

# The Servant of India

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## Topics of the Week.

### Mr. Vaze on the R. T. C.

Mr. S. G. Vaze, who in April last relinquished the editorship of the SERVANT OF INDIA to accompany the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri and Mr. N. M. Joshi to England, and who subsequently was in charge of the Secretariat of the organisation of the British Indian Liberal delegates to the Round Table Conference, has, in a press interview given on his return to India last Friday, drawn pointed attention to the effect of the States' representation on the constitution designed at the R. T. Conference. The object of the Conference was to secure Dominion Status for India, which includes autonomy for India as well as democracy. The representation of the Indian States in the federal government by means of the nominees of the Princes cut across both. The presence of the Princes' bloc in the federal government rules out at once any claims to its being democratic. Even the claim that India obtained autonomy, that political power has been transferred from England to India, is not tenable. For the Princes' bloc is as bad as, if not worse than, the present official bloc, as the Princes will continue to be under the domination of the British Government in virtue of paramountcy being retained in them.

The British Indian delegates were not entitled to discuss the internal administration in the Indian States at the Conference, but they were free to see that the future constitution of India did not frustrate the legitimate objectives of British India, and that British India did not stand to lose by accepting a federation with the Indian Princes. We still hope that the Princes will realise in good time the inevitability of democracy in India, even in their own States and will remove the obstacles to a true federation. The least that they should do is to permit the States' representatives to be elected by the peoples of the States.

### The Brutalities of Borsad.

ELSEWHERE we publish the Report of Mr. R. R. Bakhale and Mr. K. J. Chitalia, both of the Servants

of India Society, on the happenings at Borsad on the 21st January last. In the introductory paragraph they explain how they came to be deputed to make the enquiry. It was Mr. A. V. Thakkar, another member of the Society, who was the first to rouse public attention to an adequate appreciation of the seriousness of the Borsad incidents. He deserves the thanks not only of the public but, we venture to think, of the Government also, for focussing public attention and scrutiny on the ugly happenings at Borsad. Instead of giving him every facility to investigate the whole truth of the matter, the tin-gods of the place, oppressed by their guilty conscience, extorted him promptly! Equally promptly the Servants of India deputed Messrs. Bakhale and Chitalia to continue the enquiries. The tin-gods have done themselves no good, for the Bakhale-Chitalia Report is even more devastating to them.

Mr. Bakhale's public activities have been devoted and confined to Labour organisation in India and even there he belongs to the Right wing. He opposed the alliance of Labour with the Non-co-operation policies of the Indian National Congress. He is not "agin Government"; rather he enjoys the confidence of the Government inasmuch as they nominated him to the Bombay Legislative Council to represent Bombay Labour interests. He cannot be accused of having approached the enquiry with preconceived prejudices against the Government.

The Report bears the impress of conscientious thoroughness of investigation. It may not be the final word on the subject because Government witnesses were not examined, but that was not the fault of the investigators. They had, however, the Press Notes issued by the Government, and they made full use of them. Until Government appoint a committee of investigation which will command the confidence of the public, the Bakhale-Chitalia Report must hold the field.

We had hitherto deliberately refrained from commenting on the Borsad incidents because we wished to await the Report of Messrs. Bakhale and Chitalia. No impartial reader of the Report can fail to be impressed by it. It is unnecessary to recapitulate the findings of the investigators. The Report gives a graphic description of the wanton wickedness of the Police in Borsad, their cowardly brutalities on women, their trampling under foot all sense of decency and common courtesy, of their terrorism—and of their ultimate defeat and discomfiture, for the women, notwithstanding the insults, humiliations, lathi charges and all the inferno of Police rage, did hold their meetings and pass their resolutions! Truly, as the investigators put it, "the Borsad happenings form one of dark (they may well have said, darkest) episodes in the recent history of India."

### Mr. Kunzru on East Africa.

MR. HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU, Vice-President of

the Servants of India Society, who was deputed in November last by the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association, Bombay, to give evidence before the Joint Parliamentary Committee on East Africa, returned to India last week and gave his views on the East African question in a press interview. He could not formally tender evidence before the Committee as unofficial evidence was not due till April next. Mr. Kunzru however utilised his time in England to good effect by means of private talks and interviews. He reports that the East African question and the Indian aspect of it are better understood in England today than ever they were. This welcome result was partly due to the extravagant demands of the small minority of European settlers in Kenya!

It was rather surprising that the right of India to make representations and tender evidence before the Joint Committee was ever questioned. The history of the East African question during the last decade should have made such doubts impossible of being entertained even for a moment. However it is gratifying that the doubts have been resolved. As a matter of fact, the Viceroy in his last Address to the Assembly specially mentioned that the Government of India were deputing the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri to give evidence on their behalf before the Committee. We trust and hope that it will be possible to depute Mr. Kunzru also officially, if not unofficially.

Mr. Kunzru said that the Committee read their terms of reference to mean that the question of federation of the three East African territories was their first concern, and that if they found against it, the other questions regarding the future of the Kenya Legislative Council and the Common Roll would not arise. In which case, the Committee may go into liquidation at once, for there seems to be none in favour of federation. Lord Delamere and his friends have announced that they did not want it. Neither the Indians nor the Natives want it and Geneva and Germany are uneasy about it to the point of objecting to it. It is reassuring to be told that the fate of the Common Roll and the Kenya Legislative Council do not depend on the Committee but that the British Government will decide the matter and will stand by the conclusions they have already published. Nevertheless, it is very essential that India should be vigilant. The yielding of the British Government to the pressure of the Jews on the Palestine question should put us on our guard.

The fantastic proposal that Kenya should be cut up into two administrations, one of which, the settled area, can be handed over to the European settlers for being governed and the other, the Native Reserves, can be governed from London, seems to have received support in certain influential quarters in England. It is extremely doubtful if such a division will solve the "black and white" problem in Kenya, but it certainly will not solve the Indian problem. As Mr. Kunzru pointed out, the bulk of Indians live in the settled area and they will never consent to their future being handed over to the tender mercies of the white settlers, who have never concealed their hostility to them.

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#### Earl Winterton on India.

THE success of the Round Table Conference has been a disappointment to Conservative die-hards in Great Britain typified by Mr. Churchill. While Mr. Baldwin spoke of him in the recent Indian debate as representing "many people in this country", the *Times* demurs to that description.

The sort of solution which he (Mr. Churchill) would apply to the Indian problem is perfectly well known; the Indian delegates were here long enough to take the measure of his influence in the country; there is no rea-

son to suppose that it is acknowledged even by so large a section as Mr. Baldwin was prepared to concede.

This is good news and in proportion as the influence of British reactionaries decreases in that proportion will India's faith in the good intentions of Britain towards this country increase. Meanwhile we cannot afford to ignore them altogether. Indeed we ought to know what they have to say about the Indian problem. The latest to express himself on the subject is our ex-Under Secretary, Earl Winterton, who has unburdened himself in the hospitable pages of the *Fortnightly Review* (February). Much of the success of the Conference was, of course, due to the bold stand taken by Lord Reading, with whom Earl Winterton is angry for winning "cheap encomium" "by promising adherence to a principle before it was possible to know what form it would take." So far as he is concerned, the proffered "responsibility with safeguards" is impracticable. He quarrels with the phrase itself which strikes him as a misnomer. For it he would substitute "partial responsibility". Earl Winterton has not been at the India Office for nothing and does not fail to detect in this "our old friend Dyarchy." He seriously doubts if "the purely Indian part of the (Federal Structure) scheme, the Cabinet, will supply the strong executive that is so essential." None can blame him for not rising above his environment and adopting a more generous attitude. But what everybody would strongly deprecate is the attempt on the noble Earl's part to mislead British opinion by misrepresenting facts. In his present contribution he remarks, "the ministers will be chosen, not by them, (Governor General and Governors) but by Parliaments or Assemblies." This is not contemplated, as any unbiassed student of the Federal Structure Committee's Report can see for himself. But the ex-Under-Secretary would not have been guilty of this distortion if only he had carefully followed the Premier's speech in the Indian debate on the 26th January. Mr. MacDonald then clearly stated that "the Governor-General shall appoint these ministers in precisely the same way as His Majesty himself appoints his Government here". Owing to the absence of any Hindu-Muslim settlement, he prophesies for the Federal Structure Committee Report the fate of the Nehru Report, which "became gradually submerged in the quicksands of communal rivalry."

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#### Bihar Budget.

THE Bihar and Orissa Budget recently presented has much the same characteristics as the Bombay budget, except in one important particular and that is the balance position. This was considerably stronger than in Bombay. Otherwise the fall in Excise and the increase in the expenditure on Police and Jails are common to both the budgets. It is, however, interesting to note that the Bihar Finance Member makes a marked distinction between the two forces, picketing and the economic depression, which have brought about a fall in the Excise revenue. He believes that the effects of the Civil Disobedience movement on excise receipts had ceased to be appreciable by the end of October 1930 but that in December the economic depression having become marked, the situation again worsened. The revised estimates for the current year, therefore, point to a serious depletion of the balances. The Bihar Government has not been, however, reduced to the straits to which Bombay is reduced. The surplus in their Famine Fund is fairly large and it is sought to be utilised to help the budget through in some ways this year. The Excise receipts next year are expected to show a slight improvement over the current year and there has been a fairly large measure of retrenchment under-

taken. The retrenchments are of the usual type. The Petrol Fund has, however, not been touched and the Finance Member is able to congratulate himself on the fact that he has been able to avoid cutting down the usual grants for primary education. The budget thus prepared is, of course, a deficit budget but the deficit is well within the balance on hand.

#### Sangli on Small States.

THE reply of the Chief of Sangli to the Municipal Address at Sangli is characterised not only by generous intentions and good feeling, but by refreshing candour. He frankly took his audience into his confidence and told them of the guiding policies which shaped his administration. His first concern after coming to the *gadi* was to secure the goodwill of the Paramount Power. It necessitated gubernatorial visits to the State "even at a cost almost beyond the means of Sangli." The second period of his administration was devoted more especially to raising the status of his State to the level of British India. He, therefore, inaugurated the *Rajyat Sabha*, or representative assembly, to share the responsibilities of administration with his people. He hopes that "eventually the people might be enabled to conduct their own government through officials of their own selection." Responsible Government is the goal of Sangli. He now proposes to devote himself more specially to promoting the prosperity of rural Sangli.

But the most significant part of his speech was his reference to the future of small States. "The ancient dignity of a ruler of a small State requires a certain expenditure for the purpose and the rest of the public revenue is after all inadequate to secure the standard of efficiency in British India. The people have further to consider whether on the whole it is more to their interest that the entity of the State should continue inviolate with the benefit of all local revenues being spent on the limited area comprised in it than that it should get merged in British India and become part of the larger whole." The Chief has done well to put the matter squarely to his people and leave it to them to make up their mind about it. The advantage of local revenues being spent locally is considerably diluted by the fact that very little local revenue is left to be spent on the people after making provision for the due maintenance of the dignity of the Prince, not to speak of gubernatorial visits the cost of which is "almost beyond the means" of the small State. Secondly, even when the State is merged in British India, it is quite possible to see that the bulk of local revenues are spent locally. Thirdly, even under the best circumstances, even if the Prince lived the life of extreme simplicity far below the "ancient dignity" of the ruler, still the revenues of a small State are never sufficient to secure for the State the efficiency of administration that British India can afford. If this is the case with Sangli, which is one of the 103 States with salutes, the position of the 500 other States much smaller than Sangli can be easily guessed. With the best will towards the States, there seems to be no help but that they should be merged with the neighbouring British territory. If the Princes have an alternative solution they will do well to reveal it.

The Princes may themselves consider whether it is better that they should continue to be heavy drains on the slender resources of their petty States, and perpetuate inefficient standards of administration rather than that they should, by a supreme act of self-sacrifice, allow the States to be merged with British India and devote themselves to the furtherance of the welfare of India as a whole by placing their talents, their energies and their experiences at the disposal of the Dominion Government of India to be.

## Articles.

### THE RAILWAY BUDGET.

THE world-wide economic depression has hit all business hard and it has, therefore, had the same effect on the Indian State Railways. The revised estimates show large losses on current year's operations and the prospects for the next year are not much more hopeful. The reserves have now to be drawn upon and by the end of the next year they will, it is expected, stand at a very low figure. The falling off in receipts has been due to a reduction of earnings in both passenger and goods traffic. Not only is there an absolute falling off in the number of persons travelling but the Railway Member estimates that there has also been in the case of those travelling by an upper class formerly a tendency to travel by the lower classes. This may be taken as an index of the universality and severity of the depression. The most important single event of this year has, however, been the slump in agricultural prices. This has made the movement of crops unprofitable and thus severely affected railway earnings. The Railway Member categorically states that under the present circumstances a reduction of rates would neither stimulate railway traffic nor help the cultivator. The concessions given to wheat have not, in his opinion, helped that traffic. In the case of groundnut and cotton he does not see the necessity of reducing rates while the crop is freely moving to ports and he urges, in addition, that a reduction should be made only when it is likely to prove profitable to the cultivator. It would be interesting to know the data on the basis of which the Government of India are enabled to satisfy themselves that there is a free movement of crops or that a reduction in rate actually increases the price obtained by the cultivator. We, however, agree that a commercial department like the railways must first keep the point of view of earnings prominently before it. If there is to be a demand for readjustment of rates from the national point of view, it should be for a scheme of rates to be visualised and recast as a whole. While the business conditions may demand a decrease in freight rates the same conditions would from the Railway point of view necessitate an increase in passenger fares. The Railway Member, however, considers the moment very inopportune for this, especially as the upper class fares, which are most susceptible of an increase, form a very small and of recent years a diminishing percentage of total passenger earnings. We wonder whether the great importance of third class traffic earnings which the Railway Member stressed so much this year is always equally well borne in mind. In such things as, for example, the construction of railway stations the third class traffic gets spent upon it only a small fraction of the total money while all the costly conveniences and amenities are provided for the class of persons who put up, it seems, only a tenth of the total passenger traffic. The same

is the case with the provision of special train services for the upper classes and it may be a question well worth detailed investigation whether and to what extent on the Indian railways the third class traffic subsidises the upper classes.

A bad year obviously demands measures of economy and the Railway Member assured the Assembly that the possibilities of retrenchment and economic working were being assiduously studied and that considerable successes had already been achieved. An important point that he raised in this connection was the question of salaries. He pointed out that if a large saving is to be effected the salaries, not only of gazetted officers, but also of the subordinate staffs, will have to be touched. In this he was perfectly correct and we maintain that if in the interests of economy any overhauling of the scales of pay is to be attempted, such overhauling should embrace all grades though we do not, of course, visualise a *pro rata* cut. Further, as the Railway Member pointed out, if there is to be a cut at all, then railway servants should not be invidiously selected out of the general class of government servants. The question of scales of pay, etc., is indeed so important that it cannot be taken up as a temporary measure of retrenchment but will have to be considered in connection with the recasting of the very bases of our financial system.

Among the economies effected in working and other costs the most interesting were those mentioned by Mr. Russel in the Council of State which have resulted from the setting up of the Central Standards Office for the Railways. The various instances cited by him show further the importance of the unification of the control of railways and their operation as a single system. The savings already effected in wagon movements point to the same moral. It may not be out of place to mention here the curious anomaly that still exists in our transport system of the Ports being yet entirely individual authorities having little to do with the Railways. The financial conditions of the year have, of course, necessitated the cutting down of the programme of new constructions. It is expected that, at least so far as the Railways go, the depression will soon lift for otherwise the Assembly will obviously have soon to reconsider the question of the double financial burden, the strategic railways and the contribution to the general revenues, that is at present laid on the Railways.

### THE BOMBAY BUDGET.

AS had been confidently expected, the Government budgets for this year are revealing a position of great financial embarrassment. Trade depression and political disturbances have been both acute enough to disturb financial equilibrium and their combined effect was bound to be disastrous. The finances of the Government of Bombay have never been in a very happy position for the last decade. The Meston Settlement and the Back Bay Development scheme and the Lloyd Barrage borrowings have been veritable millstones round their neck. The balances they have been working with have been slender and one disastrous year like the current one has been enough

to wipe them out entirely. Last year the Finance Member had just succeeded in presenting a balanced budget. His calculations have, however, been entirely upset and, according to the revised estimates, the year will close with a deficit of 119 lakhs. The new year will, therefore, open with no general balance and the Famine Fund reduced to the minimum level of Rs. 75 lakhs. The most important item of fall in revenue is 76 lakhs in Excise. There have been important reductions under Stamps and Forests but it is surprising to note that neither in the Revised Estimates for 1930-31 nor in the Budget Estimates for 1931-32 do Government seem to anticipate any considerable fall in Land Revenue receipts. This indicates that they do not expect the no-tax campaign to affect collections materially nor are they evidently prepared to consider the question of suspensions arising out of the situation created by the recent sudden fall in prices. The Finance Member thought it necessary to warn the Council regarding the financial results of wholesale demands for suspensions and remissions; we would, therefore, like to emphasize the consideration that the policy of granting remissions and suspensions to relieve agricultural distress should not be made to depend upon the financial position of Government for a particular year.

The present Finance Member has inherited a fairly trying legacy of financial troubles and the present year would have sorely tried even the ablest Finance Member; yet making every allowance for these unfortunate circumstances, he cannot be complimented either on the way he has presented his budget or the way in which he is preparing to meet his difficulties. It is indeed unfortunate that Government should find themselves in a position where they have to complain about the people not drinking enough; but they have only themselves to thank for it. Even after a formal acceptance of the policy of gradually reaching the goal of prohibition no serious attempts have been made during the last decade to enforce that policy and to adjust the finances of the Presidency to, what should be, a falling Excise revenue. We suggest that an excellent opportunity has now offered itself to Government to improve their record in this respect and to revive the policy of rationing. This, however, does not seem to be what they are wanting to do. They are instead on the verge, it would appear, of taking a retrograde step as evidenced by the Finance Member's announcement regarding Government's decision to reintroduce the sale of "charas" in Bombay and Ahmedabad.

When the Finance Member approaches the task for the next year he merely throws up his hands in despair. He anticipates a large deficit; how much it is likely to be is more than he can say. And this in spite of borrowing Rs. 10 lakhs to meet the interest charges of the Lloyd Barrage scheme, which used to be ordinarily met out of revenue, in spite of the proposal to divert the Petrol Fund from its legitimate purpose of extending communications to that of meeting the expenditure on ordinary maintenance and repairs and in spite

of putting forward a number of miscellaneous and one important taxation bills. The important taxation proposal is that regarding a Succession Duty, but as its nature has not been yet disclosed it is impossible to discuss its merits and its possible yield at this stage. One minor point regarding next year's estimates may be noticed and it is that regarding the sales of land in the Barrage area. The recent fall in prices is, no doubt, going to land Government in worse straits than ever in respect of the Lloyd Barrage finances. During the current year land sales have brought in only 3 lakhs instead of the estimated 10. It, therefore, seems distinctly optimistic of Government that they should again put the estimate at 10 lakhs for the next year and should think that the market would so far have improved within a year when they themselves admit that it is extremely depressed at present.

No important measures of retrenchment have been proposed. The Finance Member complains that the pruning knife has been applied with such persistency of late years that it is impossible to do anything much again this year. A total retrenchment of 39 lakhs is shown. The chief amounts are saving in Civil works due to postponement of original works to be undertaken (12 lakhs), a 5% cut in the education grant to local bodies (6 lakhs) and certain reductions in allowances (3 lakhs). The most considerable single item of real saving is thus brought about by reducing expenditure on Primary Education! The Finance Member raises in his speech the general question of reduction of salaries. He is not sure whether the salaries of any of the present incumbents can be touched; he, however, holds out an assurance that salaries of new entrants would be reduced. It is not certain, however, what steps are being taken to do this. The fact that the Bombay Government only a few months ago fixed on an extremely liberal scale the salaries of the newly created superior educational service makes one doubt whether any really serious efforts will be made even in this direction. In spite of all his efforts the Finance Member expects that he will have to live on borrowings. It is most unusual for the ordinary expenditure of an ordinary year to be met out of the proceeds of a loan. Evidently Government expect the present position to be a mere passing phase and think it unnecessary to consider seriously the problem of financial adjustment or else perhaps this is the best that even an Indian Finance Member can do under existing political conditions.

## THE ORIYAS IN THE SIMON REPORT

### II

(Concluded from last issue.)

IN the foregoing article we have shown how the urgency of the claim of the Oriyas for a separate province has been recognized by the Simon Commission. There is a serious case of rapid denationalization due to the incoherence of British territorial acquisition in the past and also to bureaucratic neglect, though it might not be deliberate. No unbiased and disinterested body of persons can fail to sympathise with their cause. But the recommenda-

tions of the Commission have not all been honey. Indeed, some of their doses are very bitter to swallow and defeat their pious wishes. We have so far dealt with two considerations; census figures and financial self-sufficiency. Let us now deal with their views as regards boundary. It is here more than anywhere else that their blunders are most glaring. The reader is asked to refer to two maps, one of India and the other of Orissa, both embodied in the report of the Simon Commission. Say the Commission, "In Madras it is not recommended that any part of the Vizagpatam Agency tract should be transferred as the lines of communication run south-east and it is necessary that this backward area should continue to be linked with the coastal area of which it forms the hinterland." Now, in the Vizagpatam district there is the Jeypore Agency where the Oriya speaking population is shown as being 50 p.c. or over in the census even with its present defects. The non-Oriya-speaking people of Jeypore who are a minority are not Telugus but aborigines who mostly speak their primitive languages. As the aboriginal question is one of assimilation, the ground is cut from under any plea to retain them in the Madras Presidency. Moreover, this area is not an isolated Oriya tract. Its northern portion runs parallel with the Kalahandi State of Orissa and joins the Oriya speaking tracts of Central Provinces, thus forming an outer fringe of Oriya-speaking British territory even beyond the native states. The Oriyas of this area are going to be sacrificed on two of the flimsiest grounds possible. One is that it should be linked with the coastal area of which it forms the hinterland. The reader may be referred to the map of India for two obvious departures in the present arrangement of Indian provinces from this contention. The Rangamati hill tracts of Chittagong and the Aijal hills of Assam form the hinterland of the coastal plain of Chittagong. But they are not under one administration. The Marathi-speaking tracts of C. P. form the hinterland of the Tapti valley of Bombay. But they are not politically connected.

Their argument about the line of communications is also not impressive. Oriyas cannot afford to sacrifice their brethren in the Jeypore Agency because the lines of communication run north and south through Telugu country. How is it then that it is being administered to-day along with the coastal region of which it forms the hinterland, for the lines of communication do not run east and west? We may point out that the Surma and Western Brahmaputra valleys are not ostensibly connected by any direct line of communication running north and south but still they form parts of Assam. Indeed, it is too much to imagine that the future provinces of India will occupy the position of independent sovereign states in respect of each other. And Jeypore is not a detached area but a continuation of Ganjam Oriya-speaking area running parallel to the lines of communication. If the reader will look at the map of Orissa he will see that there are excellent roads in all directions from Jeypore, thus making it an ideal centre for administering these Oriya-speaking and aboriginal areas. Racial and cultural affinity transcends the accidents of political accretion and if the future redistribution of provinces is to be based on any firm footing, advocates of administrative convenience should not be allowed to ride roughshod over national aspirations on such grounds.

We have thus seen how, with due respect for justice and equity, not only Ganjam but also Jeypore Agency tracts can be amalgamated with Orissa. They form the major portion of the Madras Agency tracts. To the rest of the Madras Agency tracts the Oriyas have no claim. But the Simon Commission say

"The backwardness of these tracts seems to require that they should be completely excluded and placed under a single administrative head." So it would be for the good of the aborigines in the southernmost tracts, if they are placed under the same government as their brothers in the north and the whole of the Madras Agency tracts is placed under the charge of the Orissa Governor to act as the agent of the central government.

We have already dealt with Orissa's claim to territories on its Southern border. Let us turn our attention now to the north, *i. e.* Singbhum. The Commission says: "Singbhum contains less than 20 p. c. of Oriyas and 75 p. c. of aborigines. The composition of its population, its geographical position and its economic interests militate against its inclusion in Orissa. The Sub-Committee recommends its exclusion." Here again the same step-motherly treatment is accorded to poor Orissa. Mr. Lakhminder Mohanti, whose service to this cause are incalculable, rightly differed from the decision of the Committee and observed that the boundaries of Orissa might be considerably extended, especially by the inclusion of Singbhum. That the Oriyas are not in a majority in Singbhum is not denied by anybody. If the census figures be corrected they may at best form 30 p. c. But the case of Oriya language and culture is different. The aborigines generally adopt the language and culture of the Aryan people who live amongst them. And Singbhum is part of Orissa culturally. There are two Oriya feudatory states in the district which are already in political relation with Orissa and to its south lie the native States of Orissa like Mourbhanj, while to the east lie the Oriya-speaking tracts of Bengal. The aboriginal population of the district are mostly different from their brethren in the rest of the Chota Nagpur division and are socially and racially connected with the aborigines of the native states in Orissa. Thus we see that the plea of the composition of its population is not convincing and is unjust even to those in whose apparent interest it is advanced.

The argument of geographical position also does not stand scrutiny. Sambalpur district forms part of British Orissa but it is even more isolated from the coastal areas of Orissa than Singbhum. We have shown above how Singbhum is but a continuation of the Oriya-speaking areas of the neighbouring feudatory states. If the negligible area of Gopiballavpur and Mohanpur be amalgamated with Orissa as recommended by the Commission, Singbhum would be connected with the Balasore district. Sambalpur is to-day approached by Orissa in a round-about way through Singbhum district. Thus the geographical position of Singbhum does not militate against but strengthens the case for its inclusion in Orissa. Singbhum is linked up with Orissa economically. Jamshedpur depends even to-day upon the willing co-operation of neighbouring Orissa feudatory states. Mourbhanj supplies iron to Jamshedpur and Gangpur manganese. These States are the potential suppliers of both raw material and labour in still greater degrees in future. Thus we see that all the three excuses of the Commission fall to the ground. We lay no claim to any other part of Chhota Nagpur but it will be better for the people if the whole of Chhota Nagpur be added to the new Orissa province. They would then be comparatively free from the inroads of the more enterprising people of the north and be saved the rapid loss of individuality. As the Oriya population is not showing any inclination of pressing upon its northern boundaries and the interests of the people of Chhota Nagpur will be jealously guarded by the Central Government, the people of Chhota Nagpur would enjoy a province of their own practically, though not

theoretically.

"In the C. P. with the exception of the Khariar estate, the Oriyas are in a minority, generally they do not exceed 25 p. c. Minor adjustments only are recommended." But the minor adjustments contain a very substantial portion of the aboriginal population of C. P. living in the eastern boundary of C. P. We may here point out that these Oriya-speaking areas of C. P. extend towards and join the Oriya-speaking areas of the Jeypore Agency in Madras. Then there are the Oriya feudatory states of C. P. Perhaps it would be better from the administrative point of view if the whole of this excluded area be amalgamated with Orissa.

We have now dealt with all the points raised about Orissa in the Simon Report. The Commission have recommended a separate province for Orissa. We have nothing to say against it. But our criticism is levelled against the details of its recommendations. We have shown how they have gone only half way where their recommendations should have gone the whole way and how on occasions they have misunderstood the implication of facts which go in favour of, rather than against, the case of Orissa. We only hope that any body of unbiased investigators in future would look sympathetically into the case of this ancient historic people and would not add to the cup of Orissa's woes which is already full. It is vital, therefore, to the very existence of Orissa that the proposed Boundaries Commission should include a strong contingent of the public men of Orissa.

BHOGABAN MOHANTI.

## Review.

### RELIGION AND CULTURE.

**PROGRESS AND RELIGION. AN HISTORICAL ENQUIRY.** By CHRISTOPHER DAWSON. (Sheed, Ward, London.) 1930. 22 cm. 254 p. 10/6.

THIS book, we are told, is the result of more than ten years' study, and indeed ten years' simmering in the author's brain has rendered the confection so concentrated as to be veritably indigestible. Mr. Dawson has a catholic taste, an encyclopaedic style, and a desire to convey information to his reader that is a real passion. We journey from Dakota to the Andaman Islands, from Siberia to Zululand, searching for religions, for cults, for civilisation, for progress. We dally with Descartes; we descant on Spengler; we explore mysterious forests for Maya and Aztec culture; we even attempt to scale the heights of Brahmanism. Here is history and anthropology, politics and philosophy, and such a galaxy of authorities on such a vast variety of topics that the mind reels before the great width of the author's reading. When we add that all this is contained within the meagre scope of 250 pages, the reader will understand that he has a task before him when he begins this book, but a task which is its own reward.

Mr. Dawson's object is a study of the vital relations between religions and culture, and a review of the idea of progress: his guiding principle is summed up in a quotation from Durkheim that "religion is like the womb from which come all the germs of human civilisation." He deals first with the nature of progress. Is it the spread of the new urban mechanical civilisation, with its bungalowoid excrescences at its lower limit to counterbalance a heightened national conscience as regards slavery and war, as Dean Inge believes? Surely then the cost is too great, and men must realise "the wastefulness

of a system which recklessly exhausts the resources of nature for immediate gain, which destroys virgin forests to produce halfpenny newspapers, and dissipates the stored-up mineral energy of ages in an orgy of stench and smoke." There follows a competent and scholarly review of the growth of the Scientific spirit from Descartes to Huxley, Herbert Spencer, and Bertrand Russell. We note particularly that the author is at pains to point out how Huxley continually affirms the essentially non-moral character of the evolutionary process. Evolution is biology, not morality, and this is important.

We pass on to a study of the German historical school, which reaches its climax in Herr Spengler's great work *The Decline of the West*. In his shrewd criticism of this book and of its critics Mr. Dawson exhibits the same acumen as he did in the scientific section. The anthropological section which follows is equally scholarly and well-informed. Dr. Rivers' work receives worthy attention, and the methods and object of modern anthropology are outlined in workmanlike fashion. The whole chapter is a refreshing contrast to the vapourings of those misguided folk, who regard each new science as the key to all knowledge.

As an example of the author's shrewdness in the realm of comparative religion we would cite the way in which he rebuts Spencer's view of primitive man as living a purely material existence, by referring to the wealth of ceremonial among the Central Australians with their elaborate Corroborees. Of particular interest is the Dakota Indians' conception of an "ocean of supernatural energy" which supplements what we learn about the supreme importance of the supernatural among primitive races in Dr. Otto's *Idea of the Holy*. Magic is the first approach to the study of the external world, and Magic is socialised into the Priesthood or Priestcraft, as some would say. To this period of archaic ritual culture we owe the invention of writing and of the Calendar, the discovery of the use of metals, architecture, engineering, and almost all the arts and crafts of daily life.

The rise of Western culture and of the Christian Church is no less carefully treated: Mr. Dawson also finds opportunity to make some apt allusion to the religions and cultures of the East, especially India, and he says some good things about more recent developments in modern science.

This is a book to read several times. It has an excellent synopsis of contents, and a valuable bibliography. We liked its attractive orange jacket.

BROTHER RONALD.

### SHORT NOTICE

#### THE INNER GOVERNMENT OF THE WORLD.

BY ANNIE BESANT. (Theosophical Publishing House, Madras.) 1930. 20 cm. 89 p. As. 12.

THIS small book contains the three Convention lectures by the author at Benares in 1929.

The lecturer claims as an occultist firsthand knowledge of the inner government of the world to which we find references in the Hindu Purāṇas. According to her, of course, the claims made in her lectures cannot be proved to the world at large within its limits of consciousness. Occultism works by the development of latent organs which are within man instead of by the use of apparatus outside of man. This development of the inner senses can only be promoted under certain rules which affect the body and the conduct of man. The author warns her readers to use their own intellect and judgment in weighing every statement made by her and not take it as a ready-made truth.

The lectures coming from so advanced an occultist as Dr. Besant are well worth study and even those who do not believe in this kind of investigation will find a good deal of material to claim their attention.

V. C. GOKHALE.

## Miscellaneous.

### WHAT HAPPENED AT BORSAD.

#### MESSRS. BAKHALE & CHITALIA'S REPORT.\*

*Mr. R. R. Bakhale, M. L. C., and Mr. Karsandas J. Chitalia, both of the Servants of India Society, have issued the following report on their enquiries into the happenings at Borsad on the 21st of January 1931:—*

Our deputation to Borsad to enquire into the alleged police excesses on the women processionists on the 21st of January 1931 arose out of an order issued three days later under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code by the Borsad Resident Magistrate against Mr. Amritlal V. Thakkar, ordering him to leave Borsad immediately and not to enter the whole taluka for two months. Mr. Thakkar, as indeed some other members of the Servants of India Society, has been doing, in pursuance of the decision of the Council of the Society, the work of enquiring into the alleged police excesses during the campaign of the Civil Disobedience Movement; and his presence in the disturbed areas of Gujarat has always been wholesome and of a restraining character. The unnecessary interference with his legitimate movements was keenly resented by the Society and in its anxiety to continue the investigations which had been begun by Mr. Thakkar but which remained incomplete owing to the Magistrate's order, its Council decided to depute us to Borsad.

2. We left Bombay on the night of the 31st of January and returned on the morning of the 5th of February after spending full four days in and around the Borsad Taluka. We spent a day in Borsad town and three days in the taluka and its vicinities wherefrom most of the processionists were drawn. At Borsad, besides studying its geographical position and visiting the scenes of the police activities and other places connected with the happenings of the 21st of January, we took the evidence of those who, we found, had no hand either in the organisation or the conduct of the processions of that day but who did not escape the attention of the police. It may perhaps be helpful to state here that most of the processionists came from the families of the "Patidars" who have joined the No-Tax Campaign of the Civil Disobedience Movement and migrated from the British territories and who have now either encamped themselves on non-British soil or been staying in a few non-British villages. In going through the taluka, we had necessarily to visit most of the camps in the non-British territory where the migrated families have been staying and where the injured women were receiving treatment. Out of the 31 villages that had, we were told, sent processionists to Borsad, we visited the camps (on the non-British soil) of 21 British villages, including a few British villages themselves and 5 non-British villages. We might mention that we made longer halts at British villages such as Bochasan, Ras and Saijpur in order to see their present condition and the reported damage done to the property of the migrated families.

3. During the period of our stay we were able to record the statements of 128 persons of whom 111 were women who had taken part in the processions and

\* (Maps and plans and appendices omitted—Ed.)

were injured, 5 were eye-witnesses to the scenes enacted at different places in Borsad, 2 were shopkeepers assaulted by the police during their campaign of closing down the shops in the Bazar Street, 4 were readers in the library who came under the lathi blows, 4 were volunteers and guides who had accompanied some of the women and 2 were medical men who had given medical aid to some of the injured persons. Among the 111 women were 6 ladies from Mr. Gandhi's Satyagraha Ashram who were still in or around the Borsad taluka and whose statements we were able to record. Owing to a fair at Nadiad where some of the persons reported to be injured but subsequently recovered and some of the eye-witnesses had gone, we could not meet them and record their statements. We also missed some of the injured processionists who have now either been suffering imprisonment in the Sabarmati jail or had gone back to the Satyagraha Ashram. We claim to have made every endeavour to secure facts and we believe that the data on which this report is based is accurate and reliable.

#### TOPOGRAPHY.

4. To understand properly the situation as it developed at Borsad on the 21st of January, it is necessary, we feel, to know to some extent the topography of the Borsad taluka and the town. Instead of describing the exact geographical position of each village or camp concerned, it is enough if we give the position of each of the eight groups into which the villages and their camps wherefrom the processionists had been drawn were divided. The topographical position of the groups is described in the order in which they reached and marched in Borsad. The Borsad taluka is surrounded on two sides—south-east and west—and is intercepted in the interior as well, by non-British territories. Borsad town is situated in the centre, though a little north-eastward, of the taluka. To its west is the Bochasan group comprising Bochasan, Golel and Saijpur; to the south-east and north-east the Anklav group comprising Anklav, Vasana, Muj-Kua, Bodal, Davol and Joshi-Kua (non-British); to the south the Bhadrans (non-British) group and to the south-west the Ras group of Ras, Banejada, Jharola (non-British) and Vasana (non-British). On the extreme west is the Vardala group of Vardala, Khadhana and Kaniya (non-British); on the north is the Dhondu-Kua group of Dondu-Kua, Vehera, Ashi and Santok Pura; and on the extreme north-west side is the Soonav group of Soonav, Pimlav-Isnav, Palaj and Changa (non-British) villages.

5. Stripped of its few outskirts, the Borsad town can be assumed, for our purposes, to be situated within a square which, if vertically divided in the middle, makes two rectangles—one eastward (E) and the other westward (W). The latter was, broadly speaking, the scene of the happenings of the 21st of January. The Bazar Street which is only a small narrow lane and which runs horizontally from east to west, divides the rectangle into two parts. At the top (east) of this street is what is known as the "Azad Maidan"—only a small open space; and at the bottom (west) is the Cambay Gate before which opens out on the west the "Lathi Chowk." On the north-east corner of the Azad Maidan is a public library and on the south-east is a *Dharmashala*—only a small lane dividing the library and the *Dharamshala*. On the north-east of the Azad Maidan are three *Dharmshalas* (E. F. G.)—separated from each other and situated in different lanes; on the southern end of a lane which runs southwards at right angles to the Bazar Street, there are two *Dharmshalas* (B. C.) and, again, on the southern end of another road running southwards at right angles to the Cambay Gate, is yet another *Dharmshala* (D). All these *Dharmshalas* formed the camps of the processionists when they first

arrived in Borsad. The Borsad railway station is towards the south-east.

#### IMMEDIATE CAUSE OF DEMONSTRATION.

6. The immediate cause of organising the demonstration of the 21st of January (and not 22nd as the Director of Information first wrongly stated) was, we were told, the alleged police action of the 15th of January, viz., the arrest of Lilavati Ben Asar of the Sabarmati Ashram, beating her in the police lock-up and her subsequent conviction, the arrests and subsequent releases of other processionists, and their being assaulted by the police. We are not aware of any other cause or past occasion (to which the Director of Information in his Press Note of the 3rd February refers) which was responsible for the demonstration of the 21st of January. The latter was announced to be celebrated throughout the district by the Kaira District Congress Committee and not by the Borsad Taluka Congress Committee (as stated in the Press Note) which only fixed and carried out the details of the programme.

#### ARRIVAL OF PROCESSIONISTS.

7. The Bochasan group of processionists (No. 1) was the first to arrive. It came at Borsad Station at 10.15 a. m., passed the town by going through the southern-most route running east to west, turned to the north by the western-most route running south to north, entered the Cambay Gate and the Bazar Street, crossed the whole of the street and encamped itself in the *Dharamshala*. (A). The Anklav group (No. 2) arrived by rail, moved north-west and then to the west and encamped itself in the *Dharmashala* (B). The Bhadrans group (No. 3) came from the south, wended its way in the north-west direction upto Azad Maidan, crossed (westward) a portion of the Bazar Street, turned to the south and encamped itself in the same *Dharmashala* (B). The Ras group (No. 4) motored north-east and encamped itself in the *Dharamshala* (D). The Wardala and Dhodu-Kua groups (Nos. 5 & 6) motored eastwards and southwards respectively and encamped themselves in the *Dharmashala* (E), which is north-east to the Azad Maidan. A section of the Soonav group (No. 7) motored north-eastward and arrived in the *Dharmshalas* (F). The other section of the Soonav group (No. 8) was the last to come and encamped itself in the *Dharamshala*. \*

8. Appendix A to this report gives the groups as they entered Borsad town, the centres and the villages or camps attached to them, the number of women (i) who took part in the processions, (ii) who were injured, (iii) whom we actually saw, and (iv) whose marks of injuries were still visible and seen by us. All these figures were obtained by us after making careful enquiries at the villages or camps we visited. All references to the villages or camps which we could not visit and to the women who had joined the processions or were injured, have been omitted as we have no firsthand knowledge about them. Our own figures show that about 1,200 women from 26 villages took part in the demonstration, 159 women were injured, 111 injured women we saw, and 29 women had still on their bodies visible marks of injuries. We met only 13 injured men of whom 10 were from the Borsad town. We were assured that not more than 200 more women from the villages and camps which we could not visit, attended the demonstration. The total number, therefore, of those who took part in it was not, we were assured, more than 1,400. To say, as the Press Note of February 3 says, that the number was between 1500 to 2000 is, apart from paying a higher compliment to the great and well-knit organisation of the Congress, to transgress the legitimate limits of exaggeration. We may here contradict another statement in the Press Note of the 3rd



February that some of the processionists had arrived at Borsad the night before. This is no doubt true only in the case of the Borsad town ladies who had arrived there not only the previous night but several days before; but in the case of other ladies, the statement has no basis.

9. Each group and a few villages from which the processionists were drawn had given one or two volunteers or guides to accompany them and Borsad town had given a handful of volunteers to some processions to show them the way. We are satisfied that the number of such volunteers and guides was not more than 25 to 30 and that they had not joined the processions. Some of them were moving with them at a clear distance. We are further satisfied that the statements made in this behalf in the Press Notes of February 3 and 9 are not accurate and are misleading. The second Press Note has so far climbed down as to admit that the processions were *mainly* of women; but our enquiries showed that they were *exclusively* of women. They were singing national songs and their leaders and a few others were carrying the Congress flags. Our visits to the camps and villages showed us that the processionists had come from all classes of the "Patidar" families and only a handful from the Baria and other communities. Many no doubt came from poor families but were hardly less respectable than others. In the camps the rich and the poor are now leading more or less the same or similar life and to endeavour, as the second Press Note does, to belittle the processionists on the score of their social status and poverty is, in our opinion, unfair.

10. The ages of the processionists ranged between 10 and 65. About 40 were between 10 and 20, 33 between 20 and 30, 22 between 30 and 40, 8 between 40 and 50 and 5 between 50 and 65. We met 7 women who had carried babies with them a few of whom had suffered during the *melee*. Indeed we saw a baby of hardly eighteen months which had got a lathi blow on its head the swollen portion of which we touched with our hands!

#### WATER ARRANGEMENTS AND POLICE.

11. The Borsad *Panjarpole* had, its manager informed us, made elaborate arrangements throughout the town to keep water ready for the processionists. Huge earthen and metal vessels filled with fresh water were kept in the *Dharmshalas* and other places. In the Lathi Chowk itself, this arrangement was made under the personal supervision of the manager. In his statement the latter stated that the earthen vessels in the market were broken by the police and the water in the vessels in the Lathi Chowk was turned down by them without breaking the vessels. Similar statements were made to us by the processionists and a few eye-witnesses but they could not tell us who broke the vessels. In some *Dharmshalas* the ladies found water in the beginning but afterwards they saw the broken pieces of the vessels. While we are satisfied that the water arrangements were disturbed, we are unable to say whether the police did it. It is, we feel, a matter for further enquiry which is essential as we consider it a sheer cruelty to have deprived men and women of water.

#### FIRST LATHI CHARGE.

12. So far as we were able to ascertain, the police did not appear on the scene till the first three groups (Nos. 1, 2 and 3) of the Bochasan, Anklav and Bhadrans centres reached their respective *Dharmshalas*. (A. B.) Between 11-30 A. M., and 12 noon the police, armed with rifles and lathis, went to the Bazar Street and ordered the shopkeepers to close their shops and simultaneously began to assault some shopkeepers without waiting to see whether their pre-emptory order was being obeyed or not. We give

below statements of two shopkeepers:—

(1) *Mangaldas Ramchand*, cloth merchant, age 36:—Police came and asked me to close the shop. While I was doing it, I was given one lathi blow on the left shoulder, another on the right arm, the third on the hips and the fourth on the leg. In fear I ran into another shop and my servant closed the shop.

(2) *Chotalal Hirachand*, sundry shop-keeper, age 30:—I have a shop near the library. Was sitting in a friend's shop near Azad Maidan. One of the police who arrived there, entered the shop and gave me six to seven blows on the right and left shoulders. I then entered the neighbour's shop which was being closed. Saw the lathi charge on women.

Seeing the temper of the police, the shopkeepers hurriedly closed their shops and the others ran away in panic—which perhaps explains the number of injured men in this first lathi charge being limited to a few.

#### SECOND LATHI CHARGE.

13. It seems that some men on the Bazar Street ran in to the library where about a score people were reading. The police followed them in the library, cleared it of people and in doing so assaulted some people including, we were informed, the librarian. We quote below a summary of the relevant statements made to us:—

(3) *Bhailal Jethalal*, age 18:—Soon after I went to the library, some 30 men entered it in a panic. The police followed immediately and began to beat people without asking them to disperse. Most of the readers had already rushed towards the entrance and the verandahs. A constable gave me a blow on the right shoulder and, while I was turning, he gave me a heavy blow on the head which began to bleed. Went home; thence to the municipal dispensary, made a case, went with it to the Magistrate, Mr. Tungare, was accompanied by my father and maternal uncle who requested Mr. Tungare to take the complaint. But he declined to do so. I then went to the dispensary again and got the wound dressed.

(4) *Chhaganlal Nathabhai*, 40:—Was sitting in the library with my back towards the entrance. My elder son (20) and younger son (6) went there a little later, the former was reading and the latter standing at a window near me. A constable came from behind and gave me a lathi blow on the right hand. I stood up to protect my son when I got another blow at the same place. Was going to the verandah when I received another blow on the fingers of the left arm. My elder son got two blows in the library hall and two in the gallery. We managed to get out of the library and on the road my son and I got a blow each on the back. I received two more blows when I was in search of my younger son when two constables, who knew me, shouted not to beat me. Our cases are recorded in the dispensary.

(3) *Mohanlal Bhailal*, age 35:—I was sitting in the library when some men entered it, followed by about four constables. Lathis were started. I got one blow on the forehead, one or two on the right shoulder and one on the knee. When I was running away, I was beaten again on the stairs.

(6) B. D. student, age 18:—I got a lathi blow near the right eye when I was inside the library. The wound was dressed by a private practitioner.

14. Here we desire to point out that the first five names of witnesses given above appear in the list of injured persons appended to the second Press

Note of the Government. The corresponding numbers in list are 8, 9, 2, 4, 3; and the first name in the Government list is, we suppose, that of the son of Chhaganlal Nathabhai. By the inclusion of these names in the list of injured processionists, the Press Note tries to establish that men did take part in the processions and that these six men along with five others were in the procession and got injured when it was being dispersed. Nothing is further from the truth so far as these six men and one more—Govindbhai Ashabhai, (No. 7 in the Government list)—are concerned. They were not in any of the processions and were assaulted on earlier occasions or independently of the processions. The inclusion of these men in the list of injured women is, we feel no doubt, a deliberate attempt to mislead the public by creating confusion in their mind and to shield the police against their reckless attack on women.

15. Before proceeding to the next scene of the tragedy, we desire to pause here for a moment and consider the police action in the Bazar Street and in the library in the light of some of the statements made in the two Press Notes. So far the police action had been independent of any processions; there was no alleged inter-mingling of men and women either in the processions or outside them. The alleged so-called "unusual gathering of men armed with bill hooks, lathis and knives in the town" (second Press Note) had not appeared on the scene. No stones had been thrown and no dust had blinded the eyes of the police. The time to consider the alternative "in order to relieve a dangerous situation", of "dispersing the procession by force" and chasing "away the men in the crowd who were inciting the women to resist the police" (first Press Note) had not arrived. Why then, we ask, were the shops forcibly closed, some of the shopkeepers and others beaten and the innocent readers in the library assaulted? What serious trouble would have arisen if the shops had not been closed and the panic had not been created? Was it really true that "had action been delayed any longer, it is certain that serious trouble would have arisen that would inevitably have involved the use of fire arms" (first Press Note)? We are convinced that it was not true. The only conclusion we can possibly draw after taking all the circumstances into consideration is that the Borsad police seemed to have made up their mind to disperse at all costs the demonstration of the 21st of January and that, with a view to facilitate the dispersal of the processionists they created the requisite amount of panic in the town by indulging in two unnecessary lathi charges on innocent men. Otherwise their conduct is inexplicable.

#### INTERVIEW WITH THE COLLECTOR.

16. We might refer here to the interview that a press correspondent had at Borsad with the Collector of the district just when the police were showing signs of unusual activity. The Collector was informed that the police were petrolling the streets and was asked whether he had issued any orders regarding the demonstration of that day. The Collector replied, we were told, that he had no knowledge and issued no order. We wonder whether, if the above information is correct, it is in consonance with the discipline of which the Press Notes are full of praise, of the police that even the head of the district should be absolutely ignorant of the tragic scenes being enacted by the police under his very nose!

#### THIRD LATHI CHARGE.

17. After clearing the Bazar Street and the library of most of the people, the police began to petrol the street and encamped themselves on the Azad Maidan. It was arranged that the several groups after taking some rest in *Dharmasalas*, should

go to the Azad Maidan and start therefrom in a huge procession, through the Bazar Street, to the Lathi Chowk where a meeting should be held and a resolution on police atrocities passed. We shall, therefore, describe and deal with the course of events as they happened. We may only say here that the women processionists were subjected to, not one, but four, lathi charges—first in the Bazar Street, second in the Azad Maidan, the third and the fourth on the south and north of the Lathi Chowk. The Government Press Notes try to convey the impression that there was only one lathi charge and that other processions were dispersed without any force. This is wrong and misleading. Over and above these lathi charges on an organised scale, stray and isolated charges were made on at least a few men either on the road or by entering their houses. As the nature of assaults is more or less the same or similar in all lathi charges, we content ourselves with giving only, in the body of the report, a short narration together with a summary, wherever possible and necessary, of the statements of one or two victims and leave the other important statements to appendix B.

18. In accordance with the arrangements given above, a section of the Ras group (now No. 9) left its *Dharmasala*, reached the Bazar Street through a lane adjoining the Cambay Gate and passed three-fourths of the Bazar Street when they were met and cordoned by the police. Here the third lathi charge was made and some were very severely injured. Our statements show that women in the front, middle and rear rows of the processions were beaten, pushed with the butt-ends of the rifles, kicked and the hair of some of them were pulled. This attack, we find, was more severe on those who had flags and who would not surrender them. It was here that a child of eighteen months got a blow on its head! Further account can best be given in the words (summarised from their statements) of Shakri Ben, Kalavati Ben (both of the Ashram) and Mani Ben of Ras who were leading the procession:—

(7) *Shakri Ben*, age 36:—The Azad Maidan had been occupied by the police. Sub-Inspector seated in the chair. The Assistant Sub-Inspector whistled and 12 to 14 police came and cordoned us. "*Lagau, Lagau*" (beat, beat)—said some constables; and I was the first victim. I got one blow on right shoulder and 3 boot kicks on the back. We were asked to disperse which we declined. I was then arrested along with Kalavati Ben and Mani Ben and taken to the lock-up. At train time in the evening, we were released and taken to the station in the police car. While leaving the lock-up, the Assistant Sub-Inspector said—"Today is the first day of our "*Roja*" and you have given us lot of trouble."

(8) *Kalavati Ben*, age 16:—The police demanded my flag, and I declined to give it. In the tussle over the flag. I got blows on the back and also a push. Flag was taken away and I sat down. Arrested, taken to the lock-up and released subsequently. One blow on the left ankle of the foot.

(2) *Mani Ben*, age 18:—Went to help Kalavati Ben in keeping the flag when I got a blow on the left shoulder. Had a book of songs; was given kicks on the hips from behind. Then I sat with my head within knees. Another constable came, put his foot on my right foot and pressed the boot. From behind I got kicks on the loins and other parts; can't say how many. Then I was arrested, taken to the lock-up and released along with others.

Ganga Ben, head of the Women's Branch of the Sabarmati Ashram, who was watching the charge from

a neighbouring house, appeared on the scene and induced the ladies to accompany her to the *dharmashala* C. We were informed that one Purshottam Shivram, a lad of 17 and a volunteer accompanying this group was advising the ladies to sit down and not to disperse, when he was severely beaten on the head, arm, etc. He is now under arrest. We could not naturally meet him.

#### FOURTH LATHI CHARGE.

19. The next move on the part of the organisers seemed to be to bring out a procession of the group No. 1 from the *dharmashala*. The Secretary of the Satyagraha Committee, Mr. Narayan B. Patel, was reported to have gone to the *dharmashala* to make the necessary arrangements and when he was coming out, was, we were informed, severely beaten and arrested. On hearing this, the women in the A *dharmashala*, with flags and singing songs began to come out in procession (now No. 10), headed by a number of Ashram ladies. They had hardly walked a few feet when they were held up and one of the most severe lathi charges was made. The charge was, we were told, so severe that some, besides receiving blows, kicks and pushes of the butt-ends, actually fainted, as will be seen from the summary of the following statements:—

(10) *Madhumati Ben*, Ashram lady, age 16:— Had a flag and was in the front row. After cordoning us, the police asked us to stop singing which, however, we continued. A whistle came and the lathi charge started. The police not only assaulted the ladies in the front rows but entered, sideways, the middle and back rows and beat many. I got on the chest a push of the butt-end; but I did not falter. Another blow on the left shoulder and a third one on the back of the head. There was swelling. Flag was snatched away. I saw some women leaving the procession and entering the adjoining shops or houses. I asked them not to do so and have courage, when came a heavy push on the back. One more blow on the head and I felt giddy and laid myself on the ground. After ten minutes or so, I, along with others, was taken to the lock-up, where they met one Har Rai, the editor of the *Kaira District Gazette*. He suggested to the police that the ladies should be taken to the dispensary; but he was told that they had no orders. Mr. Billimoria came and asked the ladies to go to the dispensary. I declined to go. My body was aching for a number of days.

(11) *Kashi Ben*, age 16:—Was in the second row. When Madhumati Ben was being beaten, I tried to protect the flag when I was given a blow on the left shoulder and was dragged by the hair so forcibly that I fell on the ground. Before falling down, I was given 2 or 3 blows by hand on my cheek, and some blows on the loins. I tried to get up when I got 3 pushes on the chest. They again caught hold of my hair and made me stand. Three blows on the left foot; six to seven blows on the right thigh and one blow on the back. After receiving two pushes of the butt-ends of the rifles, I fainted. I found myself in the dispensary when I regained consciousness. Vomited there; the Red Cross volunteers gave me coffee. They all along supported me in going to the motor as I was unable to stand. The next day I was taken to the Bhadrin dispensary wherein I had to be as an in-door patient for six days.

(12) *Padma Ben*, Ashram lady, age 15:— was in the middle of the procession; could see the ladies in the front being beaten. Vasumati Ben was near me; the police were trying to snatch

away her flag when she was beaten and ultimately fainted. I took up the flag when I was beaten on the thigh. I then sat down; six to seven blows on the back and one on the head when I fainted. After some time I regained my consciousness when I was informed that I was arrested and that I should go to the lock-up along with others; was detained there for two to three hours. No medicine offered. All except Vasumati were released.

(13) *Laxmi Ben Gandhi*—Mahatmaji's adopted daughter—Ashram lady, age 17:—Was not inside the rows but was keeping order and discipline. Police came, caught me by the neck, pushed me forward and backward and, by the butt-ends of the rifles gave five pushes in my right ribs. Pushes were so heavy that I fell down and felt giddy. Arrested and taken to the lock-up.

20. The painful features of this charge were that the injured ladies were feeling thirsty but were not provided with water; that some of them had received severe injuries and yet they were not immediately taken to the dispensary; that those of the injured who had not been arrested and taken to the lock-up, were left uncared for and not taken to the dispensary by the police or any other Government official; and that in the lock-up itself, they were kept waiting fairly long before they were taken to the hospital! We cannot help feeling that even the ordinary humane considerations were not, so far as we are aware, extended to the members of the fair sex; and yet we are told with an air of solemnity that instructions had been given that "women were to be treated with all possible consideration." We should like to know whether these instructions were followed "both in the letter and in the spirit." After these sad happenings, some ladies went to the adjacent houses where they were given some treatment and others to a house called "Gandhi Phalia."

#### FIFTH LATHI CHARGE.

21. Seeing the fate of these two processions, the organisers seemed to have changed their original plan and adopted a new one. They instructed, we were told, the processionists who were now in the B, E, and F *dharmashalas* to reach the Lathi Chowk by the south-western and north-western extremities of the town. Accordingly the Nos. 1 and 2 Groups (Bohasan and Anklav) and the other section of the No. 4 Group (Ras) started in procession (now No. 11) headed by Ganga Ben of the Sabarmati Ashram, arrived on the southern side of the Lathi Chowk where it was stopped and cordoned by the police. The latter, we were told, asked the ladies to surrender the flags which they declined to do. Lathis were then, we learnt, started and some ladies were injured. Ganga Ben asked her comrades to sit down when she was, we were told, very severely beaten and assaulted. Mr. Thakkar informs us that when he met her, she had a bandage round the wound behind the head and several marks of lathi blows. The press correspondent, to whom we have already referred, stated in his statement that he saw Ganga Ben going with the police while she was profusely bleeding. A few extracts from the statements are given below:—

(14) *Mani Ben*, age 27:—Ganga Ben and I were in front of the procession. As we approached the Lathi Chowk, a constable said—"let them come;" another said—"beat them." Ganga Ben was severely assaulted. After her arrest I took up the work of asking the ladies to keep quiet and remain firm. The Sub-Inspector told a constable that I was a deportee. Was arrested, taken to the lock-up where there were about 15 persons. One was bleeding and others had

severe injuries. No medical aid was given here. 2½ hours in the lock-up. Mr. Billimoria who ordered my release said to all: Please go, we made a mistake (in arresting you). Seven were released and 4 taken to the dispensary. I joined the subsequent procession again.

(15) *Suraj Ben*, age 30 :—We came near the Lathi Chowk and were cordoned. After Shanta Ben who had a flag was assaulted, I took up the flag. Got two lathi blows on the loins, one on the left shoulder and a third on the head. The last was very severe. Again three blows on the right wrist and on arms. The hand was so benumbed that the flag dropped down. Then I sat down for over two hours. A volunteer brought for us water which was not allowed to reach us; on the other hand, he was belaboured. Mr. Billimoria then came and allowed us to take water which we refused. I was treated by a Bhadrans doctor. (The marks on her head were still visible and we saw them. Her hand was still giving her pain. She had fever for two days.)

Here perhaps we might give a statement of a volunteer who was taking Ganga Ben to the Lathi Chowk, as it throws further light on the manner in which law and order was then being maintained at Borsad :—

(16) *H. S. P.*, age 16 :—Was a Red Cross volunteer for the day. We were 12. Was doing the work of supplying grains to the ladies. Ganga Ben asked me to take her to the Lathi Chowk which I did. The Sub-Inspector who was in or near the police *chowki* on the Lathi Chowk called me. I went and was beaten by three constables on the shoulders and hips. One blow hit the private parts. The Sub-Inspector gave me a lathi push and I was driven away.

22. Just about that time, Bhakti Ben, wife of the famous Gopaldas of Borsad, appeared on the scene. She moved southwards from the Bazar Street and was going again northwards to join the procession when she was arrested near the place where it was cordoned. It was near this place of her arrest that Govindbhai Ashabhai (No. 7 in the Press Note list) was assaulted. This is perhaps the proper place to summarise his statement :—

(17) *Govindbhai Ashabhai*, Merchant and landlord, age 45 :—Between 11 and 11-30 I was near the library and requesting medical men to keep their dispensaries open; saw, after sometime, the police ordering the shop-keepers to close the shops. Hearing that a boy was lying near the liquor shop with an injured leg, went there and sent the boy to a dispensary. Came towards the Cambay Gate and on the way saw Ganga Ben going with police. Ganga Ben was bleeding on the back side of her head. Heard that women were cordoned on the south of the Cambay Gate and wanted water which was arranged but was not allowed to be taken to women. Saw Mani Ben arrested. Went further south and saw Bhakti Ben going in the direction of the cordoned women. We had a talk. On seeing this, the police came and arrested Bhakti Ben. I was beaten along with a few others. I got one blow on the head (we saw the mark) and some five blows on the back. I and one other were arrested twice and released twice. My wound on the head was bleeding.

The ladies in this procession were more or less dealt with, as will be seen from the statements (given in Appendix B), in the same or similar manner in which those in the first two processions were dealt with. Suffice it to say that the ladies sat there for over two

hours and then many went to the Gandhi Phalia (H) and one or two other *dharamshalas* and some went to some adjoining houses.

#### {LATHI CHARGE IN A HOUSE.

23. In the process of the (No. 11) procession being dispersed, some 15 to 20 ladies entered an adjoining shop of a weaver whose room is situated on the road running southwards at right angles to the Cambay Gate and which has doors both to the west and the east. This weaver and his family had nothing to do with the demonstration; they were not a party to it in any sense of the term; and they never asked any body to pass through their house. It was not their fault if some ladies chose his room, as being nearer, to pass through. But even this the police could not tolerate and the poor old weaver and his other older inmate had to bear the thrashings of the guardians of law and order! It is indeed almost impossible to restrain one's feelings when acts such as these come to one's notice and not to characterise them as brutal. Here is what the two unfortunate victims have to say :—

(18) *A. K.*, weaver, age 45 :—I have a house near the Cambay Gate. Was in when some 15 to 20 ladies passed through my house. Saw the police coming towards my house when I began to close the house. They came, ordered me to get out and began to beat me with lathis. I got one blow on the left arm and one on the left shoulder. In fear I ran away upstairs. (The blow on the left shoulder had a visible mark which we saw.)

(19) *B. V. B.*, weaver, age 63 :—Was sitting with *A. K.* at his place. I was caught hold of by the same constable who belaboured *A. K.* Was given blows on the right and left arms and was dragged outside the house. There I was assaulted by another constable when I began to run away. Another constable said:—beat him. Two or three more constables gave me blows all over the body and I fell on the ground. The police further gave me two kicks on the right ribs and a butt-end push. The police then went away. A man gave me help with which I went for treatment. (When we met him, we saw the marks on his left and right arms and his ribs dressed.)

#### SIXTH LATHI CHARGE.

24. On the north-east of the Bazar Street were still the groups Nos. 5, 6, 7 and 8 waiting to come out. After the news of the happenings reached them, all but one group left their *E* and *F* *Dharmashalas* and went in procession (now Nos. 12 and 13) to the northern side of the Lathi Chowk. On the way some of them were, it was reported, beaten and when the rest approached the Lathi Chowk, they were cordoned. The sixth and the last lathi charge took place here when, as before, some ladies were injured. The scenes enacted and the injuries inflicted being more or less the same, we do not propose to deal with this charge at any length. We have given in Appendix B a few statements relating to this charge. Towards the end, Mr. Billimoria appeared on the scene and induced the ladies to disperse. They told him that they would not go without Bhakti Ben. Here he is reported to have told them that Bhakti Ben and others had been released and that they had gone to their respective places. On hearing this the ladies returned in procession (now No. 14) to the Gandhi Phalia (4) and were joined on the way by a procession (now, No. 15) of the group No. 8 from the *G dharmashala*.

25. Mr. Billimoria was reported to have then gone to the municipal dispensary and asked, in the absence of the doctor, the ladies to go home. He gave his motor to them to go to the station. Finding that the train had departed, the ladies took the car as far

as Boohasan. Mr. Billimoria then was reported to have gone to the lock-up and ordered the release of the ladies except a few. They were in the lock-up for many hours and given no medical treatment!

26. After the groups Nos. 14 and 15 arrived at Gandhi Phalia where many were treated and given medicine, they, along with some others whom they met, started again in the last procession (now No. 16), went to the Lathi Chowk, held a meeting and passed the resolution of condemnation for the police action of the 15th of January. They re-formed their procession, marched through the Bazar Street, crossed the Azad Maidan and finally left Borsad by the Bhadrans route. Before all this took place, the police had been withdrawn.

#### EXTENT OF CASUALTIES AND INJURIES.

27. We now give some figures which will give the public some idea about the extent of casualties and injuries. Excluding the villages we could not visit and the processionists therefrom, the total number of men (30) and women (1182) who accompanied or took part in the demonstration or came under the blows of the police, is, according to our figures, a little above 1200. About 160 women and only 13 men were injured. The percentage of the injured men to their total number thus comes to 13.3 and 1.2 respectively. Of the injured women we saw and took statements from 111 *i. e.* 68.7 per cent. Of the women we saw, 29 women or 26.1 per cent. had visible marks of injuries on their bodies which we saw; 31.9 per cent. of the ladies complained that they were having pain for some days after they were beaten; 13.6 per cent. complained that they had fever after the happening—in one case the fever continued for seven days; 10.0 per cent. complained that their hair, which in Indian society are considered sacred, were pulled; 9.0 per cent. informed us that they fainted when they were being beaten—one lady was, she told us, unconscious for nearly half an hour. These figures are so eloquent that any comment on them is, we feel, superfluous.

#### WOMEN AND POLICE.

25. Our narration based as it is on the first and information we could get and on what we saw, compels us to reiterate that, whatever the Government Press Notes may say, the Borsad police were determined to disperse the processions and that they mercilessly attacked the ladies without any regard to Government instructions. With the number of casualties among women and men and having regard to the fact that most men were beaten outside the processions and even before they started, it is impossible to believe that women were injured during the process of men being chased away. We are satisfied that the attack was aimed at women and that it was most severe and brutal. As if to add insult to injury, the second Press Note says that "in a very small proportion of these cases it said that the injuries were actually seen by those recording them." Has the writer of the Press Note ever visited Borsad before he wrote out his stuff? Does he write his Press Notes after visiting the places concerned and seeing things for himself? It is indeed puerile to advance such arguments which, instead of strengthening the case, make it weak. When people were anxious to go and collect information on the spot, they were banned, and yet they are asked whether they had actually seen the injuries! For our part we are in a position to say that we saw with our own eyes a number of injured women, the dressings to the injured parts, the ointments applied, the visible marks of blows and pushes and we also saw one or two wounds actually flowing. It should not be forgotten that we went there ten to fourteen days after the injuries were inflicted. The nature's healing process

was there and would not wait for anybody. We naturally could not see all that could have been seen, had we been there immediately. And yet we saw a good deal.

#### GOVERNMENT PRESS NOTES.

29. So far we have given a connected narration of what took place at Borsad on the 21st of January and in doing so, contradicted, wherever necessary, a few of the statements in the Press Notes of February 3 and 9 published by the Director of Information. The Notes, however, contain many more statements which are either contradictory or inaccurate and misleading and it is impossible, in view of the gravity of the Borsad affair, to ignore them. We, therefore, propose to examine them as briefly as we can before we give our own conclusions.

30. Many people may not perhaps be aware that since the commencement of the Civil Disobedience Movement, a weekly Gujarathi paper, called the *Kaira District (Zilla) Gazette* has been started at Kaira. It is printed in the Government Printing Press, Bombay, published at Kaira by no less a person than the District Magistrate of the Kaira District and edited, we understand, by one Mr. Har Rai. It is thus an official publication which is expected, as it does, to publish the official side. In this particular Borsad incident, both the publisher and the editor of the *K. D. Gazette* were present at Borsad on the fateful 21st of January and the latter had met some of the arrested persons in the lock-up. What they, therefore, have stated in their paper, can safely be taken, from the Government point of view, as the correct version of the happenings and should ordinarily have been the basis of the Press Notes. But curiously enough, the versions in the *Gazette* and the Press Notes not only vary but they actually contradict each other at many places. We give below some samples of such contradictions only to enable the public to judge how much reliance can be placed on Government versions:—

#### (a) Cause of the demonstration:—

<i>Kaira District Gazette, 2-2-31</i>	<i>Press Note, 3-2-31</i>
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Their intention was to create excitement in the public through procession in Borsad as a protest against the alleged atrocities on Lilavati Ben Asar and against the execution of the Sholapur convicts, as published in the "Kaira Zilla Patrika," dated 20th January. (italics ours).

The Borsad Taluka Congress Committee,..... decided to organise a series of processions of women to protest against the alleged ill-treatment of women on two occasions by the Borsad police. (italics ours).

The second Press Note pursues the two occasions, describes the two women and concludes that the second woman's complaint was untrue. The third Press Note goes one better and declares that this second woman does not exist! The *Gazette* does not refer to this woman and to her incident at all as being the cause of demonstration of 21st of January. Why? Let the fourth Press Note answer.

#### (b) Number of processionists:—

<i>K. D. Gazette, 26-1-31</i>	<i>Press Note 3-2-31</i>
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Several women had arrived at Borsad by rail or motor from Bhadrans, Ras, Boohasan, etc. (italics ours.)

(1) In accordance with this plan some 2,000 women were collected..... (italics ours)

*K. D. Gazette 2-2-31.*  
These processions..... were stopped by the police

(2) In accordance with this determination a crowd of some 1,500 to 2,000

who cordoned them. As a result, two or three of them dispersed themselves and women of one procession squatted near the Cambay Gate. *But the largest of all the processions of the day which consisted of about 2,000 males and females..... (italics ours.)*

Here the Press Notes put the maximum number of processionists at 2,000 while the *K. D. Gazette* credits only one of the processions with that figure.

(c) Throwing of stones and dust :—

*K. D. Gazette 26-1-31.*

After the procession was cordoned at Cambay Gate, the police tried to induce the processionists to go peacefully when, *rumour says, stones were thrown*, which provoked the police. (italics ours.)

*K. D. Gazette 2-2-31.*

But the biggest of all the processions.....became at once unruly and began to throw stones and brick-bats. The police restrained themselves for the moment, but on observing the so-called peaceful procession getting more and more defiant and violent, they had no other way open but to use force.

women with whom were a number of men,..... (italics ours.)

.....a crowd of some 1,500 to 2,000 women..... advanced towards the police party. The Sub-Inspector used every effort to persuade them to stop but the women refused. Stones were thrown from the crowd, while the people in the front rank of the procession threw handfuls of dust in the faces of the policemen near them. Two policemen were injured and the police party was pressed back.

*Press Note, 9-2-31.*

Women (in the procession) continued to try to force their way through and were pushed back by the police.....Very soon stones began to fly, thrown by men.....Some of the women were seen to be carrying stones,..... and two policemen were injured. Those nearest the police did, however, throw handful of dust in their faces.

It is noteworthy that the *Gazette* makes no reference to the throwing of dust and the injury to the policemen while the Press Notes are silent on brick bats. The *Gazette* in its issue of January 26 does not make a definite statement that stones were thrown, it only says that it was rumoured that stones were thrown which provoked the police. It is also noteworthy that the first Press Note says that the police party was pressed back while the second Press Note declares that women were pushed back by the police. It is equally noteworthy that the second Press Note comes out with a statement that some women were seen carrying stones and the earlier publications are silent over it.

(d) Extent of force used :—

*K. D. Gazette, 26-1-31.*

(Owing to the provocation caused to the police) *two or four police used lathi for a short time*. Enquiries show that the injuries were small..... only in three cases blood had come out. (italics ours.)

*Press Note, 9-2-31.*

In dispersing the procession it was unfortunate, but inevitable, that some of the women should have received blows; had it been possible to handle the situation in any other way, no women would have been hurt.

*K. D. Gazette, 2-2-31.*

And this force was by no means more than necessary. The police knew that they were dealing with women and therefore did not make a free use of lathi..... The fact that only two or three were bandaged out of such a huge gathering shows that the police exercised extreme restraint on their mind.

*Press Note, 9-2-31.*

As they (men) were behind the women,..... it became necessary to force a way through the cordon of women which they (police) did by pushing through with the help of the butt-ends of their rifles and lathis..... Other minor injuries were caused by the police wresting flags and placards from their hands. In the *melee* some of the women were trodden on,..... The record also shows that a few more serious hurts were caused by lathi blows.

It may be noted that the *Gazette* found only two or three bandaged cases while the first Press Note puts the number of the injured at 21. The same Note refers only to the blows while the second Note admits the use of butt-tends of the rifles, the wresting of the flags, the women being trodden on and more serious hurts!! Compare this with the *Gazette* of 26-1-31 which says that only two or four police used lathi for a short time and the number of the injured was small!

31. We believe we have shown some of the serious contradictions in the three Government versions. We tried our best to reconcile them but, we confess, we failed. We understand omissions or discrepancies and make allowances for them; but surely, with the best will in the world, we cannot understand the serious and grave contradictions, in an issue like this, coming from a Government with a reputation for accuracy and fair play. We cannot help saying that these contradictions clearly indicate that the publication of these Press Notes and other versions does present anything but a true picture of the Borsad happenings; it only seeks to exonerate the police from their wanton conduct and shield them under the protecting wings of authority.

32. We will now take a few more statements from these Press Notes and show how they are not accurate. The second Press Note refers for the first time to the notoriety of the people of Borsad taluka for turbulence, violent crimes, murders, dacoities, riots, etc. Will the Director of Information publish the relevant published statistics of crimes committed in the taluka during the last ten years and show that the criminal tendencies of the people had increased? We ourselves consulted some of the latest annual police reports of the Bombay Presidency and nowhere was the kind of insurrection sought to be made out by the Director, referred to by Inspector-General of Police in his reports. Perhaps the Director knows better! Besides, we should like to know why "this particular procession" which was mostly, according to him, of women, was sought to be interfered with. Has he any information that even women have, along with men, developed any criminal tendencies? The same Press Note writes that "in addition it had been bruited about for a day or two before January 21st that the male population was arming itself for a concerted attack on the police and on the day in question there was an unusual gathering of men armed with bill-hooks, lathis and knives in the town." If this was a fact, why was it not published in the *Kaira District Gazette* and in the first Press Note? If the local officials knew it, as they ought to, they would have not only banned all processions earlier than they actually did on the 22nd of January, but they would have rounded up the hooligans

and taken all other measures to suppress them. In these days of Ordinances and when ropes are mistaken for snakes, to expect the Borsad police to adopt a policy of "wait and see" is to expect Mr. Gandhi to give up his creed of non-violence. Or is it that these lethal preparations were unearthed when the Press Note was being written in the Bombay Secretariat? The fact of the matter seems to be that the idea of lethal preparations suited best to justify the police action. We simply decline to believe it. We regret to have to record that the Director's statement is a baseless allegation framed in the nature of an after-thought designed to discredit the non-violent nature of the processionists and to save the Borsad Police. The second Press Note further states that there was no need for prohibitory order since "it was well known to the people of Borsad that for months past no such procession had been allowed." If so, why was the prohibitory order issued on the 22nd January, extending over a week? There cannot be any other answer but this: Either the processions must have been allowed in the past or if they had not been allowed, there must have been something sinister in allowing this particular procession of the 21st of January and then dispersing it by force. Let the Director of Information give a straight answer.

33. All the Government versions speak of stone-pelting, and two of them of dust-throwing and injuries to two policemen. If policemen had really been injured, would the *Kaira District Gazette* have failed to publish it and left it to the Director to publish it after thirteen days? Could it be said that the injuries to 2 out of only 30 police who were, as the Press Note says, on duty, were not detected till the 3rd of February—nearly a fortnight later? Were they taken to the dispensary and their cases recorded? If so, where is the doctor's report? Our evidence shows that no policeman was injured and we are satisfied that this is true. If any of the police force had been injured, the local authorities would have moved heaven and earth and made capital out of it. But they seem to be as quiet even now as they possibly can be and we saw Borsad as calm as it ever was. Our remarks apply with equal force to the alleged pelting of stones and the throwing of dust. We saw no stones in Borsad and it is beyond our comprehension to assume that they were brought from the taluka. The statement that some ladies were seen carrying stones appears neither in the *Kaira District Gazette* nor in the first Note. It is, we have no doubt, again an after-thought; so is the throwing of dust. The *Gazette* is silent over it. It is inconceivable that women would be so rash as to indulge in this kind of molestation. Further, we would like to know in which of the six lathi charges were the stones pelted, dust thrown and policemen injured? If this had happened in any one of them, why were the other charges made? The evidence against these allegations is so full that we are absolutely convinced that they are a mischievous after-thought calculated to create some justification for the police action.

34. It is stated that the Sub-Inspector was "faced with the choice between immediate action with the lathi and delay which too clearly would have made the use of the rifle inevitable." The lathi charges were made no less than six times and we fail to understand where the question of choice between immediate action and delay came in. In spite of the first few charges, women did form and re-form the processions, and events have shown that the rifle was never used. This in itself is a sufficient refutation of the reckless statement made. Equally reckless and wild is another statement in the first Press Note that "had action been delayed any longer, it is certain that serious trouble would have arisen that would inevitably have involved the use of the fire

arms." Action was never delayed, in fact it was precipitated and hastened by the impatience and pre-determination of the police.

35. We now come to the charges that the police were drunk and that they abused women in the "filthiest language." Many women whom we saw told us that the eyes of some police were red and some were smelling badly. But we do not attach much importance to this charge. Because the actions of the police, whether they were drunk or not, were, in our opinion, such as would put to shame the conceivable actions of even the dead drunk. The abuse by the police has been admitted in the Press Note, though as a reciprocal action. We have no evidence as to whether the women abused the police. If, however, we venture to conjecture, we feel that our Indian women, particularly those of respectable families, have not yet gone so low as to indulge in filthy and indecent language. It is stated that "no ears were shocked" by anything said by the police. If the ears are not shocked at hearing filthy language either they must be the ears of indecent men or they must be deaf.

36. Lastly, in trying to reduce the number of casualties and minimise the seriousness of the injuries, the Press Note states that "it is most improbable that any serious cases should have been taken three miles to Bhadran when there was a well run dispensary at Borsad." If only the Director of Information will take the trouble of writing to the Medical Officer of Bhadran, he will learn that the Bhadran dispensary dealt with five in-door cases (4 ladies and 1 male) and not less than 16 out-door cases. Most of the in-door cases had, he will also learn, contusions on backs and waists (loins and hips), one Laxmi Ben had inflammation of the whole of the right leg, the patients were complaining of pain all over the bodies, particularly on joints. In the case of out-door cases, the Director will further learn that most of them had contusions and one had a wound of lower extremity. He will also learn that a few of the in-door cases were in the dispensary for about a week and the out-door patients were being treated even when we were there. The idea of a "well run dispensary at Borsad" is given in the Press Note itself when it stated at the end that "it was not possible to examine them (i. e., the cases "brought by volunteers on cots, etc.") as a large crowd of people had assembled in the dispensary and round about." So, the Note gives its own refutation and the Bhadran dispensary gives the facts.

#### CONCLUSIONS.

37. We now summarise our conclusions thus:—

- (1) That the demonstration of the 21st of January was held only as a protest against the police action of the 15th of January.
- (2) That the processionists went to Borsad in eight groups and encamped themselves in six *Dharmashalas*.
- (3) That the number of processionists was not more than 1400.
- (4) That no processionists from outside the Borsad town arrived at Borsad earlier than the morning of the 21st of January.
- (5) That the number of men accompanying women or going with the processions at a distance should not have been more than 25 to 30.
- (6) That the processions were exclusively of women.
- (7) That the water arrangements made by the Borsad *Panjarpole* were disturbed, earthen vessels were broken, it is stated, by the police and water in the rest turned down.

(8) That the police went, between 11-30 A. M. and 12-0 noon, to the Bazar Street and forcibly caused the shops to be closed; and in doing so, they beat some of the shop-keepers and customers.

(9) That the police entered the library and beat some readers there including the librarian.

(10) That most of the men whose names appear in the list of the injured in the second Government Press Note were beaten outside and independently of the processions; and that the inclusion of these men in the list of women injured in the processions is, in our opinion, a deliberate attempt to mislead the public by creating confusion in their mind and to shield the police against their reckless attack on women.

(11) That the first two lathi charges on men show that the police seemed to have made up their mind to disperse at all costs the demonstration and, with a view to facilitate the dispersal of the processionists, they created the requisite amount of panic in the town by indulging in two unnecessary charges on innocent men. Otherwise their conduct is inexplicable.

(12) That not less than four lathi charges were made on four processions at four different times and at four different places. The charges were more severe on those who were leading the processions and carrying flags.

(13) That in these lathi charges many ladies were injured by lathi blows and butt-ends of the rifles, some were kicked, some had their hair pulled and were dragged and a few even fainted.

(14) That the authorities took no steps to give water and medical help to the injured except to those who had been arrested and were subsequently convicted; and that in the lock-up no heed was paid to their condition.

(15) That the police made a lathi charge on two men in the house of a weaver who were in no way connected with the demonstration.

(16) That 159 women and only 13 men were injured; that the percentage of the injured women and men to the total number of the processionists and men accompanying them comes to 13.3 and 1.2 respectively: that of the injured women, we saw and took statements from 111, *i. e.*, 68.7 per cent.; that of the women we saw, 29 or 26.1 per cent., had visible marks of injuries seen by us; that 31.9 per cent. of the women complained that they were having pain for some days after they were beaten; that 13.6 per cent. complained that they had fever after the happenings; that 10.0 per cent. complained that their hair were pulled; and that 9.0 per cent. informed us that they fainted when they were being beaten!

(17) That the Borsad police were determined to disperse the procession; that they mercilessly beat the women without any regard to Government instructions; and that the attacks were most severe and brutal.

(18) That with the percentage of casualties among women (13.3) and men (1.2) and having regard to the fact that most men were beaten outside the processions, it is impossible to believe that women were injured during the process of men being chased away.

(19) That the versions in the *Kaira District Gazette*, published by the District Magistrate of Kaira and the two Press Notes not only vary but are, in many cases, contradictory.

(20) That the statements in the *K. D. Gazette* and other Press Notes regarding the cause of the demonstration, number of processionists, throwing of stones and dust, injury to policemen and the extent of the

force used, considerably vary and are contradictory.

(21) That these contradictions do present anything but a true picture of the Borsad happenings; that they only exonerate the police from their wanton conduct and shield them under the protecting wings of authority.

(22) That the allegation regarding the Borsad people arming themselves with lethal weapons is baseless and an after-thought calculated to justify the police action and discredit the non-violent nature of the processionists.

(23) That the issue of a prohibitory order on the 22nd of January shows that previously there was no prohibition against the processions.

(24) That no stones and no dust were thrown at the police and no brickbats were used.

(25) That no policeman was injured.

(26) That the allegation that some women were carrying stones is untrue.

(27) That the situation was in no way serious; it was subsequently made anxious by the police action; and that action was never delayed; it was precipitated and hastened by the impatience and pre-determination of the police.

(28) That the actions of the police, whether they were drunk or not, were such as would put to shame the conceivable actions of even the dead drunk.

(29) That, in our opinion, the Borsad happenings form one of the dark episodes in the recent history of India and that they have tremendously lowered the British Government in the eyes of the public.

Servants of India Society,  
Bombay, February 21, 1931.

R. R. BAKHALE,  
KARSANDAS. J. CHITALIA.

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