

# The Servant of India

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OFFICE : SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY'S HOME, POONA 4.

VOL. XV, No. 42. }

POONA—THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1932.

{ INDIAN SUBSN. Rs. 6.  
FOREIGN SUBSN. 15s.

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## Topics of the Week.

### International Conference on India.

THE organisers of the International Conference on India among whom must be prominently included the well-known theologian, Mrs. Cousins, which was held in Geneva on the 6th inst. deserve India's heartfelt gratitude for their efforts to secure international sympathy in her fight for freedom. From all accounts the Conference was a great success, 26 organisations from 15 different countries being represented at it. Dr. Edmond Privat was selected to preside over the Conference, at which an account was submitted by the several delegates concerned of the pro-Indian activities that were being conducted in their respective countries. These included Belgium, France, America, and Switzerland. In France Madame L. Morin, has been carrying on her untiring labour of love in the cause of India and has done much to arouse sympathy for this country in European countries. The principal resolution passed by the Conference upheld India's right to full self-determination and decided to collect and disseminate correct information about India through a permanent international committee. It was also decided to entrust the work to a small executive committee with headquarters in Geneva. The Indian political situation engaged the attention of the Conference which telegraphed to the Prime Minister asking that "freedom should be given to Mahatma Gandhi for pursuing negotiations in view of peace," and pressing for the release of all civil disobedience prisoners and the withdrawal of the ordinances. It may be mentioned here that the Provisional Executive Committee of the Conference did its best to enlist the sympathy of the delegates to the 13th Assembly of the League of Nations in the Indian cause. The statement sent by this Committee to the delegates drew their attention to the "gravity of the situation in India," and to the evils resulting

from the repressive policy of the Government. Emphasis was also laid on the desirability of easing the present tension by releasing all satyagrahi prisoners and withdrawing the ordinances. It was also suggested that a Conference be held consisting of the accredited representatives of the two countries as equals to evolve a constitution by mutual agreement which will be acceptable to India and the opinion was expressed that no such Conference could be complete unless Congress was represented at it. There can be no doubt that in making these demands the Conference gave proof of a close grasp on its part of the Indian situation.

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### The Burden of Dominionhood.

THE status of a Dominion with which India is supposed to have been endowed, since she was invited to sign the Versailles Treaty and to join the League of Nations as an original member in her own right, is no doubt of a purely decorative character; but if the honour is empty it has not proved at any rate particularly onerous so far. Now however India's so-called Dominionhood is about to bring heavy burdens in its wake. For the principal ground which the Indian delegation to the Ottawa Conference have adduced in defence of the Tariff Agreement which on their advice the Government of India has entered into with Great Britain amounts to this, that India's being classed with the Dominions makes this Agreement inevitable. The delegation seem to say: "In the balance-sheet of this agreement, it may be admitted the direct advantages on the side of India are not great, but the losses it helps her to avoid are very great indeed. Since March last Great Britain has been levying a general *ad valorem* duty of 10 per cent. on foreign imports and has threatened to levy the same duty on imports from Dominions, among whom India is included, unless by the 15th of November they arrive at arrangements of reciprocal preference. India would lose terribly if her exports to Great Britain were to be subjected to this duty. She can save this loss only by her joining the scheme of preference. The non-self-governing colonies suffer from no such handicap. Even if they refused to give preference to British goods in their markets, the goods which they might export to England would still be free not only from the 10 per cent. duty, but also from the additional duties which Great Britain has decided to charge upon certain foreign imports. But India, though not self-governing, is being treated as a Dominion for certain purposes, and in the matter of Imperial Preference she has to pay a price for her newly acquired status."

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WHY has Great Britain exempted Colonies and Protectorates from Import Duties to which Dominions would be subject in the event of their standing out of Imperial Preference? Apparently for two reasons. One

is that colonies have not the power of determining their own fiscal system, and they certainly have not the means of discriminating in fiscal matters against Great Britain, in order to prevent which the Import Duties Act was devised in the main. The other reason is that the goods they exchange are such as are not likely to enter into competition with British goods. The Chancellor of the Exchequer himself gave this reason while moving the Import Duties Bill. He said: "The Colonies, the Protectorates and the Mandated Territories are in a somewhat different position from that of the Dominions. They lie, for the most part, in tropical or semi-tropical latitudes; they have scarcely any manufactures of importance; and their products, which are for the most part fruits and vegetables, seeds and nuts used for expressing oils and fibers, are not of a kind which compete with the home products of this country." In both these respects surely India occupies a position which is far more like that of Crown Colonies than of Dominions. Her fiscal freedom is even outwardly limited to this, that the Secretary of State cannot force his own views on the Government of India when the views of the latter coincide with those of the legislature; but, as past experience has proved, the Secretary of State can in fact prevent the Government of India's views from being known when they differ from his and thus effectually reduce India's fiscal autonomy to a nullity. Similarly India's energies are still being largely devoted to the production of raw materials; and in the case of her two principal industries, British manufactures receive preferential treatment in her market. There is no conceivable reason therefore why Indian produce should not enjoy free entry into England after November 15, as the produce of the Crown Colonies will irrespective of her giving preference to British goods. If it be true that she is to be admitted within a year or two to the rank of Dominions, not only for ceremonial purposes, but for the exercise of real power why cannot Great Britain refrain, just for this short space of time, from bestowing upon her the burdensome honour of being treated as a Dominion in this matter? India, for her own part, will not mind being degraded to the position of a Dependency, so far as imperial preference is concerned, pending the result of the R.T.C.

ON one point some elucidation is necessary. Great Britain has taken to herself the power of applying the 10 per cent. *ad valorem* duty to the exports of such Dominions as do not join the preference scheme. But will she use this power indiscriminately, subjecting all the goods coming, say, from the Irish Free State into her markets or will she use the power with discretion, applying the duty only to such goods as are in serious competition with her own or are not likely to undergo a drastic enhancement of price because of the duty? In the case of some goods, at any rate, it would appear that the levying of the import duty would be just as harmful to her interests as to ours. Would she really chop off her own nose to spite our face? Would she not rather argue, as we were or are invited to argue on the question of the differential rates levied by us on British manufactures of iron and steel and cotton textiles? The higher rate will not promote indigenous industries but only increase the burden on the consumers. What is the sense then of clapping it on? We do not set out to injure the Britisher even at the cost of injury to ourselves. This was the reasoning we were taught to adopt in 1927 and 1930. In the same way will not the British Government say to itself: Tea is a necessity with us. Our best source of its supply is India. Surely imperial interests will not be served by favouring Ceylon above India, particularly when

the favouritism is likely to result in making the commodity dearer to every Britisher. In our own interests we must let in Indian tea free. If England will reason on these lines, then our non-participation in the imperial preference scheme cannot be attended with such great risks as the Indian delegation imagined. And we need not have made the agreement under the influence of fear as they evidently did.

\* \* \*

#### Cut in Educational Grants.

THE session of the Bombay Legislative Council which dragged on in Poona for nearly a month since the middle of September came to a close last week after passing an important resolution bearing on the progress of education in this presidency. This suggested that the cut of 20 per cent. in the grants made to local bodies for primary education be restored. The grant was reduced by 5 per cent. last year which has this year been added by another 15 per cent., the total out of 20 per cent. reducing the educational budget by Rs. 20 lakhs. With the proverbially meagre resources of local bodies, it is feared, and not without reason, that the proposed cutting down of Government assistance would seriously interfere with their educational work. The result in many cases would be that, far from effecting any new developments, the local bodies would be hard put to it even to maintain the *status quo*. It was really this feeling which won support from all sections of non-official opinion in the Council for the resolutions. One can understand the expansion of education being held up temporarily on account of financial stringency; but when, as in the present case, financial stringency is allowed to play havoc even with such educational activity, as is going on at present under the auspices of local bodies, a strong protest is doubtless urgently called for. The Bombay Council did no more than its duty in recording such a protest when it carried against Government the resolution in question. It is to us a matter of surprise, as it was to some speakers in the debate, that with a budget of Rs. 14 crores it should not be possible for the Government somehow to find Rs. 20 lakhs so that the catastrophe of local bodies being required to curtail their educational activity may be avoided. It is to be hoped that the passage of the resolution by the Council will have brought home to Government the strength of public feeling on the subject and that they will find means whereby educational grants to local bodies need suffer no diminution.

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#### Returned Emigrants.

THE lot of Indian emigrants who return to India after long absence abroad is indeed as pitiable as it is difficult of solution. Their sufferings excite no public notice in India unless something untoward happens, as in the case of the emigrants who returned to India from the West Indies on the 9th inst. by S. S. Ganges. Their fate was not more unkind than that of their predecessors, but they did not suffer it with equal resignation. For they invaded the office of the Protector of Immigrants and demanded to be sent back to the Colonies from which they came. Their unruly demonstration necessitated police interference. It is reported that before embarking for India they were warned about the social and economic conditions they would meet with in India and advised not to sail. But various motives, the most natural and commendable, prevailed and they landed in India only to find their ancestral homes shut against them and the economic and climatic conditions wholly against them. In utter disappointment and intense misery they have congregated at Metiaburuz, in Calcutta, in sight of the ships, in the hope that some

how or other they might sail back to their more hospitable homes abroad.

It has been almost impossible to persuade returned emigrants of this type to accept work on plantations, railways and on land secured by the Protector of Immigrants; the wages are too low and the climate too bad. The only escape is to return to the Colonies. Fortunately, there is no prohibition against their doing so from the Governments of the Colonies concerned. But the difficulty has been one of finance. It would be an unwise policy to ask the Government of India to finance the passage back of all Indians who returned to India and found themselves in difficult straits. It is eminently a matter for non-official social service, assisted by grants from the Government. Perhaps it will be wiser if the advice tendered in the Colonies against returning to India was made more effective by the appointment of Agents of the Government of India in the Colonies concerned. It is surprising, however, that the reports of the sufferings of those who returned to India have not effectively deterred others from courting a similar fate.

\* \* \*

#### Increasing Costliness of Education.

PEOPLE of limited means have every reason to feel grateful to Sir C. V. Kumaraswami Sastri for his attempt in his convocation address to the Mysore University to focus public attention on a problem of great urgency, viz. the increasing expensiveness of the present-day education. There is no doubt that education is a great civilising influence and confers untold blessings on the receiver. As such it ought really to be brought within the easy reach of people not too well endowed with an abundance of the good things of this world. But the fact is that its costliness is making it practically prohibitive to a very large section of the community. The high fees payable by students in all grades, the yearly changes of text-books, the insistence on the part of the educational authorities of the use by the pupils of a particular type of note-books, all these are making demands on the slender resources of middle-class parents having sons and daughters to educate, which burdens they are finding themselves increasingly unable to bear. The result is that education instead of being easily available to everybody is tending to become the privilege of the select few. Well may Sir Kumaraswami Sastri therefore exclaim: "It is no use to extol the benefits of education and at the same time to make it more costly, more unattainable by those who most need it and more and more the privilege of the rich rather than the heritage of the poor." His views on the frequent changes of text-books seem to us to give faithful expression to the public feeling on the subject. "There is no reason", he pointed out, "why text-books should be changed often except in cases where the advance in science has impaired their utility or where there are much better books on the subjects taught. But the books substituted often comply with neither of these requirements. Looking back on my school days, changes in text-books were few, selection of text-books was carefully made and the text-books were judiciously changed. The books which an elder brother read were used by the younger members of the family and a couple of slates adequately performed the functions of a pile of note-books now required even in the primary classes. It is a legitimate grievance which one hears often that the frequent change of text-books serves no purpose but to swell the income of the publisher or a lucky text-book compiler." It is not too much to say that the state of things here described is prejudicially affecting the spread of education and as such must be put a stop to without delay. Interests of educational expan-

sion no less than a consideration of the economic difficulties of the parent of moderate means doubtless demand such action.

\* \* \*

#### Land Revenue Remission in Frontier Province.

THE legislative council of the Frontier Province which is at present in session has recently passed two resolutions which deserve notice. The first one of these asked for a remission of 50 per cent. in land revenue and in the water rate and was carried against the Government and in spite of the opposition of the Hindu members. These latter were by no means opposed on principle to the demand made in the resolution, but felt that it was pitched in an unnecessarily high key. If the majority which stood for the resolution had met their wishes in that respect, the Government would have been completely isolated. But that is neither here nor there. What is important to note is the fact that so far as the principle of remission was concerned, non-official opinion was solidly united in asking that it should be given effect to, in view of the abnormal fall in the prices of agricultural produce—a fact too patent to need any proof at this time of the day, and yet all that the Government had to offer in satisfaction of such pressing public need was nothing more than a committee "to help the House to get the necessary data from the departments concerned, so as to be able to arrive at a correct and wholesome decision." Is it not a wonder that with all their protestations of love for the welfare of the peasantry of which no end was heard in the debate in question, the Government should be unprepared with their own plans for its relief in the present very difficult times? To ask for a remission of 50 per cent. of land revenue which yields no more than Rs. 34 lakhs, as was done in the resolution, may be a somewhat extravagant demand. But what about the Government? They could not pretend not to know the condition of the ryot. How can they afford to look on merely as amused spectators without any proposals of their own for the agriculturist's relief? The extreme demand made in the resolution may be excused on the ground of ignorance; but no such plea can be accepted in their case. Their attitude throughout this debate does not seem to us to justify their claim to be the real friends of the poor ryot.

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#### Subvention to N. W. F. P.

THE other resolution to which all parties in the House including the Government lent their support asked that the new Government of India Act should give statutory recognition to the subvention of Rs. 1 crore made to the Frontier Province from the Central revenues so that it will be a permanent source of their income. We hope the Central Legislature will be allowed an opportunity of having its say on this subject before the Government commits itself one way or the other. It is to be trusted that they will have recourse to a more satisfactory method of asking for the Assembly's verdict on it than the one they resorted to on the last occasion when they sought the Assembly consent to the principle of the subvention: they quietly included it in the budget and defied it to reduce or cut it out altogether. As will be remembered, the item in question came before the Assembly at the far end of the budget debate and the implications involved in the new practice of making a grant to the Frontier did not really receive from the Assembly the attention which their importance merited. What was the principle on which such grants were to be made? Could the Central Government's assistance be similarly invoked by a community to whose desire to set itself

up as a separate entity the only stumbling block was that of finance? These and similar points required to be threshed out on the floor of the Assembly but could not be in the peculiar circumstances in which the subvention matter was brought before it. The subject was, so to say, smuggled out of the Assembly's consideration at the time. The better plan would any day have been to have come before the Assembly with a suitable resolution asking for its sanction to the departure involved in making a grant to the Province. Having secured the grant, one fails to understand the reason for all this hurry on the part of the Frontier Province to secure this help from the Central revenues for all time to come. The province is only just ten months old and cannot be said to have sufficient financial experience. There may be some sources of revenue which it has not yet been able to tap or perhaps some others which may manifest themselves in course of time. Supposing that experience shows its present revenue to be capable of considerable expansion at no distant date so that it can eventually make both ends meet without outside help, would it not be detrimental to its dignity that it should continue to be a burden to the Centre? Anyway the almost indecent haste with which this matter is being attempted to be rushed through deserves to be strongly deprecated.

\* \* \*

#### Free Trading in Bombay Cotton Market.

THE news that free trading was resumed in the Bombay cotton market last week has naturally given wide-spread relief. Great dislocation of business was caused during the last ten months in that market by frequent hartals and similar interruptions and the era of peaceful business in cotton implicit in the announcement will be welcomed as much by the public as by businessmen themselves. In this connection it is interesting to remember that the resumption of free trading was preceded by a state-

ment of their attitude made by the principal European firms on the Congress boycott list. This expressed the European merchants' full sympathy with Indian national aspirations and their anxiety for the early restoration of political peace in the country. They did not however content themselves merely with the expression of this pious sentiment but proceeded to indicate how in their opinion the desired end could be attained. "We believe," said they, "that the withdrawal of the Ordinances and civil disobedience would help to achieve the desired peace in all markets." The merchants also endorsed the view of the East India Cotton Association expressed in one of its recent resolutions that "the early release of Mahatma Gandhi would accelerate the end of the trouble." The view here given expression to by the European cotton merchants in Bombay has in fact been the unofficial view unitedly held throughout the land; and it is gratifying to find that even the European merchants are now convinced of the reasonableness and cogency underlying it. We hope that this unequivocal expression of their opinion by the Bombay European merchants following closely upon a succession of similar requests from numberless public bodies and individuals in the country will show to the Government the unwisdom of their unbending attitude towards the Congress and its leader. It is not even now too late for the Government to revise this and produce conditions which will make the co-operation of the Congress available to them in the final and most important stage of Indian constitution-building. The merchants also expressed the hope that the resumption of free trading would lead to the release of all cotton merchants detained in jail under the Ordinances on account of their boycott activities in the cotton market and promised to do all they could to bring about their release. Readers of newspapers need not be told that the cotton merchants have since been restored to liberty.

## THE THIRD R. T. C.

AT long last the Government have been able to announce most of their nominees from India to the third session of the Round Table Conference. While there are several unsatisfactory features about the Indian delegation, reference to which will be made later, it must be acknowledged that, on the whole, the team is satisfactory inasmuch as it includes Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, and Mr. M. R. Jayakar, Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas and Mr. N. C. Kelkar. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar, the political twins of India, have been so closely and continuously associated with the Conference method and have played such leading and conspicuous part in shaping the Conference that their inclusion in the third R. T. C. causes no surprise; their exclusion would be like playing Hamlet with the Prince of Denmark left out. They are both knight-errants of federation and central responsibility. Sir Purshottamdas was a member of the second Round Table Conference, but on his return to India he declined a seat on the Consultative Committee at the instance of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce, which had laid down certain terms to be fulfilled by Government as a condition precedent for the resumption of co-operation by their represen-

tative. Though the conditions have not been met and the Federation has not revised its view, Sir Purshottamdas has happily persuaded himself in his personal capacity to accept a seat on the R. T. C. In whatever capacity he attends, either representative or personal, there can be no doubt that he will be a good champion of India, particularly in the fields of finance, commerce and industry, in which he has few equals. The inclusion of Mr. N. C. Kelkar is a most welcome surprise. He had declined to go to the first Conference, and recently at a public meeting in Poona he laid down certain conditions for cooperation which unfortunately the Government had not seen their way to bring about. It was, therefore, feared that Mr. Kelkar might again refuse an invitation. Happily, he has chosen otherwise and rightly. He presided over the recent session of the Hindu Maha Sabha at Delhi and is, therefore, the acknowledged leader of the Hindu view in politics. He is also closely associated with several organisations of the subjects of Indian States and is in a position, therefore, to present and press their point of view at the Conference. Above all, he is a staunch nationalist, a trained and consummate politician, whose presence

in the Conference will be a tower of strength to the cause of real self-government for India.

Considering that the Communal Award has settled, at any rate for the time being, the communal question, and the questions that still remain to be tackled are constitutional rather than communal, the propriety of sending such a large delegation of exclusively communal Muslims is inexplicable, except on the ground that these Muslims alone could be trusted to join the Tory Britishers in thwarting the Indian demand for immediate central responsibility. Far from giving due recognition to the Nationalist Muslims by the inclusion of some of their representatives in the Conference, the Government have now excluded even Mr. M. A. Jinnah, the one Muslim member of the last two Conferences who was the least communal of a wholly communalist Muslim delegation.

Sir Hubert Carr and Sir Henry Gidney represent the European and Anglo-Indian interests. But the Indian Christians go unrepresented. The representatives of the Non-Brahmins all hail from Madras and they are three: the Raja of Bobbili, Sir Parashuram Patro and Dewan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar. The first two are unmitigated Andhras, which fact is rather significant in view of the recent Non-Brahmin Party squabbles in Tanjore over Andhra vs. Tamil domination of the Party. While Pandit Nanak Chand is no unworthy representative of the Hindus in the Punjab, Sirdar Tara Singh is in no sense a representative of the Sikhs; He is a judge in the Indian State of Patiala and, presumably, had to accept the invitation. It is clear that Government could not secure a single independent representative of the Sikhs in British India, they having declared a boycott on account of their intense dissatisfaction with the Communal Award. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar will find his special vocation as the representative of the depressed classes gone. He won an overwhelming victory in Poona; in London he will be better employed in joining forces with the Indian nationalists in striving for Indian swaraj.

The exclusions and omissions from the Conference are indeed very striking. Indian Christians, Women and Labour go wholly unrepresented. The Conference would have given good opportunities for the Christians and Women to secure the modification of the Communal Award by agreement. In the case of Women, the agreement must be only between the Government and the representative of women, for there is nobody in India opposed to their claim with whom the women can negotiate an agreement. Labour has vital constitutional issues to settle at the Conference, as for instance, whether Labour legislation should be a Federal or State and Provincial subject. It is satisfactory however, that, replying to a question in the Commons on Monday last, Sir Samuel Hoare said that Labour would be given full opportunity for "participating" in the Conference.

The Liberal Party in India has been given very inadequate representation in the personnel of the Conference. It may be admitted that in organised numbers and following the Liberal Party

bears no comparison with either the nationalist Congress or the communal bodies of the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. But it will not be denied that it is the most nationalist body, a characteristic which it shares only with the Indian National Congress, and it has a large number of the ablest students of comparative constitutions and of experienced administrators, the very men who are most competent to take part in the remaining stages of the Conference.

Except for Sarila, none of the Indian States are to be represented in the Conference by the Princes in person on this occasion, though on the previous occasions many of them were so represented. There is no reason however to fear that this change is indicative of any radical change in the policy of the Princes towards federation. The exclusion of Col. Sir K. N. Haksar and the inclusion of Mr. Rushbrook Williams are both as surprising as they are intriguing. The choice of representatives was left to the Princes and the Jam Saheb of Nawanagar chose Mr. Rushbrook Williams, an amazing selection!

The absence of the representatives of the Indian National Congress, and in particular, of Mahatma Gandhi, is perhaps the most regrettable feature of the Conference. We sincerely hope it will be possible even yet to find a place for the Congress in the Conference. It was certainly a mistake on the part of the Government to have stopped the political negotiations which Messrs. Malaviya, Jayakar and Kunzru initiated with the Mahatma soon after the termination of his fast. But the Government soon made it clear that they would consider on merits any applications for interviews with the Mahatma for the purpose of securing peace and cooperation. We wish this opening had been availed of at once. It is never too late. We hope that soon negotiations will be initiated by those who command the respect of the Mahatma as well as the Government of India, and that the latter will give all possible facilities for such negotiations. Whether the Congress and the Government are tired of the tug of war or not, the country is decidedly tired of it and will be thankful for the restoration of peace and co-operation. The interests of the country as a whole must prevail over considerations of prestige of either the Government or the Congress. The Government should not miss the significance of the fact that even their most enthusiastic Indian co-operators do not wish them to humiliate the Congress; nor should the Congress miss the significance of the co-operation of Mr. N. C. Kelkar and Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas.

While every effort should be made to bring the Congress to the Conference, it is not right and wise that persons like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar should, as desired by Messrs. Bertrand Russell, H. J. Laski, and the Indian League, boycott the conference. It was not wholly the fault of the Government that the Congress is not to be represented in the Conference. The Liberals did not approve of the Congress embarking on civil disobedience in January last. If anything, the Congress went against their pleadings. They cannot therefore now with any show of reason refuse co-operation on the ground that the



Congress is not represented in the Conference. The duty of the Liberals is to strive every nerve to bring about reconciliation and peace rather to sulk in defence of causes which they disapprove. They realise however that their task has been rendered infinitely more difficult by the absence of the Congress at the Conference.

### PUNJAB PROVINCIAL COUNCIL.

#### PRESENT AND FUTURE COMPOSITION COMPARED.

ALL the three important communities of the Punjab are dissatisfied with the Premier's Communal Award, each for its own reasons. It is difficult for an ordinary student of politics to understand which community is in the right in its complaint and which is the greatest sufferer by the distribution of seats made by the award. The Sikhs are raising a hue and cry over their loss, as compared with the percentage of their seats in the present Council. The Hindus say that though they are a minority community they have not only not been allowed the weightage that was their due, but got less than even their due on a population basis; while the Muslims say that they have got not the statutory majority which they demanded but only a nominal majority. The following note is written with a view to give a correct perspective of the situation and to clear misunderstandings that have arisen in the Punjab with regard to the distribution of seats in the Council under the new constitution.

2. The present composition of the Council is made up of (1) elected members from the three major communities and (2) representatives of special interests, viz. Landholders, Commerce and Industry and the Punjab University. Further the Government nominates three members to represent the European, the Anglo-Indian and the Indian Christian communities, one for each. The nominations for these minor minorities will be replaced by elections from these communities hereafter. Besides at present one member is nominated to represent industrial labour and one more to represent military service. In addition to this there are two more nominated non-officials and a block of 16 Government officers, all of whom are intended to disappear completely from the future Council. If the elective seats only are taken into account their distribution among the various communities is as follows:—

#### TERRITORIAL CONSTITUENCIES.

1. Muslims	...	32
2. Hindus and others	...	20
3. Sikhs	...	12

64

Special interests (Landlords 4, Commerce 1, Industry 1 and University 1):—

	Land- holders	Com- merce	& Indu- stry	Univer- sity
Muslims	2	0		0
Hindus	1	2*		1
Sikhs	1	0		0

It should be noted that the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh landlords elect their representatives separately.

\*Till 1930 the seat for Commerce was occupied by a European.

The landholders' constituencies are communal.

Thus the total number of elective seats, which was 71, was divided as follows between the various communities as a result of the election of 1930:—

Muslims	34	48%
Hindus	24 (23 till 1930)	33·7% (32·4% till 1930)
Sikhs	13	18·3%

Total ...71 100%

If the five nominated non-officials referred to in para. 2 are also included in the calculation, the distribution will be as given below.

The general communal seats at present are as follows:—

1. Muslims	...	32
2. Hindus and others	...	20
3. Sikhs	...	12
4. European	...	1
5. Anglo-Indian	...	1
6. Indian Christians	...	1

Total 67

Besides the above-mentioned 67 seats four seats assigned to Landholders, two to Commerce and Industry and one to the University and the two nominated seats, one each for labour and military service,—a total of nine seats—are distributed among the three major and one minor communities as follows:—

	Landholders. (Separate elec- torate for each community)	Commerce and Industry.	University.	Labour.	Military.	Total.
Muslims	2	0	0	0	0	2
Hindus	1	2	1	0	0	4
Sikhs	1	0	0	0	1	2
Indian Christians	0	0	0	1	0	1
	4	2	1	1	1	9

Excluding the 18 seats reserved for Government officers and others, there are 67+9=76 seats, which are at present distributed between the various communities as under:

Muslims	32+2=34	or 44·7%	of the total seats
Hindus	20+4=24	or 31·6%	" "
Sikhs	12+2=14	or 18·4%	" "
Europeans	1	} or 5·3%	" "
Anglo-Indians	1		
Indian Christians	1+1=2		

Total ... 76 100%

The composition of the Punjab Council according to the Premier's Communal Award will be as follows:

Muslims	...	86
Hindus	...	43
Sikhs	...	32
Indian Christians	...	2
Europeans	...	1
Anglo-Indians	...	1
Landholders	...	5
University	...	1
Commerce & Industry	...	1
Labour	...	3

For the last four interests, it may be calculated from the experience of the present Council that the seats allotted to them will be divided between the major communities as follows:—

	Land-holders	Labour	University.	Commerce	Total
Muslims	3	2	0	0	5
Hindus	1	1	1	1	4
Sikhs	1	0	0	0	1
Total	5	3	1	1	10

It should be borne in mind that the electorates for all special constituencies will be joint. There will be non-communal elections even for the representatives of the landholders, who are at present chosen by each community separately.

Thus the total number of members of each of the three major communities and the percentage they bear to the total number of seats in the Council will be as follows:—

Muslims	...	86 + 5 = 91	52%
Hindus	...	43 + 4 = 47	26.9%
Sikhs	...	32 + 1 = 33	18.8%
Indian Christians	...	2	2.3%
Europeans	...	1	
Anglo-Indians...	...	1	
		175	100%

In the following table are shown the population figures as per the latest census of 1931, the percentage of communal seats in the present Council and the percentage to the total strength in the future Council, for each of the three major communities:—

	Population in millions	Percentage of pop. to total population	Percentage to communal seats in Council	Percentage to total seats in future Council	Excess or deficit of Col. 5 over Col. 3
Muslims	13.33	56.5	44.8	52.0	- 4.5
Hindus	6.77	28.7	31.6	26.9	- 1.8
Sikhs	2.065	13.0	18.4	18.8	+ 5.8
Christian communities...	.415	1.8	5.3	2.3	+ 0.5
	23.58	100.0	100.1	100.0	

Thus it will be seen that though Muslims form 56.5 per cent. of the total population, they are given 52 per cent. of seats. Their majority is preserved and yet they have surrendered 4.5 per cent. to the minority communities, viz. Sikhs and Christians only. The Hindus, though they are 28.7 per cent. of the population, have got only 26.9 per cent. seats, or 1.1 per cent. less than what they should have had even on a mere population basis. As a minority community they ought not to have been made to suffer, by not only being denied weightage, but by being given less than their bare population basis.

The Sikhs contend that though their population ratio is only 13 per cent. their voting ratio is as much as 24 per cent. and that the proportion of land

revenue and irrigation revenue they pay is still higher. But at a time when adult suffrage is in the air and a literacy qualification is proposed to be added to the property qualification for the franchise the population ratio should determine, to a great extent, the proportion of seats to be given to the various communities and not property. For 13 per cent. of population, the Sikhs have got 18.4 per cent. of the seats. They cannot, with justice, claim more than what has already fallen to their lot under the Award. Moreover, while they hold at present 18.4 per cent. seats, they will get hereafter 18.8 per cent. seats under the new constitution. They should not grudge the Muslims the proportion of seats which they will obtain under the new constitution and should not base their agitation against the Muslims merely on the ground of their having secured a majority in the new Council (not entirely due to separate electorates).

A. V. THAKKAR.

### INDIAN CHRISTIANS AND JOINT ELECTORATES.

THE Premier's communal award has done a great service to India in awaking the national consciousness of the people of different communities. Some of those who were ardent champions of separate electorates have begun to feel that communalism in politics is bound to prove disastrous to the best interests of the nation and that it should be eschewed at all costs. In the Premier's award every community gets a taste of the separate electorate, even the sections like Indian Christians and women who have not been much enamoured of it. Efforts are being made by the leaders of the Indian Christian community to present a united front against the provision of separate electorates contained in the award. This happy and timely move in the right direction is sure to meet with the success it deserves. It is hoped that the conference of leaders which is to meet on 28th and 29th instants will be quite representative in character and that it will clarify the issue and decide the question of representation once for all in favour of joint electorates.

Those who have bestowed some attention on the condition of 'minor minorities' in India will realise that the Indian Christian community has been consistently denouncing the system of separate electorates for the last several years at the annual sessions of the All-India Christian Conference. The late Mr. K. T. Paul, who was for a long time the unchallenged leader of the community, declared at the Round Table Conference as follows: "Since we stand for peace and concord and since we are most anxious to secure the coalescing of all communities in national solidarity, we are in principle opposed to separate electorates." Dr. Datta, a representative of the Indian Christians at the last Round Table Conference, spoke very strongly against communal electorates. In April last, long before the communal award was released, the leading Indian Christians of the United Provinces issued a statement in which they strongly expressed their unswerving faith in joint electorates. Leading Christian organs of public opinion like the "Guardian", the "Catholic Leader" and the "Indian Witness" have recorded their views decidedly against separate electorates.

The Simon Commission, who at any rate cannot be accused of anti-Christian feeling, recorded its views about Christians and communal representation

as follows: "We would in any case much prefer reservation of seats for Indian Christians and we hope when details come to be worked out, this may be found to be possible."

Do the Indian Christians constitute a weak, uneducated and disorganised community so as to need unhealthy kind of protection through the separate electorate? No, the late Mr. K. T. Paul said at the Round Table Conference. "In the matter of education and training, however, we have done our best to prepare ourselves so that at the present time we occupy a position of advantage among the various communities in the matter of public employment, participation in educational work and public utility services."

The Madras Government in their memorandum to the Statutory Commission stated as follows: "It is true that in their relation with other communities the Indian Christian population do not represent a political problem of importance anything like such as arises in connection with the Mahomedan community. Indian Christians have attained a high average level of education. They are not inadequately represented in the public services and with a few exceptions, their representatives in the Legislative Council have acquitted themselves well. They are keen and vigorous and being largely autonomous in their religious and social concerns have much experience in affairs. It might be that they could hold their own even if merged in the general electorate." It is true that in Madras the Christians have been given separate electorates by the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, but it should not be forgotten that the Joint Authors of the Reforms in their report condemned separate electorates which they said "perpetuated class division, opposed the teaching of history, stereotyped existing relations and constituted a very serious hindrance to the development of the self-governing principle." The representative of the Christian community at the All-Parties Convention in 1928 confessed that the method of communal representation had been tried and it was not only found wanting but was also eating into the very vitals of the nation.

The evils of separate electorates, especially for a minority community, are nowhere expressed in stronger and clearer terms than in the Nehru Report. "Everybody knows that separate electorates are bad for the growth of the national spirit but everybody does not realise equally well that they are still worse for a minority community. They make the majority wholly independent of the minority and its votes are usually hostile to it. Under separate electorates, therefore, the chances are that the minority will always have to face a hostile majority which can always by sheer force of numbers override the wishes of the minority. Separate electorates then benefit the majority community. Extreme communalists flourish thereunder. Separate electorates must therefore be discarded completely as a condition precedent to any national system of representation."

Even in the matter of separate electorates the communal award is neither consistent nor uniform. The Premier realises that the formation of Indian Christian constituencies covering the whole area of a province will be impracticable. So he provides in the award for both kinds of electorates, separate as well as general. Only in one or two selected areas in a province Christian voters will vote in a communal constituency. In others Christians will have joint electorates. This provision for entirely two different types of electorates will naturally divide the Christian community into two sections and develop two different types of mentality driving the two divisions to opposite poles. The only

remedy to prevent their disruption and consequent demoralisation is to do away with communal electorates altogether.

We have seen that from all points of view separate electorates are injurious to the Christian community as well as to the nation as a whole. Nobody will be anxious to perpetuate such an evil. Since the publication of the communal award influential meetings of Christians have been held in important places to condemn it. Thus there is great unanimity of opinion about the undesirability of communal representation through separate electorates. There is an unholy attempt in some quarters to create a division between Catholic and Protestants in this matter. The solidarity and strength of the Christian community should not be lost on account of a difference of opinion on the issue separate electorates, which if harmful to the Protestants is equally harmful to the Catholics. Every patriotic and self-respecting Christian, whether he be a Catholic or Protestant, would naturally feel that the solidarity of his community is preferable to a system of electorates which isolates him from the other communities and through which his community itself may show disruptive tendencies and unhealthy rivalries.

Now, it is probable that some Christians will demand an increase in the number of seats to compensate for the abandonment of separate electorates. This will complicate the problem and make its solution extremely difficult if not utterly impossible. Such kind of higgling and bargaining is bound to demoralise the political life of the country and the Christians should not be a party to it. No one is justified in gaining at the expense of another. The Christian community should prove that it can solve the problem on its merits independently of the views and fancies of the other communities. It is very easy to solve the question provided the leaders of the community view it with a broad outlook and sincere interest in the larger welfare not only of their community but their country as well. We give below a table showing the representation of Indian Christians under different circumstances. It may be helpful in arriving at a settlement of the question. The percentage under the Simon recommendation is has on the total strength being 250 in major and 200 in minor provinces.

Representation of Indian Christians in Provincial Councils.

Province	Population Ratio	Seats according to Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms		According to Simon Commission		Premier's Communal Award	
	1931	Number	Percentage to total	Number	Percentage to total	Number	Percentage to total
Madras ...	3.8	5	3.7	5	2	9	4.2
Bombay ...	1.4	1	.9	2	.8	3	1.5
Bengal ...	.3	1	.7	2	.8	2	.8
U. P. ...	.4	1	.8	2	1	2	.8
Punjab ...	1.7	1	1.0	2	1	2	1.1
Bihar and Orissa ...	.9	1	1.0	2	1	2	1.1
C. P. ...	.4	nil	nil	1	.5	nil	nil
Assam ...	2.3	nil	nil	1	.5	1	.9

V. R. NAYANAR.



## THE MENACE OF OTTAWA.

THE text of the agreement reached at Ottawa between the delegates of the Government of India and those of the United Kingdom has now been published and the public has had some time to digest its contents. Be it said, in justice to the authors of the agreement, that they place their achievement in the only proper light in which it can be put when they say that it was to safeguard the interests of India's export trade that they had to enter into negotiations with Great Britain. In viewing their task in so narrow a manner, however, the delegates can hardly receive the approbation of the majority of thinking Indians. Though the political and theoretical aspects of a scheme of preference could not be present to the minds of the negotiators at Ottawa to the same extent to which similar considerations would sway the mass of Indian public and scientific opinion respectively, still there was no excuse for the delegates' complete neglect of such considerations. Let us leave alone the patent constitutional impropriety, not to use a stronger term, of the present Government of India, even acting with the Legislature which is a packed body where the support of 23 out of 95 elected Indian members of the Assembly suffices to secure a victory for Government, 'voluntarily granting' preference to the United Kingdom whose Parliament makes and unmakes the India Government. Let us only count, with all the moderation that we can command, the inevitable advantages that British business secures in India because of the Government of the country being 'British'. Does not this fact count in the reckoning at least as much as the prospects of the development of Indian trade in British Colonies of which much has been made in the delegates' report?

The delegates, perhaps taking their lead in this respect from the head of the British delegation, naively assert that the agreement should be judged as a measure calculated to retain the present extent or to lead to further expansion of India's foreign trade. Whoever suffered till now from such an innocence of the principle of exchange as to believe that by increasing the obstacles in the way of non-Empire countries the total trade of the Empire countries, including India, would increase! India and the U. K. have both the major portion of their trade with non-empire countries. Whatever else might be doubtful about the merits of the Ottawa agreements, certainly they are not going to increase the total volume of Empire trade, they will necessarily divert its course, and very probably they will reduce its extent, as the additional fields to be gained within the Empire will fall far short of the loss of markets sustained elsewhere by direct restrictions and intensified competition.

Those who are politically-minded will be well justified in emphasising the impropriety of considering schemes of preference at this critical stage in the constitutional progress of the country. So also those who have some idea of the consensus of world opinion, against the extensive and intensive increase of tariffs will see just reason to deplore the present

determined lead in the wrong direction. The agreement, however, claims no merits on either of these considerations. Its authors say plainly that, in their opinion if no price were offered for British preferences the latter would be withdrawn on the 15th of November, and that they feel that the price in the shape of Indian preferences that they have agreed to pay is a reasonable price. It is just here, however, that the details of the agreement are most damaging to its authors. Details must be discussed with the help of such figures as are available. But the authors of the agreement and its semi-official supporters exhibit a very curious outlook on this approach to the subject. For instance, they have made much of the disparity between a figure of about £18 million, on which India is committed by the agreement to grant preferences, and £38 million, on which Great Britain is engaged to grant preferences to India. The facts that already India grants substantial preferences on the two principal British imports, viz., textiles and steel, amounting in all to £25 million, and that this was taken into account while settling the terms of the agreement, are left to be separately recorded. And all this is followed by a statement that the agreement must be judged not by the record of exact figures but by general tendencies revealed by them. We quite agree with such figures as are available and also with the general tendencies revealed by them, what is the conclusion to which we are inevitably driven? That we are offering much more to Great Britain than what Great Britain is offering or can offer to us. We would desire to retain our share in the British markets and to expand it if possible. To achieve this an agreement with Great Britain is desirable as there is intense competition between India and other countries, within and without the Empire. But must not this very prospect of competition put us on our guard against loss of our non-Empire markets, and must we not see that we pay no higher price than what the 'goods' deserve? The authors of the agreement and its supporters are quick to recognise that even jute, lac, myrabolans, etc. are not invulnerable monopolies of India; but they are slow to recognise that if our export position is vulnerable in the U. K. with a comparatively low tariff it is still more vulnerable in other countries with their higher tariffs.

We are convinced that in the long run the scheme of preference will not be in the interest of the Indian producers. The real producers of India's present exports are dumb, unorganised and ignorant. There is an army of Indian and foreign intermediaries between them and their customers abroad. Most of the import and export business is in the hands of foreign firms, chiefly British, and whether it is a premium on the one or the other, it is all the same to them: their commissions are assured. Such of the genuine industrial producers as exist are mostly taken up with manufactures for the internal markets. In so far as we have an export trade in manufactures it is principally with the colonies and it is not difficult

for the interests affected to see their immediate advantage in the present agreement. They should know, however, that any trade that they might retain or capture aboard will be lost to them here, as the enhancement of prices will curtail the effective purchasing power of the Indian consumers. Many business men are, however, like many politicians : they care for the day leaving to-morrow and the day after to take care of themselves. But these are none the less real and must be counted with in framing policies. The comparative passivity with which the Indian business community has received the agreement is, however, to be accounted for not only, nor yet principally, by their shortsightedness or ignorance. They have shown themselves pretty keen when their interests are touched. The memories of the Currency League agitation are yet green and the cry over Japan's competition with Bombay is yet in the air. But the facts that preferences to British products are to be granted chiefly by a general enhancement of import duties and that protection granted to Indian industries is not affected by the agreement seem to have reconciled Indian business interests to the scheme of preference, of which even a mention was to them anathema before a few years. Both the majority and the minority of the Indian Fiscal Commission, which was fully representative of Indian industrial interests, had pronounced against any general scheme of Imperial preference. In the Ottawa agreement it is just this general scheme of preference to British goods that has been approved of by the delegates of the Government of India. Our Government has become a whole-hearted supporter of preference before it has ever cared to grant ungrudging and adequate protection to Indian industries!

Herein lies the menace of Ottawa. It is one further instance of the power of a non-responsible government being utilised to place burdens on its citizens for the advantage of a foreign interest. It is another step in the direction of restrictive economic policy, taken even without the expert counsel of the Tariff Board, the constituted advisers of Government in all such matters. It is calculated to displace Indian products from non-Empire markets. And lastly, and principally, it is designed to place unjustifiable burdens on the Indian consumers, who will have to bear the double load of protection to national and preference to Empire industries. All those who have the interests of national industry and the general consumers at heart must resist this attempt at hustling the present legislature of the country into a general acceptance of the scheme of preference. The extra-legal advantages offered to Great Britain by a 'British' Government of this country and the preferences already provided on steel and piecegoods ought to induce the U. K. not to place India on the foreign list on the 15th of November. A fully representative Indian government can alone consider such questions with that degree of national sympathy which must guide all preferential arrangements. Great Britain's refusal to accede to such a suggestion, if and when made, will be considered unreasonable even as a business deal. Granting that the Government of India is eager to have the matter disposed of without any reference

to coming political changes, the least that the public and the legislature is justified in claiming is that the matter be referred to a competent commission, or failing that to the Tariff Board itself. If the agreement as it stands is carried through the present legislature it can hardly claim the willing and abiding support of the large body of Indian citizens.

When the scheme of preference comes up for detailed expert analysis some essential tests must be applied to it. Firstly, the total sacrifice demanded from the Indian consumers must be at least approximately commensurate with the estimated gain, present and prospective, offered by the U. K. Not only on present figures but even on considerations of future movements of trade, the very wide preference agreed to by the representatives of the Government of India stands condemned. Secondly, preference should be granted in such a way as to minimise the chances of foreign retaliation. This as also the last object will be best secured by confining preference to a few principal articles of British imports into India. For instance, if preference is confined, to begin with, to piecegoods and steel, not only will the burden on the consumer be easily assessable, and we are persuaded enough consideration will be offered to Great Britain for all that that country has to offer to us, but what is more, the retaliatory action of a country like Japan can be counteracted by specific measures such as the consumption of more cotton within the country and development of exports to Lancashire of superior Indian cotton. A comprehensive and indiscriminate preference places the maximum of burden on the consumer and produces the utmost irritation abroad. So also such articles as machinery, mill stores, certain metals, electric goods, chemicals and drugs, scientific and other apparatus, paper, motors used for industrial transport, and many other similar commodities ought to be summarily removed from the preference schedules. Many of these are producers' goods and on certain others like paper and electric goods the intellectual and general progress of the country very vitally depends. Much of the progress, for instance, in mechanical transport by road brought about in recent years is due to the imports of motor vehicles from the U. S. A. So also German and American machinery and scientific appliances have been found to be of an inestimable advantage to the rising industries of India. It will be simply suicidal, industrially and culturally, to accept the present agreement at Ottawa in which not only is more quantitative advantage offered than is economically justifiable, but an indirect yet effective obstacle is placed in the way of the general progress of the country.

D. G. KARVE.

## Our London Letter.

( BY AIR MAIL. )

( From Our Correspondent. )

LONDON, 14th October.

### CONSERVATIVE REACTIONS

I HAVE been at some pains to discover the facts underlying the debate at the Conservative Conference.

at Blackpool on the Indian constitutional problem. It will be recalled that Mrs. Chisholm on the part of the Epping Division Branch of the party, stimulated no doubt by Mr. Winston Churchill (who has a special article in today's *Daily Mail* entitled "India may still be saved from Disaster"), moved a resolution deploring the extension of democratic government to an unfit country. To this Mr. W. Kirkpatrick moved an amendment designed to secure Tory support for the programme outlined in the Prime Minister's White Paper and subsequent official declarations. The first fact to notice is that the amendment was adopted and the resolution rejected. The *Morning Post* and the *Daily Mail* solved their wounds by insisting that the amendment was carried by a small majority and merely to save the face of the Government and that, in fact, Sir Samuel Hoare ate humble pie rather than subject the Government to a formal defeat. This view has of course been sedulously cultivated by the diehard group in the Conservative Party led by Mr. Churchill and Lord Lloyd, and voiced in *The Times* this week by Lord Salisbury, who is anxious that the country should not proceed beyond the narrow limits of provincial autonomy. Even Sir John Simon is no longer committed to that view, and is a party to the White Paper policy.

The real fact, however, is, I am assured by those who were best able to assess Conservative psychology, that the party Conference gave far more credit to the Government position than anything that the reactionaries and their Press associates have led us, and you in India, to suppose. I am reliably informed, and this is emphasised in a letter in to-day's *Times* by Lady Gwendoline Iveagh (who is closely connected by marriage with Lord Irwin), that the spirit of the Conference was, on the whole, very friendly to the Government proposals, especially after hearing Sir Samuel Hoare, who is reported to have managed his part with considerable dexterity. A very high authority told me to-day that, in his view, Conservative opinion was steadily veering from the Churchill standpoint to that of the Government, especially when faced with the necessity of providing a practicable alternative to the official proposals and commitments. One other tendency is worthy of notice. I have had it reported from more than one reliable source, and it was emphasised again to-day by the authority that I consulted. It is that Mr. Churchill, in spite of his breeziness, his eloquence, his invective and the subtle daring of his attack, has really lost most of his influence with the younger Tories in the House of Commons. If this, as I have every reason to believe to be the case, is the correct estimate of the Parliamentary situation it is a political development of the highest importance. Youth understands the aspirations of youth, and the young Conservative of to-day is far from holding the hide-bound and unreasonable prejudices of the last generation. It is true that the Indian spokesmen for the Youth of India will not themselves be young men, but it is difficult to believe that they will not be able to expound the aspirations of young India in language that is comprehensible to young Conservative England. On the whole, my authority was inclined to take a much more cheerful view of the possibilities of Parliamentary action at a later stage than one might be inclined to anticipate from a distance.

Moreover, it may not be altogether an unmixed disadvantage to the cause of Indian constitutional progress that the Liberal Ministers have left the Government. They are equally committed to the White Paper policy, and there is not the slightest reason to doubt that they will continue to support it through thick and thin. It may well be that an

administration now more preponderantly Conservative than ever will have less difficulty in convincing the Party rank and file that what it proposes is good Conservative doctrine, and it is astonishing how often the Tory Party has swallowed the titbits of a Liberal programme, thoroughly satisfied that they were part of their own original programme. In any event the Liberals, with the exception of the Simon group, being now outside the Government, will be freer to "ginger up" the latter, without being accused of disloyalty by the Tory rank and file.

In writing of the Liberal attitude, I am constrained to draw attention to a letter in, of all papers, *The Morning Post* by, of all people, Sir Eyan Cotton, alleging that the trouble in England is that politicians will not allow the strong and stable Executive in India to function, and are devising a scheme which is calculated to wipe it out of existence. Who would have thought that a son of Sir Henry Cotton, and a former Editor of the newspaper *India*, the Congress organ in London, would have found a pillow in the columns of the *Morning Post*, and made into his bed-fellows the reactionary Tory circle that that organ of ultra-Conservatism so faithfully serves.

Miss Mary Pickford, M. P., has done her bit in to-day's *Times* to remove a fear that if left unallayed may do the cause of Indian constitutional progress much harm. It is being circulated that the Lothian Committee has recommended the extension of the franchise to include some 36,000,000, voting for one Legislature at one time. She is at pains to point out that 8½ million is the maximum electorate proposed for any Legislature, and that the larger figure quoted is the proposed electorate for all the Legislatures put together. Miss Pickford is wise in realising the ease with which ignorant opinion can be alarmed and stampeded, and the necessity for putting vital facts in their proper perspective.

#### THE SIMLA BLUNDER.

The more the facts relating to the sudden stoppage of the political conversations with Gandhiji are investigated in the light of the events there, of which specific information has reached here by this air mail, and the correlated facts on this side are examined, the more portentous appears to be the blunder committed in closing the jail doors once more firmly upon the Mahatma. I have the most excellent authority for stating that the action of the Government of India took the British Government by surprise, and it would not be indiscreet to suggest that the surprise was not a pleasant one. Rumours apparently emanating from Simla, and circulated by the local correspondent of the *Times*, that precise guarantees ought to be exacted from Mahatmajī and his colleagues against a revival of civil disobedience if, as it must some day be called off and the participants to be set at large are strongly discredited in well-informed quarters here. It is not desired in British official circles to impose impossible conditions upon Mahatmajī, or to submit him to humiliation and indignity that would be resented by his compatriots in political circles far distant from the Congress. Even now it would not be surprising to find that the India Office has little information as to the reasons and the circumstances for the sudden ban imposed upon the unofficial, spontaneous and non-committal talks at Yerawda. Such information as has reached here this week from responsible persons in India addressed both to private individuals and to eminent personages in this country, leads to the belief that the Mahatma was particularly friendly disposed towards discovering a basis for renewed co-operation. That the generous instincts of himself and his compatriots roused by the swift response of the British Govern-

ment to the depressed classes pact should have been affronted and killed in this irresponsible and unimaginative manner is for the present an inexplicable enigma, of which the key lies elsewhere than in Whitehall. I think that I am in a position to say positively that the Secretary of State is entitled to be completely exonerated of all connection with the matter, and that it is doing him an injustice to suppose that had he known of it in time he would have given it any encouragement. At the same time formal negotiation between Mahatmaji and the Government is not in the least contemplated in official quarters. At any rate the Government themselves are very unlikely to take any positive steps in that direction. That merely imposes the duty upon friendly persons to explore the possibilities of unofficial and non-committal conversations in order to see how far the advantage gained in the earlier conversations can be turned to constructive uses, with a view to the relief of the present impasse, and the re-establishment of peace in India. In order to secure the possibility of restoring communication with the distinguished occupant of Yerawda Jail, a good deal of delicate bridge-building will have to be done, and I believe from the sources of information at my disposal that friendly interveners here have already begun their part of the task. In any event it is felt in many quarters that Gandhiji should be given the fullest opportunity of seeing that the Poona Pact is implemented by the caste Hindus, and opportunities should be made, and probably will be in the near future, to enable those directly concerned to give effect to the agreement and to have the necessary freedom of access to the Mahatma. The mere fact of the restoration of communications would create fresh opportunities for public opinion in India to assert itself positively in favour of producing those conditions of peace that will make the agreement effective and enduring.

## Reviews.

### DARWIN.

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF CHARLES DARWIN.**  
By His son SIR FRANCIS DARWIN. (Watts & Co., London.) 20cm. 154p. 1/-

CHARLES DARWIN belongs to the heroes of the past, and we should be failing in the historical sense if we do not extract as much interest from these pages as most of us have, perhaps, managed to get from Caesar's Commentaries. But unlike Caesar, Darwin's "I" is above suspicion, and his epitaph, if he had had the choice in the matter, would most probably have been, "I came into this world, I saw a great deal of it, but I have not concluded anything about it, much less conquered it." His mission was not so much specified and didactic as might appear from his original writings, at least as much as the popular interpretations of those writings made them appear, but much more that of a humble, selective quest after truth. In the "Origin of Species" he was a little empirical, a devotee of science as such, but here he is undoubtedly his own self, a disciple half of faith and half of reason, almost monkish in his catholicity.

If curiosity is the mother of sins, then Darwin did more than any other scientist to promote the cult of Original Sin. Curiosity, alternating with vigorous personal "sweat of the brain", formed the very

life-breath of this nineteenth-century prophet. Sir Francis Darwin (the scientist's son, himself a hero-worshipper) in his apologetic way gives some revelations into the character of his father, as he was in the inner circle of his life, which should set at rest, once for all, any doubts that might still be troubling the cautious good man whether this was not another of those iconoclasts who came to destroy, and not to fulfil. Here is a paragraph:

"Another source of conviction in the existence of God, connected with the reason and not with the feelings, impresses me" (Charles, and not Sir Francis) "as having much more weight. This follows from the extreme difficulty or rather impossibility of conceiving this immense and wonderful universe, including man with his capacity of looking far backwards and far into futurity, as the result or blind chance of necessity. When thus reflecting, I feel compelled to look to First Cause having an intelligent mind in some degree analogous to that of man; and I deserve to be called a Theist. This conclusion was strong in my mind about the time, as far as I can remember, when I wrote the *Origin of Species*, and it is since that time, that it has very gradually, with many fluctuations, become weaker. But then arises the doubt: can the mind of man, which has, as I fully believe, been developed from a mind as low as that possessed by the lowest animals, be trusted when it draws such grand conclusions?"

The whole of Darwin was a big question-mark to his, and to a greater extent to our, generation. He has left us, as his rich legacy, the same big interrogation: Whom say ye that Man is from; whence; from what?

A. MADHAVA MENON.

## SHORT NOTICE.

**INDIAN DUST.** By PHILIP ERNEST RICHARDS. (Allen & Unwin.) 1932. 20cm. 272p. 6/-  
IN "Indian Dust" one finds an interesting record through the medium of letters written to friends and relatives overseas, of one man's reactions to the totally strange environment of new work in India. Its literary charm, its humour, together with the author's sincere regard for the people and his keen appreciation of the beautiful in India makes it a book well worth reading.

L. A. F.

## Just Published.

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