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Topics of the Week.

Gandhiji's Retirement.

MAHATMA GANDHI, finding that there are fundamental differences of opinion between himself and most other Congressmen on crucial matters of policy, has decided to retire from the Congress after the next session is over. If he had pressed his proposals to a vote, he would in all probability have obtained a majority, but he realises, as we ourselves ventured to point out before, that such outward conformity, without inward convictions to support it, would only have aggravated the evils he set out to cure. The views expressed to him by prominent Congressmen have convinced him that a real agreement on major issues is impossible between him and other Congressmen, and therefore he thinks that the only course for him in the circumstances is to retire from the Congress. It is, in our opinion, a wise decision.

No Longer a Sin, either Mortal or Venial.

HE has therefore dropped his proposals in regard to the spinning franchise and such other things, but is going to propose other amendments with a view to preventing the frauds that were practised on a wide scale in Congress elections. The amendments seem to be generally acceptable to the Congress and will at least minimise the evil which they are intended to remedy. The Board which he intends to set up for the promotion of village industries is also capable of doing great good. In this statement there are references to Council entry which show how steadily he is moving to the right, forswearing his former principles in so doing. At first entry into the Councils was to him a deadly sin.

It was not only unwise and unpatriotic to go into the Councils, but immoral. This objection was dropped when he found it necessary to take legislative help in his Harijan campaign. Then it became both wise and expedient and moral to receive support of legislators for particular pieces of legislation, though it was still sinful on one's part to become a legislator oneself. After the new move of Dr. Ansari, a new aspect was put on the whole question. It will still be a sin to go into the Councils; only it was not a mortal sin, but merely a venial one. It will detract much from perfect righteousness but will not altogether take away sanctifying grace. A Congressman who could not resist the temptation of going into the Councils was to be pitied for his weakness, but not to be too severely censured. Now, however, support of Council entry has become a moral duty for all Congressmen. From sinful it has become righteous. Mahatmaji's constancy to principle is very much to be admired!

Mahatma's Inconsistency.

THE inconsistency of Mahatma Gandhi's position in regard to the States is best brought out in his reply to Mr. Amritlal Sheth, a leader of the States' people, which has now been published. In this reply the Mahatma reiterates the view formerly expressed by him that the States' people are not intruders in the Congress, nor are they there on sufferance, but that they have an equal right with British Indians to be members of the Congress and to share with them the privileges and burdens of such membership.

BUT if this view is correct, then it follows that the Congress must not confine its activities to British India alone, but must extend them to the Indian States too. As it fights for the political freedom of British India, so must it fight for that of the States. There can be no room for the policy of non-interference in the States that he has been advocating for some months past. The Indian States may be foreign territory to British India; but they are not foreign territory to the Congress, for the Congress includes both the States' people and British Indians and gives them an identical status in its organisation.

IF the hands-off policy is to be pursued in regard to the States, as the Mahatma desires, then it follows that the States' people must be rigorously excluded from the Congress; or if they are to be made members, they cannot be full members like British Indians, but semi-demi-members, members for courtesy's sake. Admit them to membership, and the Congress must take up their cause as it has taken up the cause of British Indians. Or exclude them from membership, and then non-interference will not only be legitimate but imperative. These are the only two possible alternatives; to mix them up is to confuse the issue.

THE *Tribune* has a very penetrating paragraph on this subject in its issue of the 14th inst. It says—

"The latest statement made by Mahatma Gandhi on the subject of the eligibility of Indian States people for membership of the Congress hardly helps to elucidate the issue raised on behalf of these people. 'It surprises me,' says the Mahatma, 'that anybody should think it possible that I do not consider them to be an integral part of the Indian nation. Of course, they are, even as Indians residing in other parts of geographical India are. Though we are under different systems of government, surely we are one. Indeed, there is a definite provision in the Congress constitution for their being enrolled as members, and those who subscribe to the Congress objective and carry out the rules governing its membership have as much right to be enrolled as members as any other Indian.'

"The first part of the statement is wholly non-contentious. That the States people are as much a part of the Indian nation, the Greater Indian Nation, if that term is preferred, as the people of other parts of India, no one can deny. But when it is said that they have the same right to be members of the Congress and on the same terms as any other Indian, are they not entitled to inquire what *Purna Swaraj* in their case means or is going to mean, and, if it means the same thing in their case as it means in ours, how the great body of which they are full and equal members can avoid waging the same struggle for it in their case as it does in the case of other parts of geographical India?"

Non-renewal of Ordinance Legislation.

AN influential section of Indian opinion firmly holds the view that as the Congress has virtually abandoned civil disobedience, the Government should respond to the peaceful gesture by a declaration that the Ordinance Acts would not be renewed after their present life expires. Sir Phiroze Sethna is by far the most distinguished exponent of this view. He first put it forward in an article in the *Hindustan Review* to which attention was called in these columns a few weeks ago and has since pressed it on the attention of Government by making a motion to that effect in the Council of State.

AS our readers will remember, repressive legislation designed to cope with the civil disobedience movement is both central and provincial and, unless revived in the meanwhile, is due to expire at the end of next year both at the centre and in all provinces except N.-W. F. Province where its lease of life is longer by two years. What Sir Phiroze Sethna and people of his way of thinking want is that Government should publicly bind themselves not to ask for its renewal after the expiry of the life at present allowed to it. If unfortunately the civil disobedience movement is restarted between now and the time when the ordinance legislation is due to expire, Sir Phiroze Sethna's demand of course falls to the ground. His resolution omits to mention the time exactly when such a declaration is to be made; but it is to be presumed that it is to be made as soon as possible.

SO far as can be seen, the principal objection urged against such a course on behalf of Government is that the legislation, though primarily concerned with the civil disobedience movement, is also aimed at the communist and terrorist movements and though the former may be said to have come to the end of its tether, the same cannot be said about the latter two. It would therefore be unwise for Government to promise in advance to deprive itself of this handy weapon before they successfully run communism and terrorism to earth.

APART from the opposition which the request for a declaration met from Government, it is also likely to fail to commend itself to some sections of non-official opinion. To them the demand might seem to presuppose a want of confidence in the strength of the Indian legislature. How? If those who make the demand for that kind of declaration felt sure that in case the Government came before the legislature with proposals for renewed life to the Ordinance legislation their proposals would be turned down, it is hardly probable that they would address such a request to a foreign Government. If the popular part of the Indian legislature at any rate could be relied upon to lend not the slightest countenance to such proposals, where is the need, it may be asked, to appeal to the good-will of the Government? If only the legislature faithfully represented public opinion, all fear of such legislation being again foisted on the country would be at an end. We do not know if this aspect of the case has been thrust on Sir Phiroze Sethna's attention and if so, how he and those who agree with him try to meet it.

Reciprocity towards States' Subjects.

THE claims of reciprocity towards States' subjects in regard to appointments in Government service were pressed on Government by Mr. Raza Ali by means of a resolution he recently moved on the subject in the Upper House of the Indian legislature. From his experience as a member of the Public Service Commission the mover was convinced that a large number of Indian States' subjects were able to find their way into Government service, particularly in the Audit and Accounts Departments. The Military Accounts Department, the Imperial Customs Service, the Telegraph Engineering and Wireless branches of the Posts and Telegraphs, to name only a few were, in his view, among the services which had a considerable proportion of members who hailed from the States. No statistics to corroborate or to disprove the mover's impression could be produced, none being available. But the Home Secretary was able to quote figures in regard to the Civil Service from which it appeared that out of the 228 Indians who were admitted into that service between 1925 and 1933 only 18 or 8 per cent. belonged to the States. If this proportion is on inquiry found to hold good in regard to the other departments mentioned by Mr. Ali, it might be said that he was trying to make a mountain out of a molehill. But in the absence of statistics his impression was that a large number of States' subjects succeeded in displacing British Indians specially in some departments.

HE had no objection to the entry of States' subjects into British Indian Government's service as such. But if, as he believed, there are States which refused to take British Indians into their service, Mr. Ali wanted that the subjects of such States should be debarred from entering Government service in British India. He was unable to assert that in any States explicit prohibition against the entertainment of British Indians existed, but the insistence upon preference to the States' subjects virtually amounted to the same thing. All that Mr. Ali asked was that in the case of such States British India should similarly give preference to British Indians. What is the number of such States it is not possible to say in the absence of statistics which are, at the instance of Mr. Ali, being collected by Government. Even if they show that the problem is not a serious one, praise is due to Mr. Ali for calling public attention to this important point.

Indian Students' Difficulties in England.

THE report of the India Stores Department for 1933-34 is published during the last few days. It is seen from it that the complaint about Indian students not being given adequate facilities for practical technical training by British manufacturing firms, even though vast orders for India's requirements are placed with them, has not yet been removed. Where, as in the electrical trade applications for training outrun the facilities, nobody can be blamed if Indian young men have to go disappointed. But such is not the case with many other British firms which refuse to admit young Indians to their precincts for training in manufacturing processes.

* * *

IN their case at least the motto "no training, no orders" can be put into effect without any breach of propriety. In fact a promise to make suitable provision for training facilities to Indian students should be made a prior condition to the acceptance of the tender of any British or other firm or of placing any large scale orders of Indian requirements with them. This has been the insistent demand of Indian opinion all these years. But it is not yet given effect to, for reasons best known to the authorities. Nor is Indian opinion made acquainted with the difficulties in the way of its effectuation, if there are any. The stores Department would really help towards a solution of this knotty problem if in its next report it gave the public an idea of the objections on which the refusal by British firms of such facilities to the future citizens of this country is based.

* * *

DURING the year under report the applications for such facilities handled by the Department numbered 136, including those carried forward from the preceding year. Only in 76 cases did the Department succeed in securing such facilities! Seven applications were withdrawn, 38 were undisposed of by the year-end, and in 15 instances the Department found itself absolutely powerless to make itself useful to Indians who had gone to England at enormous expense for acquiring an insight into British processes of manufacture. If the Department adopted as its rule of conduct the motto referred to above, its potentiality for use to Indian young men would doubtless stand considerably higher.

* * *

Articles

LEAVE THE DECISION TO NON-OFFICIALS.

MR. NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN'S speech at Edgbaston contains as plain a hint to Indians as any Minister of the Crown can give that the proposals of reform that will be finally embodied in the India Bill will be a very much weaker version of the White Paper proposals. That speech was addressed mainly to the British Conservative Party, it is true; but it has a much wider significance than that. In it Mr. Chamberlain says quite clearly what the Nationalist Government will do in face of the growing opposition to reform in die-hard circles. The Government will not, as was believed till now, stand by the White Paper and challenge the Churchill group to turn it out of office. It will, on the contrary, water down its original proposals in order to make them

acceptable to the extreme right wing of the Opposition. If the Indian people charge it with breach of faith, the Government's answer is very simple. It will say: "What good will it do to you if, besides your losing all reform, we lose office? Will it not be more to your advantage if, recognising our internal difficulties, you let us throw overboard some of our cargo in order to save the rest? You will then have at least some reforms. They will not, it is true, go as far as we should have liked them to go; and perhaps they will fall tremendously short of what you would like to have. We sympathise with you. But is it the part of wisdom for you, by holding us to our word, to put us into a situation which can only lead to the abandonment of the whole reform scheme (that would be a clear loss for you) and to our going out into the wilderness (that would be a clear loss for us)? Let us both bow to the situation, lower our flag a little for some time—only to raise it again at the proper time to the advantage of both of us." We have no doubt that to such pleadings some groups of Indian politicians will fall a prey.

Time indeed has come for these groups to come out into the open and make themselves heard. This is not the time for rending the skies with loud wails about the inadequacy of the White Paper proposals. And this is certainly not the time when we should be speaking about the Joint Memorandum. Any one who does so will be regarded in England as a wild radical, utterly remote from realities. The utmost that a practical politician can do in India, if he is so minded, is to try to save the White Paper. Even that is a hard enough job in all conscience, but it is one to which one may devote oneself without writing oneself down as an absolute visionary. Saving of the White Paper too will need strenuous campaigning, and those who wish the country to be blessed with these reforms must take the field immediately, not as critics of the White Paper but as its avowed supporters. Those who are silent in such a crisis are no better than those who go about inciting the country to reject the White Paper. But there is no campaigning at all in favour of the White Paper in India at present, and if even after the recent events in England no propaganda on a large scale is set up in this country, the inference is plain, that the Indian people have no use for the White Paper scheme; that they would either have reforms cast in a more generous mould or no reforms at all; that they would rather preserve their national self-respect by having an end put to the White Paper scheme than see that the scheme is put into force. It is due to England as well as to India that we should make our wishes known.

In another column we have extracted a very timely and thoughtful article from the *Pioneer*. It says that the British statesmen would be glad to be rid of the responsibility of putting the White Paper proposals through, if only it did not involve bad faith with India. It would smack of bad faith indeed if they were to make the rejection cry of the radical politicians in the country an excuse for running away from the White Paper. But it would not be bad faith, but a very proper thing to do, if they took the sense

of the country after giving a clear warning as to what the consequences of rejection will be. Such a motion is going to be moved in the next Assembly, and all that they need do, when the motion comes up for discussion, is to declare that the official *bloc* will abstain from voting, and that if the non-official vote is clearly for rejection the official proposals will be withdrawn. If the country as a whole does not want the reforms offered by Government, it will not do to force them upon it. And the country will not then mind if incidentally the withdrawal of the proposals enables the Government to come triumphantly out of the hole in which it finds itself at present. If the voting is left to non-officials, a much larger number of the Assembly members than the professed rejectionists are willing to admit will vote against

rejection; and possibly they will be in a majority. In either case the Government stands to gain by confining the vote to non-official members. If the vote is for acceptance, then the Government will be free from the charge which otherwise will certainly be levelled against them, viz. that a constitution is being imposed upon India against her will. If the vote is for rejection, the Government will no longer have to face opposition from the die-hards; the Conservative Party will remain united. All things considered, it seems to us to be both expedient and right that the Government should declare here and now that when its proposals will be considered and pronounced upon by the Assembly it will leave the decision entirely to non-official members. It will be self-determination for India in a small way.

HALF A LOAF, &c.

THE promoters of the Indian States' movement will feel flattered by the *Tribune* of Lahore, in its issue of the 10th inst., devoting a leader to their manifesto and supporting the demands made therein in all essentials. The paper says that the States' people have a right to insist on three things: "first, on the election of the States' representatives in the Federal Assembly by the States' people on a franchise similar to, though not necessarily identical with, that existing in the Indian Provinces; secondly, on the Princes undertaking, in the course of a specified period, to introduce representative institutions in their States; and, thirdly, on some fundamental rights of the States' people being guaranteed in the federal constitution." These things are necessary, according to the *Tribune*, not only in the interests of the people in the States, but of those in British India. It says: "Without them there can be no federation worth the name. A federation between popularly governed provinces and autocratic rulers of States, with the people of the States entirely left out of the picture, would be a monstrous absurdity. It would be neither better nor worse than the continuance of the present form of government under another name, with only this difference that the representatives of the Princes will take the place of the official *bloc*. He must, indeed, be a bold man who would say that the change would necessarily be a change for the better. If the Congress accepts the ideal of federation it is both its right and its duty to say what it means by a federation and what minimum changes in the federating States it considers essential for the purpose."

In agreeing so far, we are inclined to believe that the *Tribune* has agreed to most, if not to all, the States' people's demands, and, therefore, we feel that its advice to the people in the States not to go too far is somewhat gratuitous. "Half a loaf is better than no bread" is a good enough maxim, but we see no occasion for our contemporary to fling it into the face of the authors of the manifesto. The *Tribune* thinks that more demands than the three that it itself suggests are made in the manifesto. For one thing, it seems to be obsessed with the idea that the States'

people "insist upon the archaic system of administration in most of the States being overhauled overnight as a condition precedent to the entry of the States into the federation." As a matter of fact we see no such condition mentioned in the manifesto. Indeed the *Tribune* itself goes farther than the manifesto in asking that representative government be established in the States within a stated period of time. The manifesto makes no mention whatever of internal reform in the States in its relation to the federation. The position of the States' people, on the other hand, seems to be that all the States should be admitted into the federation without reference to the structure of government in their domestic affairs, provided that they agree to act as democracies in federal matters. The *Tribune*, with an air of practical statesmanship which becomes it so well, gives the sage counsel to the States' people that they should put forward their minimum instead of their maximum demands. In fact, however, their maximum demands are less than the *Tribune's* own minimum demands.

Even the supposed maximum demands of the States' people do not appear to the *Tribune* unreasonable in themselves. On the contrary it is in general agreement with all these demands, but it thinks it would be impolitic to press them now. Since, as we have shown above, the States' people have not incorporated in the manifesto the demands which our contemporary attributes to them, it is unnecessary here to consider the grounds on which it condemns them. But we cannot resist the temptation of examining one such ground. It says in effect: "Already the Princes seem reluctant to join the federation, and the British Government still more reluctant to bring it about. If in these circumstances you tell the Princes that they will not be admitted unless they reform their administration, which indeed is necessary, but which is a matter of considerable time, the Princes will fight shy of federation," and (now we give its own words) "the reaction of such action on their part on the attitude of British Conservatives, already gone die-hard over the question of Indian reforms, can

well be imagined." It appears that our demands are to be determined by the repercussions they will have upon the die-hard section in Great Britain. If so, even in British India, we must jettison all our demands which are in excess of the proposals contained in the White Paper, for it is now clear that the British Government will have a tough enough job on their hands in getting, not to speak of the White Paper proposals, but the White Paper proposals as they will be watered down in the Joint Select Committee's Report, passed in Parliament. If our chief concern is to be to do nothing which is calculated to give strength to the die-hard group, but to make it easy, by throwing overboard some of our demands if necessary, for the more advanced among the Tories to introduce some kind of reforms, then it follows that even in British India we must abandon our former position and must remain mute in regard to our political aspirations so as to leave some chance for the more liberal of the two factions of the Conservative party to be successful. We wonder if the *Tribune* is willing to do so. If it would say instead, "We will rather have no federation than the kind of federation proposed," why should not the States' people too say so? Is rejection good policy only in British India? The truth is that such questions must be decided primarily on their merits and not on the reactions that they will have upon one's enemies. But, as we have shown above, the States' people have not made the demands which the *Tribune* has ascribed to them.

We write at length on this aspect of the question because we wish to find out what the *Tribune* would say if the States' people really took up the position which it considers to be so unreasonable, that is to say, if they made the introduction of responsible government in the States a condition precedent to the establishment of federation. Some British Indians themselves have taken up this position. *United Bengal*, for instance, in its issue of the 11th inst.,

while approving whole-heartedly of federation in principle, lays down the following conditions:—

In the first place, we are definitely of opinion that no State whose administration has not been popularised should be brought into the all-India Union. It will be the height of folly on the part of the British Indian leaders if they allow the delegates of the autocratic governments of the States to poke their nose into affairs of British India. If our representatives do not take time by the forelock and refuse to be associated with despotism in the States, the march of democracy, for which so much agitation has been made and so much sacrifice has so far been put in, will be arrested in this country. Secondly, the undue weightage which the States have been granted in the two houses of the proposed federal legislature must be resisted, and the amount of their representation must be reduced so that the provinces of British India may not be called upon to make an undue sacrifice. Thirdly, the authorities of the States should know that they can come into the federation only on their delegating to the federal government the same powers and functions which the provinces will make over to this all-India body. They cannot eat the cake and have it at the same time. They cannot be allowed to enjoy the privileges of federation without parting with any appreciable portion of their sovereignty.

Let us assume for a moment that the States' people put forward the same demands. What then? Would the *Tribune*, finding that the States' people stick to this demand in spite of its own earnest pleading in favour of allowing the federation to go forward, finally agree to hold up the federation or would it impose it upon the States' people, on the ground that what they are asking for is unconscionable in the extreme? Would it allow them to exercise the right of self-determination or not? This is really the core of the problem set out in the manifesto, but the *Tribune* is studiously silent about it. Are the States' people to be admitted to the constituent assembly and given an opportunity of saying whether they want federation or not, and if they want it on what terms and of what character? That is the question which they have addressed to the Congress. How would the *Tribune* advise the Congress to answer it?

NO CHANGE OF POLICY CALLED FOR.

IN the leaflet issued by the States' people* containing their Manifesto and the Gandhi-Kelkar correspondence, a warning is given that the Congress at its ensuing session will in all likelihood let them down. It is explained that the Manifesto "is an attempt on the part of those who have always felt reverently towards the Congress to thrust the question of the States' people into the conscience and intelligence of the Congress authorities who seem to be on the point of sacrificing the States' people in the hope of winning Swaraj for British India." And, further, the leaflet says: "It is a vain hope. British India, by turning its back on the States' people and allying itself with the States' rulers, will only deliver itself into the hands of brown autocrats instead of white bureaucrats. From the frying pan into the fire!" Whether this forecast of what will happen in the Congress meeting turns out true or not, we shall come

*This was printed in our last week's issue.—Ed., S. O. I.

to know soon. But there is one thing that deserves to be emphasised before the Congress or its Subjects Committee enters on a consideration of the problem.

The States' people, in putting forward their demands, are not calling for a change in Congress policy, but are merely asking the Congress to adhere to the policy to which it is already committed. The demands are two: first, that it shall give, to the extent of its power and opportunities, active assistance to the States' people in obtaining redress of their grievances and in winning democratic self-government from the Princes; and, second, that, in its project for implementing the principle of self-determination for India, it shall include the States' people on the same footing as British Indians. Round the first demand a great deal of misconception is found to centre. It is thought, and in fact it has been said by the *Indian Social Reformer* and the *Tribune* for instance, that the

Congress is meant to be a British Indian organisation which has for its object political reform of British India alone. It cannot therefore concern itself either with the grievances of the States' people or with their political aspirations. The people of the States have really no place in the Congress; if the Congress has left its doors open for them it is only as foreigners, and in any case it is outside the legal competence of the Congress, as it is beyond its physical power, to come into the States and fight on the side of the people against their rulers.

Now, Mahatma Gandhi himself has made it clear in a letter to Mr. Amritlal Sheth that the States' people are not in the Congress on sufferance, but in their inherent right as Indian citizens. But at the same time Mahatma Gandhi pleads for abstention from active interference on the part of the Congress in States' affairs, and he argues that such abstention becomes necessary not only from prudential motives and for considerations of political expediency, but on account of impassable constitutional barriers. One cannot help saying that, at the moment he made this statement, his memory failed him. For the Congress has in unmistakable terms asserted its right to an intervention in the affairs of the States. For a long time, to use Mr. Kelkar's telling phrase, the Congress had "kept itself unspotted" from the States; its constitution had put a ban on its workers mixing themselves up with any of the States' domestic problems in the name of the Congress. But in 1928 the Congress deliberately altered its constitution and lifted this ban. If Mahatmaji's contention is true that the States are foreign territory, from which the Congress must, for reasons of constitutional law, keep studiously aloof, then this change in the Congress constitution is clearly *ultra vires*. There is no doubt, however, that Mahatma Gandhi will maintain the constitutionality of the change that has already been introduced, when the fact of its introduction is brought to his attention. At the forty-third session of the Congress in Calcutta a number of additions and alterations were incorporated in the constitution on the motion of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, one of which deleted the proviso in Art. VIII, para. 3 which had said that the Congress shall not interfere in the affairs of the Indian States. The purpose and effect of this deletion were thus described by Mr. Satyamurti at the time. He said:

"We want (by effecting this change) to assure the people of the Indian States from this platform that all the resources of the Indian National Congress and all the sympathy and support of the Indian people are at the disposal of the Indian States in their manful and just struggle to get full responsible government established in their States."

The States' people only ask that the assurance which was solemnly given to them in 1928, and in order to give which the Congress constitution itself was altered, be now carried out. In asking for this, they are quite prepared to recognise the practical difficulties which the Congress encounters; they know that only a small proportion of the Congress energy can at present be devoted to them. They do not wish the Congress to strain itself to breaking point by fighting on two fronts at the same time with

all its force. All that they desire is that the promise that has been given to them be remembered and something be actually done, however little that may be, as a mark of a lively recognition on its part of the duty which it owes to them.

The reasonableness of the other demand, viz. that the States' people be admitted to the constituent assembly on the same terms with British Indians, is manifest on the face of it. If the assembly were to frame a constitution exclusively for British India, then the States' people could obviously have no share in it. But the constitution is to be an all-India one, comprehending within its scope both British India and the States. If the Congress had consisted of British Indians alone and not, as is the case in fact, of British Indians and the States' people even then it could not, without being traitor to its basic principles, ask for self-determination for one people and be a consenting party to the application of coercion to the other. But as it happens both peoples are among its members and how can it by any possibility say, either expressly or tacitly, that while one set of its members will have accorded to them the full right of writing their own constitution, the Congress will raise no objection to the autocratic Princes deciding upon the constitution for the other set? It can either stand for self-determination or other-determination; but in any case it must be either self-determination for all or other-determination for all. It cannot be self-determination for British Indians and other-determination for the States' people. If it concedes to the Princes the right to speak for the States, it must give the same right to the British Government to speak for British India. And since it denies the right of speaking for British India to the British Government, it must challenge the theory advanced by the British Government, and acted up to throughout the Round Table Conference proceedings, that the autocratic rulers of the States are the true spokesmen of the States' people. Congress leaders did so in fact even before this theory was put forward at the time of summoning the first Round Table Conference.

For instance, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in his presidential address at the 44th session of the Indian National Congress in Lahore, in 1929, said as follows on this point.

"It is not surprising then that they (the States' rulers) claim, and their claim finds acceptance with the British Government, that they alone can represent their subjects at any conference and no one even of their subjects may have any say. The Indian States cannot live apart from the rest of India and their rulers must, unless they accept their inevitable limitations, go the way of others who thought like them. And the only people who have a right to determine the future of the States must be the people of those States including the rulers.† This Congress which claims self-

† Pandit Nehru's idea here was that the rulers and the people together should thresh out a constitution, and therefore he says that the people of the States, including the rulers, should decide what constitution they would like to have. But the idea requires a slight change in its application to the constituent assembly plan. For, on the constituent assembly, there are to be representatives of the British Indian people alone and not of the British Government. Therefore, by analogy, on the side of the States, there should be on the constituent assembly representatives of the States' people alone and not the Princes. When the constitution is framed by the people of British India and the States and by them alone, it is to be presented to the respective rulers for acceptance without a change of a comma.—A. V. P.

determination cannot deny it to the people of the States. Mean while the Congress is perfectly willing to confer with such rulers as are prepared to do so and to devise means whereby the transition may not be too sudden. But in no event can the people of the States be ignored."

Mr. Satyamurti, speaking at the same Congress, on the resolution concerning the States, said:

"That no permanent or satisfactory solution of the political future could be arrived at without the active co-operation of the Indian States' subjects. The resolution declared that hereafter the people of British and Indian India were linked together, for better or for worse, to secure freedom... The claim of Maharajas to be spokesmen of their people was historically unsound, constitutionally incorrect and politically dangerous."

What the States' people want is nothing more than that this declaration of policy made on behalf of the Congress by its prominent leaders should now be adopted by the Congress as a whole and be translated into action, when setting up the constituent assembly. Surely no change in the ruling policy of the Congress is required here; all that is required is that there shall be no backsliding on its part.

A. V. PATVARDHAN.

Our London Letter.

(BY AIR MAIL.)

(From Our Correspondent.)

LONDON, 5th October.

THE LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE.

THE Labour Party Conference has been in session at Southport this week, and the expectations that a strong fight would be put up by the Socialist League against the Party's official programme, to which it had submitted a long series of detailed amendments, were falsified. Sir Stafford Cripps and his colleagues had watered down their ferocity to a quite unexpected mildness, and where they did not quietly submit to the policy of the platform they were heavily steam-rollered, and their opposition remorselessly crushed. It is not of such material that revolution is made, and the chief revolutionary, Sir Stafford Cripps, having virtually made his peace with the Party leaders, has been readmitted to the official fold by election to the Party Executive, together with Major Attlee. It was quite clear from the proceedings throughout that, notwithstanding some rather large generalisations to which Mr. Morrison and Mr. Henderson committed themselves on behalf of the Party, the policy of gradualism was not substantially departed from and the Conference, as the *New Statesman* points out to-day, promised no more than to abolish the Lords if they were a nuisance, and to take emergency powers if there were an emergency. That does not amount to very much. The Conference dissociated itself from the Hastings general strike resolution as a means of prevention of war, but has, on the contrary, given an absolute pledge to conform to the national obligations at Geneva by advocating collective security, which has been to some extent at any rate reinforced by the adhesion of Soviet Russia to the League.

HOW IT STRIKES OTHERS.

Interesting to read in to-day's *New Statesman* is a summary of the Southport proceedings by Mr. Kingsley Martin, in which he summarises a conversation with a young non-Socialist banker who was present at the Conference. The banker's analysis of the

situation was that the Party was now obviously dominated by the Trade Unions, though not fully and effectively. The Trade Union leaders seemed to consider first the interests of the sheltered and highly organised industries, from which he concluded that the influence of the Labour Party would be to keep up wages even when, economically, the deepening economic crisis which he foresees in the future might from the capitalist point of view demand their drastic reduction. He continued that the gradualist corporation Socialism of Mr. Morrison, one of the two outstanding figures of the Labour Executive, would be impotent to deal with the crisis which would arise in a fiercer form than in 1931. The result he feared might be a financial crash as dangerous as that which had happened in Germany or the United States. He regarded this as the shortest route to Fascism, which he recognised to be disastrous to capitalists as well as to workers. He, therefore, felt, not that there was any menace from Socialism, but that the policy of the Labour Party might lead to a grave crisis, which would serve the purposes of extreme reaction. Whilst Mr. Kingsley Martin would not agree with this diagnosis, and suggests the existence of other elements within the Party which might give a different complexion to events, he nevertheless agrees that the present influence of the Trade Unions is stronger than ever, and that it may very possibly result in accepting an English form of the corporate state to the ignoring of Socialism, and Mr. Kingsley Martin is not enamoured of such a possible future.

INDIA AT THE LABOUR CONFERENCE.

The question of Indian constitutional reform was discussed at the Southport Conference on Wednesday, Mr. Krishna Menon, on behalf of the Westminster Labour Party, proposing a resolution calling for immediate application of the principle of self-determination for establishing the full self-government of India. He urged that the next step should be not merely a conference between the British Government and Indian nominees of that same Government, but between the British Government and the direct representatives of the Indian people. The White Paper did not represent the policy of self-determination. Indian reform should not be effected on the basis of agreement with the Princes, but on that of adult suffrage, with a body elected by adult franchise to formulate the new constitution. British Imperialism, he observed, was the centre of the Imperialism of Asia, and to destroy it in India would be to cripple it everywhere. Mr. Arthur Henderson, replying on behalf of the Executive, said that the recognised and repeatedly formulated policy of the Party on India contemplated constitution-making on the basis of equality and in consultation and conference with all sections of the Indian people until the Indian people enjoyed a form of government in harmony with their aspirations. With this view the Conference was generally in agreement, and the previous question was moved and carried, so that the resolution was not adopted.

THE TORIES AND INDIA.

The Annual Conference of the Conservative and Unionist Associations has also been held, this week, at Bristol. It was distinguished, among other things, by the absence of Mr. Winston Churchill, who is erecting a proud and undiminished head in Greece where he has been painting relics of the past, a fit and proper occupation and object of record for a Tory leader. On the other hand, those three darlings of reaction, Lord Lloyd, Lord Wolmer, and Sir Henry Page-Croft, graced the occasion with their genial presence, though whether they were responsible for the darkening of Tory counsel on India by the placing of anti-White Paper printed propaganda

in the bedrooms of delegates, the night before the opening of the Conference, must remain an unrevealed secret. During the week-end there had been published a lengthy correspondence between Sir Henry Page-Croft and Mr. Baldwin. Sir Henry and his friends have been trying hard to persuade themselves and the Tory Party in general that this will be the last opportunity that the Party will have for expressing hostile views on the subject of Indian constitutional reform, at least, so far as it tends to be shaped by the White Paper proposals. Mr. Baldwin sought to show that no new arguments had been adduced for the further discussion of the Indian constitutional question before publication of the Report of the Joint Select Committee, and pointed out that thereafter he had promised before the introduction of the Bill to consult the Party Council. If then it was decided that a special conference should be called there would be time for this under the rules and a special conference could be convened upon the requisition of fifty local Associations. Sir Henry, however, who is not quite so modest as some of his friends and supporters would have us imagine, was not to be placated, when he was determined, to proceed with his motion at the Bristol Conference in the following terms:—

"This Conference congratulates His Majesty's Government on the restoration of the financial and economic position, and records its readiness to give its fullest support in fulfilment of the nation's mandate in this respect. This Conference further, while prepared to support proposals for a greater measure of self-government in the Provinces of India, step by step, in accordance with the Government of India Act, records its emphatic opinion that the partnership of Britain and India in the Central Government of the Indian Empire must not be dissolved, and urges the Government to assent to no proposals which would imperil the future of India within the Empire or impair the confidence and unity of the Conservative Party in view of the menace of Socialism."

The burden of his argument was that the Joint Select Committee was not an impartial body, that now was the time for those who held strong views in this matter to express them, that the Conference had as much right as the Indian witnesses to give their views to the Select Committee, that the White Paper meant the end of the partnership of Britain and India, that Conservatives refuse to end that partnership, that they were willing, not without serious misgivings, to assent to Provincial Autonomy, and that the White Paper policy was the joint product of the last Socialist Government and of Lord Reading, the last suggestion, an anti-semitic smack. Indeed, Sir Henry and many of his associates and the *Morning Post* generally and its clientele, have no special love for Jews. The motion was opposed by an amendment moved by Alderman John Inskip, brother of the Attorney-General, substantially to the effect that the decision of last year's Conference at Birmingham to await the report of the Joint Select Committee, should be reaffirmed. The Duchess of Atholl, of course, supported the resolution, in a speech which not many members appeared to wish to listen to, and at its close it was moved and carried that the question be now put, which had the effect of preventing a reply by Sir Henry Page-Croft. When a show of hands was taken it was realised that the voting was very close, and much dissatisfaction seems to have been shown against the Chairman's decision in favour of the amendment. Lord Wolmer moved that a ballot be taken, and as a result it was declared that the majority for the amendment on a poll of 1,063, was only 23.

To-day's *Times* takes this result very philosophically. It says:

"The Conservative delegates... can hardly be held to have done themselves credit. The actual figures of their eventual ballot are not in themselves of any particular consequence. The situation would have been precisely the same if they had been reversed. They show in either case that there is a large body of Conservative opinion, as there has been in the history of every great reform, which will oppose to the last a policy for which the Party will stand in the end and of which in future ages it will be consummately proud. That body of opinion is always, and necessarily over-represented in a delegate conference, and on the present occasion immense efforts had been made beforehand to stampede the delegates into a false impression that now or never was the chance to make their voices heard."

Nevertheless, the episode will create a bad impression and the *Daily Express* to-day, in glaring headlines declares that the Tory Party is split on the India question. Indeed, it is not.

When the amendment was put to the Conference this morning as a substantive motion, it was carried by a show of hands. There is a singular discrepancy in the enumeration of delegates. The Chairman declared that only ten registered delegates abstained from voting, but it was generally understood that something like two thousand delegates were present. Something will have to be cleared up. I think that there can be no doubt that the Tory official headquarters will be distinctly disturbed by yesterday's happenings, for it is the heaviest vote that the diehards have yet had cast for them. I do not believe, however, that the vote was on the main issue, for a number of people would have voted for discussion apart altogether from their support of the diehard cause. It is certainly improbable that the proportions of the votes cast would have any reflection on the Tory benches in the House of Commons.

Reviews.

INDIAN CURRENCY PROBLEM.

INDIA'S PLIGHT: DEBT DOUBLED: DEVELOPMENT DAMMED. By M. de P. WEBB, (Daily Gazette Press, Karachi.) 1934. 102p. Ra. 1.

THIS is a bold and courageous book by that indomitable fighter, Sir Montagu de P. Webb. Mr. Jamssetji Wadia was ploughing a lonely furrow for all these forty years or so regarding the wrong that had been done to this country when the mints were closed to silver in 1894. With his trenchant and masterly pen he has never ceased writing that practically a death-blow was given to India's industry and prosperity by the steps taken at the time. Since then many changes have been visualised in the field of currency and monetary reform in this country and about half a dozen Commissions have reviewed the whole question and made reports, some of which are still safely lodged in the pigeon-holes of the Imperial Secretariat. A turn of the wheel of fortune has brought the silver question to the fore at present. The ever-selfish policy of the Imperial Government practically dictated the 1s. 6d. Rupee in 1927, as it had practically dictated a 2s. Rupee in 1920. Since then the economic depression set in all the world over like a pall leading to momentous changes, among them being England's breaking away from her Gold Standard. India also had to accept the Sterling Standard willy-nilly and there is a history behind it.

Sir Montagu Webb has always been an earnest and impassioned critic of the policy of the Govern-

ment of India. Though he did not see eye to eye with popular opinion in 1927 and criticised Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas for espousing the 1s. 4d. Rupee, he was the first to acknowledge his mistake when he saw what turn events had taken and has latterly been one of the foremost and most fearless critics of Government's financial policy. Thus he writes:—

"Subsequent events have proved completely that in these particular matters Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas was quite right and other members of the Hilton-Young Commission were entirely wrong."

In this book Sir Montagu Webb has exposed the mistakes and the sins of the policy pursued by Government "which has made the Rupee so distorted that it will purchase today twice as much as it did ten years ago." The result is, as the learned author says, "the unfortunate agriculturist, be he a small landholder or a big landlord, finds himself in a position of extreme difficulty and, in some cases, is faced by possible bankruptcy and ruin." Having traced the different causes for the present debacle, Sir Montagu says that the prices must be raised. He gives his proposals as to how the present crisis may be met and how the Government of India must depart from the time-worn policy of following the behests of the Imperial Government and take steps to further the interests of this country and this country alone. Among the steps suggested the most important are that a notification must be issued at once that India had always been and will continue to be a silver money using country and intends to make the utmost use of silver as legal tender money; that the Rupee must be derated to 1s. 4d. pending negotiations with the United States of America for re-opening the mints to the free coinage of silver; that the Secretary of State for India must be advised to communicate with President Roosevelt with the object of negotiating the re-opening of the mints to the free coinage of silver in both countries and the ratio to gold on which both countries were prepared to accept silver and gold money in unlimited quantities in settlement of all debts.

It is a very important and masterly publication and, though the lines laid down may not have the approval of all the economists in the country, Sir Montagu Webb must be congratulated on the intense earnestness with which he has pleaded throughout for a fair deal being given to India.

J. K. MEHTA.

A PEEP INTO MARATHA HISTORY.

RISE OF THE PESHWAS. By H. N. SINHA.
(The Indian Press, Allahabad.) 24cm. 255p.

SIGNIFICANT though some statements are in the preface, as regards the condition under which the book was written, "The Rise of the Peshwas" is just that kind of book which may supply the want of a succinct narrative in English based upon Marathi accounts, if it can be freed from certain defects to be noted presently. Coming last in the list of English histories of the Marathas those by Grant Duff, Parasnis and Kincaid and Sir Jadunath Sarkar preceding it, Mr. Sinha's compilation has some distinct advantages. But he does not seem to come up to the standard reached by the late Justice M. G. Ranade, the versatile philosopher with catholic sympathies and the magic power to turn everything he touched into gold. Ranade tried to unravel the intricacies of the early dark period and succeeded in establishing the underlying current of evolution. His was a difficult task, to clear the ground where there was nothing but raw growth of wild prejudices choking the feeble voice of justification. Prof. Sinha, on the other hand, sails

smoothly over the surface of a mass of well-arranged historical literature containing the direct results arrived at by a group of life-long workers, in Maharashtra, and tries to convey their sense in a different medium. Prof. Sinha has just to select and impart where Mr. Ranade had to build from the very beginning.

But because the material on Maratha history is even now fast accumulating, the apparently simple task of keeping pace with research and selecting up-to-date facts is growing difficult day by day. Research in Maratha history is a living affair and the historian must be very careful in sifting his material. No opinion should be accepted as authoritative without scrutinizing the words in the original document. Nothing can be treated as the final word simply because it appears in print and is published over a well-known signature. If the task of selecting facts in Maratha history is strewn with thorns, the theories advanced by unwary historians are still more confounding. Prof. Sinha, on his own admission, could not postpone the publication of his volume for consulting the thousands of letters in the Peshwa Daftar, and that has created a strange situation. Some of the theories advanced by him can now be easily disproved by the simple citation of recently published facts. Take, for example, the description of Chimaji Appa's invasion of Malwa and the battle of Sarangpur. Prof. Sinha expressly asserts that "in all probability Baji Rao was either present at the battle or was in the province hard by" &c. (p. 113). But the fact of Baji Rao then being encamped in Berar cannot now be doubted. It is based on a contemporary and authoritative document.

Prof. Sinha's views as to the ultimate results of certain well-known trends in Maratha history are often defective and seem to be inconsistent with facts. His analysis of the results of Baji Rao's policy of expansion and its reaction on what he calls the intrinsic nature of the Hindus (p. 71), bearing a bitter fruit for the whole of India, is easily disproved by what he himself has to say in another place (p. 79). The sense of gratitude shown by Chhatrasal for Baji Rao's remarkable services, the appreciative words of the Delhi Emperor himself for Mahadji Scindia's bravery and statesmanship and such other incidents ought to suffice as direct evidence for disproving the theory of Marathas being regarded as 'enemies and robbers' by the classes and masses in Northern India.

Prof. Sinha's judgment that "the Marathas were set on the track of Delhi by the selfish ambition of the Nizam" is again unjust and unsupported by well-known facts. His statement (p.x) of Raja Ram being kept constantly intoxicated by the habitual use of ganja and opium by Pralhad Niraji (on the sole authority of Sir J. Sarkar) cannot be passed over without a word of caution and protest.

D. V. APTE.

COMPARATIVE RELIGION.

EAST AND WEST IN RELIGION. By S. RADHAKRISHNAN. (Allen & Unwin.) 1933.
20cm. 146p. 4/6.

THIS book is a collection of lectures and sermons delivered on different occasions in England between 1929-1930. The first lecture on "Comparative Religion" is the first of a series on Comparative Religion given at Manchester College, Oxford. The growth of the science of Comparative Religion is due to the patient investigations of such scholars as Max Muller and Dr. Carpenter, Sir Edward Taylor and Sir James Frazer. The value of the study of Comparative Religion consists in the fact that such a study teaches

us that all religions have a growth and a history, all of them contain the expression of common human sentiments and feelings, and that none of them can claim finality and perfection. Thus this study will save us from dogmatism and fanaticism and make us more tolerant of other faiths. Problems dealing with Comparative Religion may be either anthropological, or historical or philosophical. Radhakrishnan has rightly pointed out that "for any religious internationalism, a study of Comparative Religion is the indispensable basis."

The second lecture "East and West in Religion," which apparently imparts its title to the book itself, brings out the characteristic attitudes of the East and the West in religion. This distinction is expressed generally by the distinction between inwardness, spirituality, intuitive thinking on the one hand, and rationalism, criticism and pragmatism on the other. In the western religions an urge for clear definitions and concrete forms is noticeable. This intellectual attitude in religion "confuses pictures with proofs and mysteries with dogmas." In the eastern attitude religion is more a way of life, an affair of spirit. Religious experience is the realisation of the essential unity of man and universe, a spiritual illumination and not merely an intellectual conviction. Further we have to mark that eastern religions teach quietistic ethics and individual emancipation, while the western religions emphasise activistic ethics and social salvation. The eastern mind lays stress on individual duties and individual virtues whereas the western mind gives greater value to the duties towards the community and social virtues.

In the sermon on "Revolution through Suffering" Radhakrishnan creates the impression of a deeply religious man speaking with the fire and zeal of an oriental prophet. He tells us that religion is a rebellion for bringing about a better moral order and God is a supreme rebel. But in a truly religious revolution the chief means of conquest is love and suffering. God himself struggles and suffers for the salvation of the world.

In the sermon on "Chaos and Creation" we get the author's casual reflections on the futility of mere pacifism, the true object of Yoga. A lecture on "Rabindranath Tagore" forms the concluding portion of the book, which abounds in many suggestive ideas and inspiring thoughts expressed in elegantly worded and artistically constructed sentences, which singularly characterise Radhakrishnan's style.

D. G. LONDHE.

SHORT NOTICES.

THE INDUSTRIAL EVOLUTION OF INDIA IN RECENT TIMES. By D. R. GADGIL. (Oxford University Press.) 1933. 22cm. 327p.

THE book under review by Prof. Gadgil, Director of the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Poona, is a treatise on Indian industrial and agricultural problems. It traces the evolution of the industrial progress of India through the various stages and points out the changes that came over Indian industries by the improvement in the means of transport, establishment of large-scale industries and the transition that has come over Indian agriculture. In the chapter on "War and After", Prof. Gadgil refers to certain important directions in which our agricultural and industrial development should proceed and the conditions necessary for bringing about those improvements. In closing the survey, the author says that two notable achievements mark the period under review, the change in the attitude

of Government towards industry and the establishment of the steel and iron industry, the change being the replacement of the doctrine of *laissez faire* by discriminative protection. As regards the future, Prof. Gadgil is not very optimistic. He says:—

"Though many hopes of war time have been belied, much has also been achieved with iron and steel manufacture established in the country and with the changed policy of the State, the prospects of the future are much better than in 1914. Looked at qualitatively, however, the advance made is yet too small. It should be further remembered that India is a country made up of many separate natural economic areas and a country of long distances. While for a few areas the advance made has been considerable, for others the period has brought little change, and for India as a whole the near future at least does not seem to hold in store a period of rapid industrial transformation."

One suggestion that may be made in regard to the book itself is that it should be brought up-to-date by the incorporation of events that took place during the last few years. For a publication which has been reprinted in 1933, it detracts from its value and usefulness if it does not include references to such important events as the trade depression and its effects upon Indian development, the conclusion of the Ottawa Agreement with its policy of inter-imperial preferences and so on.

C. V. HANUMANTHA RAO.

SELECT CONSTITUTIONS OF THE WORLD.

Ed. by B. SHIVA RAO. (Editor, No. 1, Armenian Street, George Town, Madras.) 1934. 25cm. 684p. Rs. 10/-

MR. SIVA RAO could not have chosen a more opportune time for the publication of this book. At a time when the Indian constitution is undergoing revision, a reference to the constitutions of different countries is found necessary as much by those engaged in the onerous task of constitution-building as by students of constitutional problems. Mr. Siva Rao has rendered a distinct service to the public by making available to it in a handy form the constitutions of 19 countries. His work was considerably facilitated by a publication entitled "Select Constitutions of the World" for which the Irish Government made itself responsible in 1922, when the Irish constitution was being fashioned. But this is now out of print and those interested in constitutional problems have every reason to be grateful to Mr. Siva Rao for his prudent forethought. The value of the publication is doubtless enhanced by the inclusion therein of the Statute of Westminster and the reproduction of the recent correspondence between Mr. de Valera and Mr. J. H. Thomas, British Secretary for Dominion Affairs.

A. D. V.

REMINISCENCES OF LENIN. By CLARA ZETKIN. (International Publishers, New York.) 1934. 22cm. 64p. \$3.75.

A book full of human interest. It gives an intimate picture of the private life of Lenin with Boswellian loyalty and faithfulness; and we get a glimpse, all too short, of Lenin's simple life, happy home life and his aims and aspirations. The author very clearly intersperses her discourse with many incidents in the life of Lenin which enable us to know the make-up of Lenin's mind. We get a glimpse of Madame Lenin, particularly of the part she played in the revolution, thus making her husband's task easy

and smooth. To those who wrongly believe Bolshevism and Leninism as the very negation of culture and art, the chapter entitled 'Lenin on Culture' should be a pleasant surprise. Lenin held the view that illiteracy is incompatible with the tasks of reconstruction. Lenin's views on women, marriage, and sex are set forth in the last chapter. The part that the Russian women played in overthrowing the Czarist regime, how they worked during the revolution, in offices, factories, fields and workshops side by side with men without sex consciousness or the least inferiority complex can be best understood by reading the book. The author seems to have enjoyed the intimate friendship of Lenin and her reminiscences of Lenin are marked with that necessary quality of sympathy and enthusiasm that a biographer should possess.

S. R. V.

COST OF GINNING AND PRESSING COTTON IN THE PUNJAB. By PRATAB SINGH PHULLAR and AJAIB SINGH GULZAR. (The Board of Economic Inquiry, Punjab.) 1934. 25cm. 18p. As. 4.

THIS is a survey of ten ginning and pressing factories, one pressing factory and one ginning factory, all in the Punjab. Accounts were not properly kept or were not available to the surveyors, and they proceed on those available to them. The total cost of these factories can be roughly divided into that of stores, wages, miscellaneous, and interest and depreciation, which come on an average to 32.6, p.c., 27.2 p.c. 4.8 p.c., 35.4 p.c. respectively. These factories do not work regularly and this adds to the heavy costs under the last head. A regular system of working hours dispersed throughout the year with no off-seasons would considerably lessen the cost under the last head. The average cost per bale is from Re. 1-12-8 to Rs. 4-2-6 inclusive of interest and depreciation charges, and from Rs. 2-12-0 to Rs. 4-2-9 inclusive of them. These factories have no joint pool and they allow no rebate. The maximum of wastage comes to Rs. 2-4-0 per cent in one factory.

M. S. S.

Miscellaneous.

IF PRAYERS WERE ANSWERED.

IN politics, as in war, it is advisable from time to time to imagine oneself in the place of the opposing general and to try to see the situation through his eyes. Congress speakers like Dr. Ansari who are so fervently pledging themselves to the rejection of the White Paper would do well to take this elementary tactical precaution and to reflect on the reaction which they may produce in Conservative circles in England. Suppose, what is quite probable, that Congress members are returned in sufficient numbers to the Assembly to make their opposition impressive, if not effective. Assume, what is quite certain, that their protests will be echoed and amplified in nine-tenths of the newspapers in India. And then assume that, as all the indications seem to suggest, Mr. Winston Churchill's following of die-hards will grow in numbers and determination. What would be the best tactical move for a Conservative

leader faced with the risk of splitting his party before a general election in which the feat of having imposed reforms upon a reluctant and ungrateful India cannot conceivably win him a single vote? Surely it would be to take the Congress leaders at their word. "Very well," he might say, more in sorrow than in anger, "we have tried for a number of years to evolve a scheme which would give you a greater measure of self-government. We have had three Round Table Conferences and a Select Committee at which a mass of evidence has been heard. These are our proposals. To us they seem reasonable, and even generous. But from the storm that they have aroused it is evident that they are unacceptable in India. Let us, then, withdraw them and admit that we have failed. But as we cannot satisfy you it is now for you to tell us what you want. Summon your constituent assembly and let us have your scheme in due course. Our only stipulation is that, since we are trustees for the minority communities, it must be a scheme which is unanimously approved. If you can arrive at substantial unanimity we will promise to give your proposals our most sympathetic consideration—though we cannot pledge ourselves that Parliament will necessarily accept them, since it is quite on the cards that we may not be in office when they come to be discussed."

What would be the effect of this manoeuvre of "passing the buck" back to India? In the first place, it would prevent the threatened split in the Conservative Party. In the second place, it would muzzle Labour. In the third place, it would put the Government right in the eyes of the world for they could argue, very plausibly, that they were merely trying to discover what it was that Indians actually *did* want instead of forcing upon them a scheme to which they had already registered their objection. From the point of view of the party manager, intent only upon the maintenance of the party in power, it is perfect. It shelves an awkward problem as neatly as possible. Congress leaders and Liberals like Mr. Chintamani may say that it would suit them also. But in their heart of hearts do they really believe that it would be better to sit down to some years more of the present system and then begin the struggle all over again with a Conservative Government still in power? If so, their optimism seems to us to outrun their judgment. And are they really so sure of securing agreement in a constituent assembly?

The subterfuge that we have suggested would be, of course, the very negation of statesmanship. It would be a political dodge, and a low one at that. For ourselves we believe Mr. Baldwin and the much-maligned Sir Samuel Hoare incapable of it. But politicians in a corner are liable to be tempted by an easy way out—and the average English elector knows and cares very little about India. Congress politicians and journalists who, unlike ourselves, believe the Secretary of State and the Conservative Party leader to be a couple of Habakkuks, *capables de tout*, should realise that they are doing their best to place temptation in their way. Like the small boy who prayed for a pet and was rewarded with an elephant

they might find it embarrassing if their importunities were answered.—*The Pioneer*, October 11.

ONE AND INDIVISIBLE.

IN the course of a letter to Mr. Amritlal Sheth Mahatma Gandhi complains that his attitude in regard to the States' peoples has been much misunderstood. "It surprises me that anybody should think," he writes, "that I do not consider them to be an integral part of the Indian nation . . . Though we are under different systems of government surely we are one." Gandhiji goes on to explain that the States' people are already enlisted in the Congress, and they have as much right to be in it as any other Indians. Unfortunately, Gandhiji's remarks do not clear the position created by his last letter to Mr. N. C. Kelkar in this matter. In that now notorious letter, he wrote explicitly that,

"the policy of non-interference in the affairs of the States that the Congress has followed is wise and sound. The States are independent entities under the British law. That part of India which is described as British has no more power to shape the policy of the States than it has (say) that of Afghanistan and Ceylon."

While the letter written to Mr. Sheth is very enigmatic, the letter to Mr. Kelkar leaves no room for any doubt whatever, and we hope the question will be threshed out on the floor of the Congress, when it meets in Bombay in the next few days.

The attitude taken up by the Mahatma in his letter to Mr. Sheth is obscure, and it is difficult to make out what exactly he means. We may take it for granted, however, that his opinion on the States' people's question remains unaltered and he still believes that it is not possible for Indians to interfere with the governance of the Indian States, because they are "independent entities." In his letter to Mr. Kelkar Gandhiji admitted that the Indian States were an "integral part of geographical India," as he admits even now in his letter to Mr. Sheth, without carrying matters further or clearing his own position.

Whatever may be the views of Gandhiji in this matter, there is little doubt that the Indian intelligentsia holds very pronounced and diametrically opposite opinions on this question, and it will never be satisfied until either the Congress changes its policy radically in this vital matter, or Gandhiji agrees to allow other Congressmen and Nationalists to do what they like in the Indian States and their administrations and take the consequences. So far all those Indian nationalists who have tried to interfere with the administration of Indian States, not for their selfish ends, but for the relief of the people, have borne the consequences of their action and nothing has deterred them from doing what they thought was their duty not only to their country, but to their fellow-Indians across the borders.

Gandhiji complains that a misunderstanding has arisen in the minds of the public, but there is good reason for it. It is not a question whether the States' peoples are or are not an integral part of the Indian nation, but whether Indians living in British India can and should help them to free themselves from oppression. It is not surprising, therefore, that immediately after this correspondence between Mr. Kelkar and Gandhiji, the Working Committee of the Indian States' People's Conference repudiated the view taken up by the Mahatma and reaffirmed that, "it is the constitutional duty of the Indian National Congress, apart from its moral obligation, to render effective help to the people of the States, in their endeavours to secure freedom for themselves." The Congress must reaffirm this principle and support the efforts of the States' peoples to free themselves from mediæval and antiquated rule.

It is useless to deny that even the Government of India have seen through the Princes and their methods of administration, however much they may try to screen them from the attacks of the Indian Press. Otherwise, there would not have been such stringent action against so many of them during the last two or three years. Those who had to submit to these measures have now found themselves absolutely powerless, and more or less in the position of puppets, with no power to do anything in their own principalities. In view of such a change even in the attitude of the Indian Government, it is strange that Mahatma Gandhi should still hug the myth to his bosom, that the Indian Princes are "independent entities."

Whether they are independent or not, it would be monstrous to leave the States' people to the mercies of Indian Princes, and it would be the height of folly to commit such a crime in these days when great efforts are being made to unite the whole of India. We repeat that it is essential that this question should be discussed and settled once for all in the Congress session. Indians must extend their hand of fellowship to the States' people and reassure them that whatever happens they will stand by them as comrades in arms, belonging to one and indivisible India.—*The Bombay Sentinel*, October 15.

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