage to be drawn except by them. The popularity was extreme in its fervour and enthusiasm. The speaker met Mr. Gokhale in the midst of it as he was passing through Delhi and noticed his face careworn and almost saddened. Mr. Gokhale spoke to him about the burden that this new popularity threw on him. He was afraid of it and thought that it might rather do him harm than good. He was not accustomed to it and did not feel happy while it was around him. Later on towards the end of his life when Mr. Gokhale used to speak to him very very freely about his own life, his own failings, his own attitude and character, he told him one day that his ideal had always been that of the Bhagavad Gita, Nishkama Karma. He said that was the only attitude, which could save the soul of the man who had to do with politics; because there was so much to elate him and so much to depress him that unless he was above both praise and blame, he could not do his work. Mr. Gokhale told him also that at one time he was the most unpopular man in India. Because he had confessed his fault and had done what his conscience had dictated to him, he was regarded as in some way a traitor to his own country. Mr. Gokhale said to the speaker, "I remember how one after another used to ask me 'Don't do this, don't do that. You will lose all your reputation if you do that.' But I said to them one after another, 'I must do it; it is truth and my reputation can go, but I must do what I feel to be truth.'" And he had thus to face an excessive unpopularity and the only thing that sustained him was the satisfaction that his conscience told him that he was right, and what the people held was wrong.

Then again he remembered the days when Mr. Gokhale was in Delhi trying to lead the whole of India to take up the cause of Mr. Gandhi and his fellow-patriots in South Africa. That was the time when the South African struggle was at its height. Mr. Gokhale had fever day after day but he absolutely refused to take any rest, lie in bed and let the fever go by. His friends would implore him to take one day in bed. He retorted: "Take a day in bed? I would die rather than give up the struggle. Just think of the suffering men in South Africa. I must go on until sufficient funds are forthcoming to carry on the struggle." Mr. Gokhale felt that the whole burden of this struggle was on his own mind. That filled the whole of his imagination and the speaker had never seen such an intense agony, earnestness and sacrifice as he saw in Mr. Gokhale at that time. Later on in South Africa, Mr. Gandhi told the speaker the same story how, when Mr. Gokhale came to that country before the struggle and began to try and make terms with Boer Government, he had utterly sacrificed himself through that result, how his health had been almost failing and how he knew he was a dying man but would not give up his work as long as he could give something more for the sake of his country, how the Tamil coolies flocked to him in thousands as their saviour and had touched his feet, how marvellously he had impressed the Europeans there that they had begun to have a new respect for India from his presence, how he had led them over to the Indian side and how he went home thinking that everything had been gained. But it was one of the bitterest disappointments in his life that after sacrificing his health, strength and everything in that visit to South Africa during a time of bodily weakness and sickness, he heard on his return to India in a very few months that his whole work became fruitless, that once more the three-pounds poll tax was threatened and that Indians had to go to prison in thousands. Then after the great struggle was over and Mr. Gandhi had met Mr. Smuts at Pretoria and won at last the terms which alone were honourable, Mr. Gokhale summoned the speaker to London from South Africa. When in London Mr. Gokhale used to tell him about his own life, his thoughts, desires and beliefs and the greatest of all impressions that were produced on the speaker was the depth of his idealism and religious nature. Mr. Gokhale was not one who formulated religion. He had no formulated dogmatic creed and was not one who belonged to any one sect, religion or party. His belief in God and immortality had been founded upon a supreme conviction, for Mr. Andrews heard him from his own lips to say that it was that faith in right and truth that was his guiding star which sustained him both in times of defamations and popularity. (*The Hindu.*)

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