

# The Servant of India

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## Topics of the Week.

### S. I. Society's Annual Session.

THE thirtieth session of the Servants of India Society which came to a close on Tuesday with a concluding address by the President Mr. G. K. Devadhar was characterised by several noteworthy happenings. The financial position of the Society has been, as is well known, far from satisfactory. Still, having regard to the pressing needs of work, it was decided to admit to its probationary membership as many as six young men—the largest number ever admitted in a single session. One each of them comes from U. P., Orissa and the Punjab, two belong to the Bombay Presidency, and one to Sangli State.

Mr. A. D. Mani, who was admitted on probation last year, was admitted to membership this year.

Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri was offered the Vice-Chancellorship of the Annamalai University by its founder, the Raja of Chettinad, and asked for permission to serve in that capacity. The Society allowed him to accept the post, which in his case will carry only a small honorarium to cover his personal expenses.

The abolition of the out in the allowances of the Members, which last year became effective only in the case of junior Members, became effective this year in the case of all Members.

Besides the usual inaugural address by the President and a comprehensive review of the Society's work and the general political situation by the vice-President, Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru, three lectures were arranged: one by Mr. D. R. Gadgil, Director of the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, on "Protection to Indian Industries", by Mr. Devadhar on "the Relief of Agricultural Indebtedness" and by Prof. V. G. Kale on "the Reserve Bank of India."

### Amalner Arts College.

ATTENTION has been drawn by recent discussions in the Senate of the University of Bombay to the problem of affiliating new Arts Colleges in mofussil centres. It can hardly be said that the Bombay University has during the last decade made any effort to formulate a well thought-out policy on this important question and there has been no instance in recent years of the University refusing any properly presented application for a College at any centre whatever. Within the last ten years new private Arts Colleges have been started at places like Poona, Belgaum and Shikarpur. While even with great financial stringency staring it in the face, Government accepted a considerable new burden by the opening of an Arts College at Andheri. This action of Government has been rightly considered as specially unjustifiable, as the intentions of the donor could have been best fulfilled by such a step as the opening of an Institute of Arabic and Persian Studies. In short neither on the part of Government nor the University has there been any attempt either to curtail or limit the sphere of the development of new Arts Colleges.

We are ourselves not inclined to support the plausible connection so often put forth on the platform and in the press between educated unemployment and the growth of the facilities for higher education; and we regard the growth of these facilities as a natural development of the existing system. It may be, that if Government or the University had a well-formulated policy in these matters the development would take place on somewhat different lines. But in the absence of such a policy it seems to us distinctly unfair to victimise a particular place or institution. It is likely that even the Amalner College would not have encountered any opposition but for certain last minute technical difficulties in connection with the application. Much was made in the Senate discussion of the fact that the building in which the College is to be opened is not the same as that originally approved by the Syndicate Committee. The technical defect must be conceded. But when it is remembered that the promoters of the scheme had to change their plans at the last minute because of circumstances over which they had no control and that the new proposed building is better situated and provides better accommodation than most such schemes in their initial stage, we feel that it would be unduly harsh to refuse sanction to the project on that account.

### Situation in Quetta.

THE evacuation of Quetta may now be said to be almost complete, nearly 15,000 refugees having been so far sent to their native places in the Punjab. As soon as people recovered from the shock caused by the earthquake, their thoughts naturally turned to

the safety of their property buried under the debris. What would happen to it? Would it be perfectly safe in the hands of the military authorities who are in charge of what remains of Quetta? Where is the guarantee that by and by it will not be allowed to disappear? All such apprehensions should be largely allayed by the recent Government communique. This offers facilities to representative property owners to pay brief visits to the affected area with a view to satisfying themselves that every attempt is made to protect their possessions from being looted. There is reason to believe that the offer will be largely availed of. The steps taken to protect the property are that the city around which strong barbed wire fencing has been erected is guarded day and night by the troops, their task being greatly facilitated by electric light specially provided all over the area.

THIS is good so far as it goes. But it is no use concealing the widespread public dissatisfaction caused by the Government's refusal to allow philanthropic bodies and persons to proceed to Quetta, the latest to be so treated being Mahatma Gandhi. His request for permission to visit Quetta with his collaborators has been turned down by the Viceroy. It is possible to argue, as the Government apparently do, that as there are no survivors left in Quetta, all of them having been despatched to their respective places, there is no occasion for the presence of relief parties there. It may be granted at once that there is considerable force in the reasoning. But we fail to see what would have been lost by allowing some philanthropic persons to proceed to Quetta, if only to discover for themselves that their presence there was totally uncalled for.

THE A.G.G.'s recent visit to Simla is said to have been with a view to arranging for the restoration of civil authority in the 'quake area, and if press reports are to be trusted, this will be an accomplished fact in a few days. An earthquake commissioner has been appointed who, we suppose, will be in charge of the work of reconstruction. It is time Government seriously turned their attention to recovering property buried under debris and notified arrangements for its safe custody and procedure for its return to its owners.

#### Zanzibar Cloves.

THE clove legislation in Zanzibar which threw the Indian community in such ferment last year was avowedly designed in the economic interests of the farmer. These were to be promoted by ensuring a better market for his produce and at enhanced prices. Thanks to the heavy administrative expenses of the Clove Growers' Association brought into being last year and which is in control of the clove trade and the exorbitant fee of Rs. 5,000 levied on clove exporters, the Zanzibar clove went up in price but not in demand. From statistics published in Zanzibar papers recently to hand, it is found that the stocks of cloves remaining unsold are being fast added to. Soon after the hated legislation was enacted, the clove stock in Zanzibar amounted to 383,000 fraslās. This was augmented by new arrivals to the tune of 813,500 fraslās which makes 1,196,000 fraslās as the total stock on hand at the end of July last. If from this figure are deducted the exports which amounted to not more than 442,598 fraslās during the last ten months, it is found that the stock of cloves in Zanzibar had gone up to 754,382 fraslās. In other words, the stock could be said to have very nearly doubled itself in less than a year. Be it remembered too that this is a record figure for the last

ten years when the stock never exceeded 383,000. It is also worthy of note that the exports were smaller in quantity than during the preceding year by nearly 1¼ lakh fraslās, a further testimony to the unpopularity of Zanzibar cloves. Whereas in May of last year 18,391 bales were exported, during the same month of this year only 4,500 bales were despatched out of the island. We hope the moral of these figures will not be lost on the Zanzibar authorities.

#### Local Boards in Bombay.

COMMENTING in a recent issue on the working of village panchayats in C. P., we had occasion to draw attention to the evil practice of levying needless taxation on the villagers—needless because no well-considered programme of expenditure was thought out beforehand with the result that the funds so raised were lying idle. To judge from the Government resolution on the working of local boards in the Bombay Presidency for 1933-34 which has recently been issued, the evil cannot be said to be altogether non-existent even in Bombay where the village panchayat movement is not as strong as in C. P. Only the offending body happens to be, not a panchayat but a district local board, though the funds raised by additional taxation were intended for village improvement. But whether it was a panchayat or a district local board that was responsible for raising unwanted funds, the practice itself is to be severely condemned. And we strongly echo the hope expressed in the resolution that early steps will be taken to put the funds to their legitimate use.

ANOTHER noteworthy point about the working of local boards is that the public prejudice against the admission of depressed class children to ordinary schools and their being treated there without any distinction is slowly dying out. It is observed from the resolution that the Central Division did not experience any trouble on this account; while in the Southern division the strength of will displayed by a local board was instrumental in beating down the opposition. When objection was taken by the villagers to the unrestricted admission of depressed class children to some schools, the board concerned preferred to close the schools rather than pander to public prejudice by closing them against the admission of these children. This had the desired effect on the villagers who thereafter ceased to object to these children receiving equal treatment with any other class of pupil in the schools. The admirable example set by this board will, it is hoped, be copied with benefit by bodies similarly circumstanced.

#### Education in Bombay.

IN these days of extreme economic depression it is somewhat comforting to note from the Bombay educational report for 1933-34 that, in spite of a fall of 141 in the number of educational institutions, there was an increase of 42,200 in their strength. More than a half of the total decrease in the number of institutions fell to the lot of primary education, but luckily it did not betoken a decrease in the number of pupils. As a matter of fact, this went up by over 28,000, which represents two-thirds of the total increase in the number of pupils during the year. Even so the percentage of scholars to the population showed a slight increase from 6.11 to 6.30.

SOME idea of the inadequacy of the facilities for primary education may be gained from the fact

that, out of the 26,859 towns and villages in the presidency, as many as 16,200 were without a school. The smallness of population may not justify the opening of a school in many of these villages. But it is high time that serious attempts were made to equip at least all villages with a population of 500 and more, which number nearly 2,000, with a primary school. This should be a matter of practical politics even in the present hard times and we would suggest to local authorities the desirability of early action in that direction.

A REFERENCE to the working of compulsory education would not be out of place here. Only twelve local authorities have so far come forward to introduce it, none having done so during the last six years. But even where it is in operation, it is a regrettable fact that it has not resulted in any appreciable increase in attendance. This is attributed to the unwillingness of the educational authorities concerned to exercise all the powers vested in them by the Compulsory Education Act with a view to enforcing attendance. In this connection the report rightly bewails the decision of such an advanced municipality as that of Bombay not to prosecute parents who persistently refuse to send their children to school. In such circumstances it is not surprising if the working of the Compulsory Act is not attended with more satisfactory results.

It is a source of gratification to find from the remarks of the writer of the report on the system of secondary education that all these years of public agitation in favour of a change in it do not threaten to be altogether wasted. Indeed there is enough in the report to show that a realisation of the unsuitability of the present course of studies in our high schools has begun to dawn on our educational authorities. This is full of happy augury for the future. It is something that even the Director of Public Instruction should be compelled to characterise the course of instruction in high schools as "too theoretical, uniform and unrelated to the daily life and surroundings of the pupil." But this is not all. He goes further and with refreshing candour so rarely met with in Government reports or publications exposes the weaknesses of the system. He said:

The present system gives little scope for developing the pupil's personality or for stimulating his capacity for thinking and doing for himself. Preparation for the Matriculation examination has become the main business of the secondary school, and cramming facts and words in order to pass the examination the main objective of the average pupil. Education must be regarded as something more than mere book-learning. The necessity of broadening the curriculum is also imperative. It is desirable to develop within the school—particularly in a big one, a multiple curriculum in order to provide suitable alternate courses of education for pupils of differing capacities and dispositions. The chief defect in the present system of secondary education is that the needs of the pupil who will not go to the University are not sufficiently taken into consideration. Although it is necessary that all pupils should receive some general education, whatever may be their aim of life, it should be possible for boys to branch off at a suitable stage to one of a selection of courses—professional, commercial, industrial and so on.

This plea by the head of the department for a re-orientation of the secondary course is not the less welcome because it is so belated. We hope no more time will hereafter be lost in putting into effect the bifurcation scheme which has engaged the minds of educational experts for years past. Before leaving the subject of secondary education, it deserves to be noted that the option allowed by the University to answer papers in history and classical languages in the vernacular is being increasingly exercised.

WE are pleased to find that the number of depressed class pupils in various educational institutions rose by nearly 3,500 to 70,500, a little over 68,000 of whom were to be found in the primary stage. Their number in secondary schools also rose by nearly 200 to 1,621; and that in receipt of collegiate education from 29 to 36. There were 466 special primary schools and classes for depressed class children with 18,000 pupils in them. Strenuous attempts are not lacking on the part of the local educational authorities to give effect to the policy of Government which is to encourage the admission of depressed class children to common schools and to prevent the observance of any discrimination against these children in those schools.

## END OF CONSTITUTIONALISM.

SIR HERBERT SAMUEL, in supporting the Third Reading of the India Bill in the House of Commons, observed:

The British Parliament to-day says to the Indian nation: "Take this Bill. We have worked at it and shaped it as well as we could. We know that you think it is inadequate, yet accept it for what it is, make the best out of it, and if the results justify it at no distant date this Parliament, gladly and readily, will co-operate with you to enlarge the bounds of freedom wider yet."

Miss Rathbone said much the same thing. "If you cannot get a mile, get a yard; if you cannot get a yard, get a foot; if you cannot get a foot, get an inch." "This," she remarked, "is the English way;" and she bewailed the fact that, "unfortunately, it is not the Indian way." Both these members appealed to Indians to overcome their sense of bitter dissatisfaction with the India Bill, now that it is about to be passed into an Act, and work the new constitution in a spirit of good-will, giving it the best possible chance.

The Government spokesmen, too, of course, made the same appeal. But we particularly emphasise the appeal made by the Opposition parties, as it certainly deserves more consideration on the part of Indian politicians. British friends of India say in effect: "This is a good constitution on the whole. It will improve India's position considerably. But if, after an honest trial, it is found, contrary to our expectations, that it does not promote India's growth as it should, we shall know what to do. This constitution is by no means final. We shall be quite willing to amend it as may become necessary."

That the constitution, as it is embodied in the Bill, is gravely unsatisfactory cannot be denied. No Indian is going to be persuaded to take a different view. The only question is whether it can and will be amended in future to suit India's growing needs. In this connexion one thing must be remembered, and it was stressed by Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru

at the Servants of India Society's Anniversary on the 12th inst., viz. that many changes which formerly could be introduced by the executive on its own responsibility will hereafter require Parliamentary sanction. Mr. Kunzru gave an instance in point. The proportion of Indians in the I. C. S. could till now be increased by the Secretary of State by executive action. But henceforth an amending Act will have to be passed by both Houses of Parliament sanctioning larger recruitment of Indians. Similarly, by mere changes in the Instrument of Instructions many important constitutional alterations are capable of being made, but these changes can, in the Indian constitution, be made only if Parliament by affirmative resolution approves of them. It appeared to Indians at first as if the Instrument of Instructions would receive added sanctity by reason of the sanction of Parliament behind it, and that from that point of view it would be an advantage to India. But, as Major Attlee has often pointed out, the only object—and in any case the effect—of these provisions is to prevent a liberal-minded Secretary of State (the liberal mind is now absent from the Liberal Party but is only to be found in the Labour Party) from widening the scope of self-government within the existing framework of the constitution, for the House of Lords is sure to impose a veto upon every such proposal. This means that the future constitutional development of India, even in minor matters, which are usually disposed of by the executive, will have to wait upon the pleasure of the ultra-conservative section in England, and one can well imagine what progress is possible in these circumstances.

While the occasions for having to go to Parliament for constitutional changes have been infinitely multiplied, almost an insurmountable barrier has been raised against Parliament itself making any changes in the federal provisions, even if it were so minded, by reason of the fact that the individual consent of all the federating States will be required to all such changes. This aspect of the new constitution has been fully grasped only by the Labour Party in England, and by none too many even among the radical politicians in India. We cannot therefore thank members of the British Labour Party too warmly for bringing this fact prominently to the attention of Parliament. Major Milner, for instance, spoke as follows in the House of Commons on the Third Reading :

In plain language, His Majesty's Opposition oppose this Bill because not only does it not carry out our repeated pledges, but it does not hold out even the early hope of those pledges being carried out. If the new Constitution provided even a satisfactory starting point, if the foundations were well and truly laid, if we saw that in the near future it was possible for the Indian people to build a superstructure on those foundations, we might be willing to accept half a loaf as being better than no bread. But we are not so persuaded. The major defects of the Bill are two. They are complementary, and to a large extent merge one into the other. On the one hand, the forces and the interests of property and privilege are installed in power practically in perpetuity. On the other hand, the Indian people, no matter how well fitted or how desirous they may be to-day, or they may become tomorrow, cannot of their own volition progress one

step on the road to the goal we have promised that they shall reach.

The situation with which Indians are faced will be clearly understood only when we keep steadily before our mind's eye the fact that not only are the defects in the constitution of a serious character, but that they are permanent. And they are permanent, not only in the sense that Indians of their own volition cannot remove them, but that even Britishers of their own volition cannot do so. Major Milner referred to this when later he said : " It will not be possible for even the British Parliament, still less the Indian Legislature, to impose their will on the Princes without their agreement." It is not as if the British Parliament, not obtaining the Princes' agreement, can introduce the desired reforms in British India, leaving the States alone. The States have been given the power of saying : " The reforms shall not be introduced in British India either ; if they are, we shall step out of the federation." Even the British Parliament, therefore, not to speak of the Indian Legislature, will find itself powerless to make a forward move in the federal sphere in any part of India—in the part which is under its direct control as well as in the part which is under its indirect control. The same point was very forcibly put by Mr. Morgan Jones in the following passage in his speech :

The Princes come into the Federation on their own terms, and the terms are to be stated through the medium of an instrument called the Instrument of Accession. It is impossible, and it will be impossible for any future government, to permit any constitutional change to take place in India except with the assent of the Princes thereto, because, the moment that any change of a constitutional kind takes place, at that moment each Prince will be entitled to say, " I never entered the Federation on those terms, and I am absolved, therefore, from the Instrument under which I came in." You can, of course, say to the Prince who objects : " Why stand in the path of progress ; why not concede something to the conditions of the time ? " But he will be entitled to reply to you in the words of " The Merchant of Venice " :

" Is it so nominated in the bond ? "

He will call attention to his bond, and he will be able to charge you not to move one step further, because, if you do, you will thereby break the Instrument of Accession and the agreement with him that is implied therein. If, on the other hand, you say to him, " If you stand in the path of progress, if you oppose progressive legislation, you are likely to create trouble," he will be entitled to say :

" My deeds upon my head ! I crave the law,  
The penalty and forfeit of my bond."

I am not overstating the facts, for, when His Highness the Maharaja of Patiala spoke some time ago on this matter, he took good care to warn the Government that he and his fellow Princes were not going to be compelled to wear what he called the Nessus shirt of discredited political theory. What did he mean ? He is going to have no democracy ; he is going to have no Government progress in that department ; he is going to insist that his autocracy shall remain inviolate and inviolable.

Indians must realise therefore that this is not a transitional scheme of reforms, but a final one. All the defects that it will now contain will be petrified and will remain in perpetuity. All the autocracy that we may now wink at and that is now in a somewhat fluid condition will freeze and will be wholly irremovable—except at the will of the autocrats

themselves. There is no chance of any improvement being brought about by constitutional action alone—even in the distant future. This is the plain truth of the matter, and many patriotic Indians feel that the constitution, instead of being the dawn of a new era, is the first crack of doom. It is certainly the doom of constitutionalism. Even so, however, writers and speakers do not like to end their articles and speeches on a pessimistic note. It seems to be the invariable rule of publicists to put some optimism into their perorations. Even the Labour Party members (excepting only Col. Wedgwood), convinced as they are that the constitution, besides being reactionary in the provisions now made, will prevent future growth, counsel Indians to make the best use of a very bad instrument that has been given them and even hold out the hope that when the Labour Party comes into its own it would put matters straight. We know of course that this does not signify anything in particular and that these sentiments are uttered only to provide what is regarded as a good ending to a speech. It is supposed to be the thing to do.

Major Milner thus happened to say, after a speech which was full of utter hopelessness, "I can only hope that a Government may soon be in power in this country which will right the wrongs that are now being done, and will do as Campbell-Bannerman did in South Africa and do it generously, trustfully and courageously." The Attorney-General fastened upon this empty adornment in the peroration of his speech and asked: If the wrongs now done are irremediable, how is the Labour Government going to remedy them? The fact that the Labour Party hopes to put things right at a future date implies that the constitution is not past repair. "That does not look," he said, "as though the domination of the Princes were imposed upon India for all time." Major Milner had to admit: "I expressed a pious hope." It is a pious hope that India will be able to realise her destiny through this constitution. The only hope lies in the possibility that the very safeguards contained in it will hasten its destruction.

## SPARKS FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY ANVIL.

*House of Commons: 4th and 6th June.*

### POLITICAL CALM.

ON the Third Reading of the India Bill in the House of Commons on 4th and 6th June, the question that was asked most insistently was: What is the support of Indian public opinion behind the Bill? Whom will it satisfy in India? Sir Samuel Hoare refused to believe that "no one in India wants the Bill and that no one in India is going to work the Bill." He felt sure, on the contrary, in spite of the "wave of furious criticism that we see raging in India from one end to another," that "the constitution enshrined in the Bill is workable and will be worked" and, what is more, will be worked "loyally and sensibly", as the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms were worked by Indian public men who had, at the time when the reforms were passed, expressed discontent with them. Sir Samuel Hoare did not deem it necessary to mention here that on the earlier occasion those from whom the Government received co-operation had expressed, contrary perhaps to the supposed wont of politicians in general, support of the constitutional proposals—discriminating support it is true, but support all the same. They had promised to work the reforms loyally, and they carried out their promise to the best of their abilities.

Is there a class or group of public men in India outside the ranks of reactionaries upon whose support the Government can now rely? The former supporters have deserted the Government. They have become uncompromising critics of the Bill. They would live under the old constitution than go under the new one. There are of course some—to call them a handful would be to exaggerate their numbers; very distinguished men they are. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, the most eminent of them, was referred to by name by Viscount Halifax in the House of Lords as a counter-

blast to all the other Liberals who have expressed themselves as preferring the *status quo ante* to the new constitution. We do not mind the disparagement to which they were subjected by Viscount Halifax in magnifying the importance of Sir Tej who, he said, "has as much influence as any other Liberal in India and who knows much more what he is talking about than a great many people who talk more than he does," but the relevant question is: can Sir Tej and those who think with him that the new constitution, however bad, is better than the present one, be relied upon to bring the country round to work the constitution "loyally"? Sir Samuel Hoare and Viscount Halifax quoted the opinions of Congressmen to show that the Bill, when it passes into an Act, will be worked. But will it be worked contentedly or sulkily, smoothly or "tempestuously" as Col. Wedgwood put it? The Secretary of State appealed both to British and Indian critics at the end so to adjust their outlook towards the provisions of the Bill as to ensure "a period of political calm in India in which the Bill can be brought into operation with the best possible hope of success." So far as political India is concerned, the appeal is sure to fall on deaf ears. There will be no political calm, but a fierce political tempest. Sir Samuel Hoare—or rather his successor Lord Zetland—should begin inquiring what active help he may count upon from those upon whom the Government is relying in subduing the tempest.

Sir Samuel Hoare realised that the Government was in need of Indian support. The Bill was in fact put forward because he detected an improvement in the political atmosphere in India, and he feared that but for such reforms the Government would lose the support of the "large body of Indian central opinion" that he thought the Government had behind it. The

fact that the Central and Provincial Legislatures had passed "drastic measures for the restoration of law and order" was, to him, evidence of the support of central opinion, and he was therefore unwilling to "maintain the *status quo*" and "stay our legislative hand." If the present constitution were maintained intact without any alteration, "the problem of Indian government would be made tenfold more difficult." This central body of opinion has definitely disappeared, and if Congressmen too are thinking of entering the Councils it is only for the purpose of preventing the adoption of the drastic measures for the restoration of law and order that Sir Samuel Hoare had in mind. It would be well if the Government got rid of any illusions it might have on the subject. Sir Samuel also referred to the lifting of an economic ban as a sign of central opinion asserting itself. The new constitution may safely be relied upon to inaugurate once again the boycott movement.

Sir Samuel Hoare feels no qualms of conscience for bringing autocratic Princes into a professedly democratic constitution. Princely nomination suits the British Government at least as much as it suits the Princes themselves. He has a theoretical justification for it too. For the All-India federation, based on the nominative system, will be, according to him, "a system of government which will combine within it the experiences and institutions of the West and the experiences and the institutions of the Indian States in the East"; it "may prove a bridge between Asia and Europe." It is of course of no account to him that India does not want this blend of Eastern and Western civilisations, but that it wants a Western democracy pure and simple. But it is no use arguing with Sir Samuel Hoare on this basis. The only argument that will appeal to him is that the enforcement of the new constitution will set in motion a veritable political tempest, and we are glad to be able to promise him this. The political conflict between British and Indian, between Princes and people and between the privileged and unprivileged, will deepen as the constitution will come into force.

#### SAFEGUARDING POLITICAL REACTION.

THE Labour Party, it must be said to their credit, did all that was in their power to squelch the reforms. Their criticism was comprehensive and far-reaching. Mr. Morgan Jones attacked federation on the ground that it was motivated by a desire to entrench reaction. He said:

Instead of permitting the Princes to join the Federation without prejudicing the future progress of British India, the Government have proceeded to safeguard the Princes—to make British India join the Federation without prejudicing the Princes. The single thought which has dominated the mind of the Government has been how to protect the Princes, and not how to protect British India. It is a typical Conservative approach, and I do not complain of that; but it is not an approach, in my judgment, which is calculated to remove the fears and apprehensions and to meet the aspirations of the Indian people. Instead of safeguarding political progress, the Government have safeguarded political reaction. I agree that some Princes—I have never denied it—can disclose within the borders of the territories over which they reign elements of

progress that should make even British India blush and glow with shame, but those are exceptions. In the main, taking the Princes as a whole, everyone knows that they represent a regime, a form of government, which is certainly not democratic. When, therefore, we seek to placate the Princes to the exclusion of the aspirations and ideals of British India, we are, in my judgment, laying ourselves open to the charge that is propounded in our Amendment, namely, the safeguarding of privilege.

#### COUNCIL OF INACTION.

THE Labour Party's rejection motion was based on four grounds, of which one was that the Bill "entrenches in the legislature the forces of wealth, privilege and reaction." He made this good by pointing out the serious and incurable defects in the composition of the central and provincial legislatures. The Legislative Assembly of the federation is to consist of 375 members, of whom 125 are to be "representatives of the autocratic Princes" "acting as one solid bloc, who are going to take good care that nothing in the nature of progress shall be registered whatsoever." "But," he said, "that is not all. Take the Council of Action—( *Laughter.* ) It is a mere misnomer; I should have said, 'The Council of Inaction.' Let me take the Council of State, which has 260 members, including 104 representing the Princes. . . . It cannot be denied that the effect of this instrument will be that progress in India will be utterly impossible except with the good-will of this body of people, who represent only autocratic individuals." In all the major Provinces there are to be second chambers, and these second chambers are to be indissoluble, "inviolable." Here Mr. Jones quoted from an article by Sir Austen Chamberlain in the *Daily Telegraph* of 3rd December, 1934, which also throws light on the motives of the Joint Select Committee in recommending indirect election to the Assembly. The passage is well worth reproducing here.

"If we let slip the opportunity it may not recur; it certainly will not return in so favourable a form. In all that concerns us most, the interests of the Princes of India are the same as ours. Their attachment to the person of the King-Emperor and to the Empire has been proved again and again. The presence of their representatives in the two Chambers of the Legislature will be a conservative and stabilising element, which will be further fortified by the recommendations of the Joint Committee in regard to the method of election of the two Chambers and the indissolubility of the Upper House."

#### BOUND HAND AND FOOT.

THE Labour Party's second ground of attack was that the Bill "fails to make adequate provision for enfranchisement and representation of workers, both men and women." In the Federal Assembly Labour's share of representatives is only 10, while the Europeans alone, numbering round about 70,000 get 8 representatives. Europeans represent mostly commerce and industry and as such they get additional representation. Thus they have "dual representation." Commerce and industry are to have 11 representatives while labour is to have 10. In the Council of State there is not a single representative of labour. In the Provincial Assemblies labour is given 38

seats, landlords 37 and representatives of commerce, industry, mining and planting 56. The third ground of attack of the Labour Party was that the Bill "imposes undue restrictions on the exercise of self-government." In making this point he referred to the Labour Party's demand for implementing "the findings of the Rawlinson Committee that 30 years shall be taken as the definite period of the Indianisation of the Army." He summed up the situation thus: "I am not overstating it, I think, when I say that we have bound the Indian legislatures hand and foot. We have even given power to the Governor-General and the Governor to gag the Indian Speakers. The Governor-General has the power to stop a Bill from being introduced, the power to stop it in its passage, and the power to withhold his consent when it is passed, and that is called, in the terminology of the Government, self-government for the Indian people."

#### INDIA'S "DUE PLACE" AMONG DOMINIONS.

THE last point on which Mr. Morgan Jones dwelt in opposing the third Reading of the Bill was that the Bill "does not contain the means for the realisation of Dominion Status." In omitting a preamble from this Bill and keeping alive a preamble to a dead Act, wholly inapplicable to present conditions, the Government, he said, had failed to carry out its promises and has "prevaricated." The Attorney-General had pointed out in justification to a phrase in the Instrument of Instructions to the Governor-General about India occupying in fulness of time "its due place" among His Majesty's Dominions. As Major Milner observed, this phrase, instead of giving an assurance, will only cause misgivings in India. The words, he said, "signify a possibility, if not, indeed, a probability, of a less exalted and a less free place in the Commonwealth than that attained by other Dominions."

#### FROM NON-CO-OPERATION TO TERRORISM.

SIR HENRY PAGE-CROFT pointed out how the Government had shifted its ground in regard to the Bill. When the Bill was introduced, the Lord Chancellor said, in a poetic speech, "India is thirsty. India is calling. You have put the cup to her lips, do not delay her drinking it." "Sad to relate," however, Sir Henry observed, "India regards the cup as poison, and now in the sacred name of democracy we come to this House and have to indulge in forcible feeding, if the draught is to be swallowed at all." For "no man dare say to-day that India wants this Bill," and "His Majesty's Government have positively refused to allow the elected representatives in India to decide whether or not they desire these reforms, which we are going to force them to work."

It is no use the Government congratulating itself upon non-co-operation having come to an end. Mr. Wise warned the Government that the only result of forcing a hated Bill upon India would be that non-violent non-co-operation would give place to terrorism, so fundamental are its defects. He said:

All that this Bill lays down is to provide India with a Constitution which will not work, a Federation which will not work, an electoral system which cannot redound to the benefit of the people of India. It is impossible for this electoral system ever to work. The Constitution which we are giving India is one of such impossibility that the most hardened constitution-mongers would shudder to impose it on a country. Even the Abbe Sieyes would turn in his grave if he were asked to design a constitution of this sort. He was one of the greatest experts and once produced 19 constitutions in three months, but never one as bad as this. The constitutions which he produced were followed by dictatorship, dictatorship by revolution and revolution by an incompetent monarchy. I think that we should take thought that we are not taking the same sequence of events in India by the installation of a permanent oligarchy which the people of India will never have any power to criticise and which minorities will have no power to turn out of office, and whether by that installation we are not opening the way to the only weapons which oppressed peoples have at long last—the sword, the lamp-post and the rope to hang? It may well be that despairing of the justice which we have taught them to appreciate, they will take the last and most desperate measures, and then we shall be called on to use our forces and our machine-guns to restore order for that government which will have caused the trouble, and the life of every man killed in a riot then will lie far more at our doors than now when a riot is caused by agitation against our rule.

#### CALLING THE BLUFF.

SIR EDWARD T. CAMPBELL was in India when the Legislative Assembly debated the Joint Select Committee's Report. When he heard the speeches condemning the Bill, he wished he were able to rise in the Assembly and say on behalf of Government:

"Well, gentlemen, you say you do not want the Constitution offered to you in this Bill. Very good. I have the authority of His Majesty's Government to inform you that the Bill will be withdrawn forthwith and you will have to wait for some other Government to bring in a new Bill."

"I am convinced," said he, "that in such circumstances the Assembly would have asked that the Bill should not be withdrawn—that they would have said, 'Better this than nothing.'" If Indians were only bluffing, why did not the Government call their bluff? Why does it not call their bluff now? Why does it not accept Lord Hugh Cecil's suggestion and either get Indian support for the Bill or shove off its responsibility for dropping it. Obviously Sir Samuel Hoare is not quite so cocksure about the result of a vote in the Assembly as Sir Edward Campbell.

#### THE PRESERVATION OF PRINCES BILL.

CAPT. CAZALET, a supporter of the Bill, showed how groundless were the objections of the die-harder, that the new constitution would completely destroy the British power in India, and in all that he said on this point Indians agree wholeheartedly. He observed:—

We hear a lot about the steel frame, and we are told that we are undermining it. It is well to remember that in spite of what has been said about abdication and desertion the Army remains, the Viceroy remains, the Governors remain, the advisers remain. Under this Bill no official of the all-India service can be dismissed, trans-

ferred or promoted without the sanction of the Governors, who themselves are appointed by the Crown. So much of Indian affairs is psychological. So much depends upon prestige, status and complexes of that kind, but I believe that the results of this Bill may be very different from those that are commonly imagined.

Nor does Capt. Cazalet subscribe to the die-hard opinion that the Bill is the Princes Suicide Bill and that the Princes will refuse to join the federation. On the contrary he says, "a truer definition of the Bill would be the Preservation of Princes Bill. He observed :

Let us frankly face the situation and ask ourselves this question: "How many of the Princes in the glory of their isolated autocracy will be able to continue to exist surrounded by a sea of democratic Provinces and with a strong move and claim for an all-British India Federation growing up around them?" Most of the difficulties and objections of the Princes have been ones of paramountcy, protocols and so forth, which we cannot discuss here, but I believe that it will not be long before it will be seen how wise it has been on the part of the Princes, even at the cost of some small measure of their sovereign rights, to take a part in the all-India Federation, and how wise from our own point of view it has been to set up a Federation which represents the autocratic Princes on the one hand and the depressed classes on the other.

No one can deny the superlative wisdom from the British point of view of bringing what he calls the autocratic Princes into the federation with all their autocracy carefully preserved.

#### GERMS OF REVOLUTION.

THE combination of autocracy and democracy in a federation is, to the Government, the supreme merit of its plan, thus developing a new form of western conceptions of government so as to suit easterners. To the opponents of the Bill this is its supreme weakness. Mr. Annesley Williams said on this point:

What is that Constitution? It is a combination of autocracy and democracy never before seen in the history of constitutions. How long will British India submit to the permanent nominees of the Princes having a voice in the government of British India while they, the elected representatives of British India, have practically no power in the government? How long will that state of things continue? The Constitution proposed in the Bill contains the germs of its own destruction, and that is why to my mind it is impossible to support the Bill.

If the constitution is such as can never be accepted by the Indian people and if further it can never be amended in future by constitutional means, then it is clear that there are only two choices before them: submission or revolution. We are sure that Indians will not submit.

#### NO NEED FOR PROPORTIONATE PENSIONS.

GREAT concern was shown by Sir Joseph Nall and some other members about the security of pensions. Sir Walter Smiles, however, asked what was the justification at all for proportionate pensions for recent entrants into the civil service. He remarked:

I think that those who joined the Services long ago are in a different position from those who joined the Services after 1919. Everybody who joined after 1919 and everybody who invested in commerce, trade or industry after 1919, was well aware, if they had any common sense, that

at some date in the not too distant future the constitution of India was to be extended and more self-government given to the Indians. Members of the Services are intelligent enough to appreciate these things for themselves, and they knew very well that if they joined after 1919 they would very probably be called to serve under Indians and to occupy a position very different from that which the Indian Civil Service occupied in the old days when there were no such things as responsible legislative councils in the Provinces or a responsible Legislative Assembly at the Centre.

#### KEEPING AUTOCRATS ON THE THRONE.

AS always, Miss Rathbone's contribution to the debate was of a very weighty character. She was very much perplexed as to whether she should vote for the Third Reading. On the one hand, her first interest is the progress of women, and in that respect she recognised that "even in its original form the Bill did constitute a substantial advance in the opportunities it offered to women, both as voters and as elected representatives;" and "the concessions which have been made during the Committee stage have marked a further advance." But, on the other hand, there are other matters in which there is no advance but retrogression.

"The first of the questions which greatly perturb me," she said, "is that relating to the effect of the Bill on the interests of the subjects of Indian States. Formally and ostensibly the Bill makes very little change in the position of the subjects; . . . nevertheless the Bill does actually make a change in two respects. (First, the Government has undertaken) solemnly to reaffirm the inviolability of the treaties, sanads, and engagements which bind us to keep those autocrats on their thrones. The reaffirmation of an ancient treaty as part of a new bargain creates a new situation, and is a different and more serious thing than merely allowing an ancient treaty to run on until a substantial reason arises for terminating it." Second, with the establishment of federation prevention of gross misrule in the States, which is the duty of the paramount power, will be rendered still more difficult.

The Butler Report boasts how very rarely the power of intervention has been exercised. . . . It is plain that it will be harder in the future to secure intervention when such intervention might risk forfeiting the good-will of a particular Ruler whose support is needed for some measure which the Government think important. It is acknowledged even by so distinguished a constitutional lawyer as Mr. Panikkar, now in the service of the States, that the position of the subject of an Indian State "is anomalous and sometimes lacks the guarantees of ordinary citizenship." He says that those subjects "have a dual allegiance, one to their immediate Ruler and the other indirectly to the paramount power. . . . They seem to have no rights as against either."

Miss Rathbone then goes to point out how Mahatma Gandhi has, in his representations to the Round Table Conference, let down the poor subjects of the States:

Congress never seems to have interested itself vigorously in safeguarding the interests of the subjects of Indian States. I suppose they are reluctant to admit that Indians can in any circumstances be worse off under Indian Rulers than under the hated British rulers. One hears that in the



future we may look for improvement, because of the closer union between the Indian States and the people of British India that is bound to take place as a result of federation, and which will necessarily bring about a free flow of progressive ideas and of social reform within the States. Yet the Bill is full of precautions which tend to prevent or limit the free breath of publicity through the States to dispel the thick mists which prevent us from knowing what is happening in all these 500 States.

I refer to this now because the Secretary of State told us, I think it was on 25th February, that he intended, though not in the Bill or in the Instrument of Accession, to take an opportunity solemnly to reaffirm the inviolability of treaties and engagements between ourselves and the Indian States. I hope that we shall have an assurance from the Under-Secretary as to the kind of occasion which will be taken for making that reaffirmation. I hope it will be a public occasion, and that the House will be able to discuss the matter. May I venture to hope that the Leader of the Labour Party may find it possible then to state on behalf of his party that, if ever his party returns to power, it will hold itself perfectly free to reconsider any agreement made with Indian Princes which is inconsistent with the natural rights and duty of a great democracy like this, and to refuse to uphold, whether actively or passively, any form of rule which is resulting in the oppression of the people under that rule, or that is resulting even in the suppression of their rightful aspirations towards greater freedom? Now that we are in the last stages of this Bill and are letting the Measure pass out of our hands, we ought to remember the responsibilities that we have towards those 80,000,000 inhabitants of the Indian States, of whom we know so little and have heard so little, yet whose future will be inevitably and irrevocably affected. We should not lose sight of their interests now or in future years.

The other question which perturbed Miss Rathbone was what exactly Indians felt about the Bill. Would they want Parliament to kill the Bill? Would they prefer the *status quo*? Would they rather have no Bill than this Bill? Would they rather go on as they are in the hope of something better later on? She could not make up her mind and wished she could have visited India to find out. On this point she would have had no doubt at all if she had found it possible to come to India. Beyond, shall we say?, half a dozen politicians we are certain she would have met none even amongst the moderately progressive people who would not unhesitatingly prefer the *status quo*. But she continued to entertain doubts till the end, and ultimately she decided to vote for an amendment asking for the widening of the Bill, but to vote against it if the carrying of it meant an end to the Bill without the prospect of anything better coming on soon, for she felt that, defective as the Bill was, it contained "elements and seeds of future growth," an opinion which we have examined elsewhere at some length.

#### BRITISH DEMOCRACY AND INDIAN AUTOCRACY.

MAJOR ATTLEE, like other members of the Labour Party, was much concerned at the possible repercussions that autocratic Princes may have on British India in the new constitution. He said:

We must look forward for the development of India to the development in the States of democratic institutions. You have them already in some. We have not the power to force the rulers of Indian States to make these changes, but we should give all possible chance for the

forces that are in the Provinces to flow over into the States, because there is a great danger if in any way you rely on the States for what is called a conservative element at the Centre to keep national forces in check. The danger there is that we are pledged to support the States. If you make the States instruments of reaction, you will have the Provinces agitating among the people of those States. British democracy may be placed in a very difficult position. I certainly hope that British democracy would refuse to come to the aid of people who were reactionary in their own States. . . .

If you are going to use the States as a reactionary force at the Centre—we have already overloaded the Centre with the States—and rule India and the States through the representatives of vested interests, the result will be that you will get Provinces where there is a comparatively advanced majority breaking away from the Centre and the whole of your structure will break down.

#### WHY IS A WHITE CIVIL SERVICE NEEDED?

It will no longer be possible in future, as it was in the past, to increase the proportion of Indian recruits in the Indian Civil Service. For any change in the existing conditions in this respect an amending Act of the British Parliament is necessary. Some people do not understand why such a drastic provision should have been introduced. Sir John Wardlaw-Milne supplied the answer to such a question in the debate:

The safeguards which there are in India to-day lie in the carrying out of the legal acts of the Government of India by a loyal and trustworthy Civil Service and by the other loyal Services of the Crown. Should anything occur to make it necessary for the Viceroy, Governors-General or Governors of the future to take action under this Bill when it becomes an Act, the duty to take such action will bring new decisions or the orders into being and they will become the law of land, which must be carried out by those loyal servants just as they are carrying out the orders which they receive to-day.

We must confess that there is much force in this. White civil servants are required to put into force the orders of the White Governors.

#### A JUMPING-OFF PLACE.

THE Marquess of Hartington's was probably the shortest speech on the Third Reading, but it was one of the best. In the course of it he said:

We believe that the Bill can do nothing but harm. It will cost much money and will satisfy no section of Indian opinion, because it is based upon fraud and upon telling two different stories to two different lots of people. To the Princes the Government say, "It is quite all right; your fears are unfounded," and the Government go at the same time to the Indian politicians and tell them that their lawful aspirations for self-government are to be satisfied. A Bill based upon such unstable foundations cannot be a success. It will prove no solution to the Indian problem and no departure from or settlement of that problem, but only a jumping-off place for fresh difficulties and dissatisfactions in India and fresh troubles at home in the shape of further unemployment among that section of our industry which depends upon the well-being of India for marketing its goods. Instead of getting India out of the way, we shall be bringing India into the forefront of politics, and we shall be for many years to come in a much less favourable position for grappling with the problem.

### POLITICAL HERMITS.

CENTRAL opinion in India is claimed by the supporters of the Government to be behind the Bill. Major Cadogan, for instance, said: "Moderate opinion in India, as expressed in the public views of such distinguished leaders of Indian thought as Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mr. Jayakar and others, makes it clear that they themselves are in favour of co-operation." It cannot be questioned that Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar form a very distinguished pair of politicians, and their individual support is no doubt of great value. But the question is: Are they willing to beat up a political party of supporters of the Bill? For the present they look like political hermits, and the support of hermits to a political measure does not go far in influencing public opinion.

### HEAD AND FRONT OF THE OFFENCE.

THE Liberal Party in India will be thankful to Mr. Isaac Foot for making it plain to the House of Commons what great weight they attach to direct election to the Assembly and what a grave blunder they think has been committed in the substitution of indirect for direct election. He said:

The reception given to this Bill and the criticisms of the Bill in India have very largely gathered around this question. The alteration from the direct to the indirect vote has been regarded in India as the head and front of our offending. Reference has been made frequently to the opposition to these proposals by the National Liberal Federation of India. I am sure that the Liberals of India will be flattered by the quotations which the hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Page-Croft) and others have made. If they have taken the trouble to find out the grounds on which the Liberals of India object, they will have found that at the centre of their objection is their intense opposition to the withdrawal of the direct vote in India. At the conference which took place at Poona on these proposals they directed their attention to this matter and said that to India it was a question of life and death.

But except for his insistence on direct election, Mr. Foot was thoroughly disappointing in his attitude towards the Bill. He no doubt said in his Third Reading speech that "the safeguards are too many and too onerous," but not one of them did he try to get relaxed or help others in getting relaxed. Indeed, in this very speech, after this slight reference to the onerous character of the safeguards he proceeded to justify them. He declared:

In the main they are defensible in the interests of India, and that they are put forward on that ground. What the people of this country say to India is this: "You are going to have immense powers that are not comparable anywhere else in the world. If you are equal to the responsibilities the result will be that these great Provinces will be practically under your own absolute control, but if the powers break down it is essential that steps should be taken to ensure that there is some government." It is the problem of free government with which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State has been concerned. Freedom is a great thing, but it must be built first of all on the foundation of government... The problem of securing free government has determined very largely the form and the purpose of the Bill, and explains why a great many safeguards are in it to which so much objection has been taken.

In fact, Sir Herbert Samuel took great pride in the fact that the British Liberal Party had given "a steady and consistent support to the Bill." Nothing in the world is more disappointing than the so-called Liberal Party's illiberalism.

### PROPPING UP THE UNION JACK.

VISCOUNT WOLMER, as was only to be expected, delivered a furious onslaught against the Bill. Two quotations may be given here:

What sort of Federation is this going to be in India? A Federation of units many of whom have little in common and some of whom do not even exist; a Federation where the Federal law on a great many subjects will not run in many of the acceding States; a Federation where the Provinces will pay income-tax and the States will not pay income tax; a Federation part of which rests upon the principles of democracy and part of which rests upon the principles of the sheerest autocracy; a Federation which has no control over 60 per cent. of its budget expenditure.

There is one more thing which I feel bound to say about this Federation. It is bolstered up with vested interests. There is substance and truth in the criticism of the Labour party that vested interests of a reactionary type have an undue position in the Constitution; and here I must protest altogether against these elements being described as a conservative influence by hon. Members. In listening to the speeches of Ministers one would think that the Socialists are right when they say that the Tory party exists to protect slum landlords. That is not the kind of Conservatism for which I joined the Tory party to serve. I joined the Conservative party because I admire its ideals, Imperial and national, and I believe that its philosophy is founded on the teaching of history and human experience. But here the Government have prostituted the name of Conservatism by packing the Assemblies and cooking the electorates in such a way that the very reforms which every decent-minded man and woman in this country would wish to see carried out in India will be made very difficult. What is the use of saying that Indians must carry social reforms themselves? The Government have made it as difficult as possible for them. All this was unnecessary if you had stuck to Provincial Government. But in order to buttress up your shaky artificial Federation you have introduced elements which some of us are ashamed should have been brought in to prop up the Union Jack in India. We believe that under these conditions the great constitutional experiment can have no fair trial, that much trouble must ensue, and that the people of India will suffer sorely. These are the reasons why we oppose the Bill.

### LAWS OF THE MEDES AND PERSIANS.

INDIA owes a debt of gratitude to the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Lansbury, for making one point clear. He said:

No one can say with truth that this Bill has been produced after consultation and co-operation with representatives from India. It is a Bill that has been put together by British statesmen, and it is being presented to India as something which we consider is good for India to live under. The right hon. Gentleman Sir Samuel Hoare has stated that he does not take much stock of the opposition in India, because in effect—if I am misrepresenting him I will withdraw—it was simply a clamour which would die down when the Bill comes to be operated because the politicians will, as they would here, want to be in their places, manning the various offices and sitting in the Assemblies that will be elected. That may or may not be true, but I think the right hon. Gentleman has overlooked the fact that those Indians who came for consultation with the Joint Select Committee have put on

record their objections to this Bill, and, so far as I know—and the right hon. Gentleman has never yet told us of any—there is no representative body in India of Indians who have supported the Bill.

To Miss Rathbone's appeal for declaring that the Labour Party, on coming into power, will change the treaties with the Princes, he responded as follows :

At the risk of being misunderstood, I am going to say that I do not believe that in international jurisprudence it has ever been considered that all treaties were, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, never to be changed. We cannot accept the view that the position that the Government are putting up in this Bill for the Princes is one which should last for ever. When we have the power, if the condition in India is what people expect it will be, we shall try—I am sure my friends who will be here will try—to get a more reasonable arrangement with the Princes as to their position within the Federal State of India. To me, it is quite amazing that a House of Commons at this time of day should pass a Bill giving the Princes such tremendous power over what is called a democratic constitution.

*House of Lords : 6th June.*

WHERE IS CENTRAL OPINION ?

THE Marquess of Salisbury, in opposing the First Reading of the Bill in the House of Lords, did us the honour of referring to this paper in these terms :

THE SERVANT OF INDIA represents an association which was founded by Mr. Gokhale, whom all persons interested in this subject know to have been a great authority

as a moderate reformer. And this particular paper represents the Party of Mr. Sastrî, who belongs to the same section of opinion. This is how the SERVANT OF INDIA deals with the Government's proposals. (The paper writes:) "Political India certainly does not want this Bill and would honestly prefer the *status quo* to it. If the measure depended upon Indian opinion it would have no chance whatever." What chance is there of good-will? Where is this central body of opinion which supports the proposals of His Majesty's Government? I have not the very slightest idea where it is to be found. I have not been quoting extreme partisans, I have been quoting, as far as I am able, this moderate section of opinion in India, and that is what it says.

Then Lord Salisbury quoted the *Statesman* to show that "moderate European opinion" also voices the same sentiments. In its issue of March 4, it wrote :

"To-day there is only the duped and misled National Government left advocating what it took upon itself merely to carry out the wishes of the supposedly united voice of India. Those Liberals who are not damnatory are dumb. Under Moslem leadership the Assembly has roundly condemned it. Moslems, Congress, Liberals, Princes and the British diehards are all united. The lion figures of Mr. Baldwin and Sir Samuel Hoare are left protesting that India still wants it."

Viscount Halifax refused to be guided by the SERVANT OF INDIA, in which he said some "very extreme things" were being said. He would rather bank upon the support of Sir Tej Bahadur Saprû.

## The Servants of India Society.

REPORT FOR 1934-35.

### SOME PRESS COMMENTS.

*Following are the comments in some of the newspapers on the Servants of India Society's Report for 1934-35.*

#### REAL SERVANTS OF INDIA

THE SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY has become an indispensable institution for India.

Its activities cover every department of life and every part of the country. The report for 1934-35 is again full of the varied and valuable activities of the Society's members, for which the country must be thankful to its great founder, Gopal Krishna Gokhale.

In politics the Society, its members and its organ the SERVANT OF INDIA condemned the J. P. C. constitution as not only disappointing but unworkable. The attitude taken up by the Society's paper is in marked contrast with that of Liberals, or even some Congress leaders, who even now refuse to make up their minds as to whether they should work the reforms and accept offices in the process, or not.

The most important activities of the Society were in the legislature, whether in the provincial or the central, among the Indian States, the labour movement, the treatment and condition of overseas Indians, local self-government, co-operation, rural reconstruction, the cause of education, depressed classes movement, scouting, Seva Sadan and so on. In fact, whenever there was some difficult situation to cope with the members of the Servants of India Society offered their services and did their best for their country.

Some of the members of the Society, though moderate themselves, have served the interests of Indian workers truly and well, and even their enemies cannot say that they have betrayed them on a single occasion. In this connection the services rendered by both Mr. N. M. Joshi and Mr. R. R. Bakhale are of outstanding merit and reflect credit on them individually as well as collectively on the Society as a whole, for their singular devotion to their duty and their singleness of purpose.

The Society and its organ must be congratulated on the valuable work done by them in educating public opinion in regard to the Indian States and their constant propaganda against the Princes, their despotism and their many criminal extravagances. While some of the members of the Congress are still toying with the Princes and the Indian States with their manifold corruptions, the Servants of India Society and its organ have had no delusions on the point and they at least have done their best to educate public opinion in the proper way.

While the Congress and its leaders have been befriending the Indian States, and their rulers, in spite of their reactionary influences on the country, the SERVANT OF INDIA has again taken the lead in creating public opinion in the country, on the right lines.

In other spheres of national activities too the Society and its members have taken no mean part and whatever may be their past politics, at present at least they have no intention to shirk their responsibilities or their duties to their country.

The Society has more than justified its existence and it is a credit to the country. By their

devotion to duty, their patriotism, and their courage, the members have shown to India what a small band of devoted political missionaries are capable of achieving for their countrymen.—The *Bombay Sentinel*.

The Servants of India Society completes this week thirty years of its career, and during this period it has served the country as few institutions can claim to have done. One distinguishing feature of the Society is that it does not confine its activities to politics, though politics occupies a large place in its programme. The Society rightly believes, as the Indian National Congress too has come to recognise in recent years, that nation-building needs simultaneous efforts in many directions. And its report for the year 1934-35 testifies to the noble work it has done in various spheres of national life, political, economic and social. Any institution in the country may well be proud of such work or of workers like Messrs. Srinivasa Sastri, G. K. Devadhar, A. V. Thakkar, Hirdayanath Kunzru and N. M. Joshi, to name only a few of the members of the Society. These Servants of India and the Society as a whole have worthily maintained the noble tradition of selfless service left to them as a rich legacy by the founder of the Society, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, whom Gandhiji himself gratefully acknowledged as his political Guru.

As regards the Society's political work during the year 1934-35, two notable features need to be particularly noted. One is that the Society gave the right lead to the Liberals and many other political parties in the country in rejecting the new constitution. Another is the Society's very strong championship of the constitutional rights of the States people. A regrettable weakness of the Society in matters political is that in pressing its political views upon the Government or in creating sanctions behind its demands, it takes a too narrow a view of the scope of constitutional methods to which it is pledged. It is much to be hoped, however, that in the trying times that are ahead, when the Government will impose upon the country a universally condemned constitution, the Society will join other Nationalist political institutions in taking a stronger line of action than it has so far done, so as to compel Government to withdraw the new constitution. It is necessary in this connection to remember that the Servants of India Society has always held the view that "it would be less injurious to national interests to remain under the present constitution than to come under the new one."—The *Bombay Chronicle*.

... BUT though events have outpaced former ideals and the progressives of yesterday are now looked upon very much like reactionaries, to-day on the thirtieth anniversary of the Servants of India Society we have no hesitation in paying our homage to the memory of its great founder and recording our appreciation of the great work done by the other members of the Society, in the economic and social fields. In everything they have done, they have brought to bear the real missionary spirit and the latest report of the Society, which lies before us as we write, is a fine record of achievement in uplifting humanity of which any Society can be proud. If the Society were to identify itself less with active politics and more with the work of social and educational advancement to which the members are devoting so much attention, we are sure it will make itself still more useful to the country.—The *Hindustan Times*.

... THE record of work put in by all the Servants of India is such as every Indian can be proud of. Of particular importance, in our opinion, is the work done by Mr. Sastri and Mr. Kunzru in regard to the coming reforms. The SERVANT OF INDIA, which is in charge of Mr. Vaze, has been doing incalculable service in exposing the character of the new constitution; in particular, its federal character. This journal and the *Sansthani Swarajya* have specialised in ventilating the States' people's grievances. Mr. Devadhar's services in the social service and co-operative fields scarcely need any mention—so well-known they are. The work steadily being done by Messrs. Joshi and Bakhale in the Assembly and the Local Council has met with the approbation and admiration of even those who differ with them on matters of public policy. Similarly, Mr. S. V. Parulekar's services in the cause of organisation of labour and the harassment to which he is being subjected bring the fact once more to the fore that at least the activities of some of the members of the Society are not immune from the attentions of the police and the Home Department in the same way as those of Messrs. Gokhale and Sastri were not, in the past.—The *Mahratta*.

#### A FINE RECORD OF SERVICE

THIRTY years of selfless, disinterested service in the cause of the country—this is the splendid record of the Servants of India Society which completes, this week, its third decade of existence. It was that great stalwart among politicians, Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, who conceived the idea of starting an institution dedicated to the service of the country with the object of enabling Indians of light and leading to co-operate in doing constructive work for the general advancement of India. What the Society has achieved during the thirty years of its existence is a fitting tribute to the memory of its founder. Quiet, steady, unobtrusive work, carried on at times against heavy odds, has steadily raised the Society in the estimation of all classes in this country and has made it a power in the land.

Its views on the constitutional reforms have received respectful consideration not only in India but in England as well. The decision of the Labour Party to oppose the India Bill on its third reading is believed to have been due, in some measure, to the strong attitude adopted by the Society and the Liberal Federation. The last session of the Federation was held under the presidentship of Mr. H. N. Kunzru, the Vice-President of the Servants of India Society, and it was at this session that the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri made his notable speech condemning the proposed reforms. Very soon the new constitution will be foisted on the country, and the Society will then have a splendid opportunity of making its influence felt by fighting, with all the other Nationalist parties, for the removal from the constitution of all those objectionable features which have made it look like a travesty of responsible government.

Not only in politics, but in social and economic matters too, the Society has an enviable record of service to its credit. The society has paid special attention to the need for the amelioration of labour conditions in India and rural reconstruction. In the field of social service, it has done excellent work on behalf of the depressed classes and has given Mr. Gandhi valuable help in his recent Harijan tour.

The report of the Society for the year 1934-35 gives us ample justification for expressing the conviction that in the trying times that are now ahead the Society will rise to the occasion and give a good

account of itself. We wish it many more years of useful work.—*The Indian Liberal.*

We offer our warm felicitations to the Servants of India Society of Poona on the completion of its thirtieth year. It was founded by the late Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale on the 12th of June, 1905, and is, in fact, a living memorial of that distinguished patriot. The country may not be quite in agreement with the politics of the Society, which was the politics of Mr. Gokhale. But it is a most remarkable institution and has been doing highly useful constructive work. As is well-known, the Society is a body of national missionaries who pledge themselves to serve the country in a religious spirit, without seeking any personal advantage for themselves and without making distinctions of caste, creed, race or religion in their service. This was the ideal of Mr. Gokhale and to this ideal the Society has remained true.

The activities of the Society are many-sided and in every direction it may point to substantial work having been done. The co-operative movement has received great help from the members of the Society and the *harijan* movement has received its due support from it. But rural reconstruction is the Society's special care. It conducts three rural reconstruction centres directly—one near Cuttack in Orissa, another in Trichinopoly, Madras, and another in Berar. The Poona Seva Sadan is doing splendid social service. The Society is giving increasing attention to the propagation of Swadeshi, and Indians abroad, who are fallen on evil days and evil tongues, are a special care of the Society. May it have a long and useful career.—*Forward.*

The report of the work of the Servants of India Society for 1934-35 is of more than ordinary interest. It was due to the strong lead given by the Society, that, during the year, the Liberal Party came to the conclusion that the proposed Reforms were unacceptable, and that it would be less injurious to national interests to remain under the present constitution than to come under the new one. The signal service rendered by the SERVANT OF INDIA, the mouthpiece of the Society, in mobilising moderate opinion firmly against the constitutional proposals adumbrated in the J. P. C. Report and the India Bill, also deserves to be gratefully recognised. But it is in the sphere of non-political activity that the Society has made its most valuable contribution to public welfare. In the promotion of labour organisation, in the co-operative movement, and in Swadeshi, the Society did excellent work during the year in Madras, Bombay and in U. P. It conducted three rural reconstruction centres, and four adult education centres, while

experienced members of the Society like Messrs. Devadhar, Thakkar, Kunzru and Venkatasubbaiyya have been the moving spirits of the Harijan movements in their respective provinces. As a political institution associated with a dynamic ideology conducive to the political redemption of the country, we feel that the Servants of India Society has not fared as meritoriously as it might have done. But it has been rendering with silent and steady efficiency an immense deal of precious nation-building work of great value for the future. In the coming days, the Society may well prove to be an asset to Gandhiji in his village industries campaign, as it has already proved to be in the Harijan campaign.—*The Free Press Journal.*

#### A DESERVING INSTITUTION.

... The seed sown thirty years ago has sprouted up into a big tree whose branches are spreading to various parts of the country. The aim with which Mr. Gokhale founded the Society was to train a body of national missionaries pledged to serve the country in a religious spirit, without seeking any personal advantage to themselves and without making distinctions of caste, creed, race or religion in their service.

Keeping in view the high ideal laid down in the constitution of the Society, a band of less than thirty members has been quietly and unostentatiously carrying on a large variety of work. Though politics occupies the most important place in the activities of the Society, much is being done in the social, economic and educational spheres, also. Nation-building requires simultaneous effort in many directions, and true to this dictum, the members are devoting themselves to work of varied types. Constitutional reforms in British India and Indian States, the condition of our countrymen abroad, promotion of labour organization, cooperative societies, rural reconstruction, Swadeshi, boy scout and girl-guide movements, uplift of the depressed classes and relief of the victims of natural calamities (earthquake, floods, etc.) are some of the directions which claimed the attention of those patriotic workers. The latest report of the Society for the year 1934-35, which we have before us, is a creditable record of beneficial activities of which any organization may well be proud. The finances of the Society have never been in a prosperous state. With better monetary support from the public the Society can usefully increase its membership and expand the field of its labours. We heartily endorse the appeal made by the Society (which appeared in a recent issue of this paper) for adequate public support and hope that this will be forthcoming in an unstinted measure.—*The Leader.*

## FETTERS ON INDIA'S WRISTS.

### COL. WEDGWOOD'S CONDEMNATION OF BILL.

Col. Josiah C. Wedgwood spoke as follows on the Third Reading of the India Bill in the House of Commons on 4th June.

Of course the end is not yet; but for this House and for myself 30 years' continual struggle on this question ends to-morrow. For 30 years India has been struggling towards the light. All that time we have gone forward one step after another. I remember the Morley-Minto reforms being debated in this House, and I remember the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms being debated. They have all gone a little bit nearer freedom, and in this long struggle the

Indians have learned what freedom means. We have educated them from this House. All my friends—Gokhale, Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Motilal Nehru, and above all, Edwin Montagu himself—were all lovers of liberty—not nationalists, but real lovers of liberty. They are all dead now, but it is through their spectacles that I would have this House for one moment look at this Bill. All the previous Measures were devised to be, and were, in fact, leading strings in which the Orient might run to learn liberty and how to use it. The leading strings that were devised by John Morley and by Edwin Montagu have suddenly been converted into fetters. This is the end

so far as we are concerned, and so far as the constitutional struggle for freedom in India is concerned. What we are passing to-morrow is final. There can be no change. It is not liberty you are handing over, but the ossification of things as they are, a perpetuation of India as it is. If the machine is strong enough it will work, and it will take more than us to change it.

Hon. Members opposite say that the Indian opposition to this Measure comes from the fact that the Indians prefer things as they are, because they hope that at some future date a Labour Government in this country will deal with the subject on different lines. They have long given up that hope. They know, and my Labour colleagues know, that, even if they were in power 10 years hence, they could not alter this Bill; and even if they were to think to alter it, we should never get home rule—that Dominion Status—which has been a popular cry until it has become a danger beacon for India. We cannot alter this settlement. Once this Bill is through, once these fetters are on their wrists and on our wrists, there is no chance of any further step forward. Put England back to 1830 and make reform impossible; put back Ireland to 1820 when Catholics had no votes. If you can see us going back to that position, you can see what India sees in this Bill.

There can be no change. This all powerful House can make no change because this Bill is the registration of treaties between a sovereign State and sovereign Princes. We believe, whatever other countries in Europe believe, that any alteration of a treaty requires the consent of both parties. We should have to get the consent of—how many hundred Princes?—before we could alter the Bill, save and except as the rules and instructions provide. Those rules and instructions rule out the amendments wanted for reform. All questions of communal representation are ruled out, all questions of a just and common franchise are ruled out, and all questions, above all, of the powers of the Princes in their own States and in India: so that this Bill, when it becomes an Act, when later on, if ever, it is enacted in India and put into operation, will be permanent. Because of that, I say without hesitation, having known the great Indians of the past and knowing the politicians of to-day, that every thinking man in India would sooner not have this Bill, and would sooner have the *status quo* rather than this end of all things so far as liberty is concerned.

As politicians we all know that we have to invent ories to get our followers rallied behind us. How can you expect the Indians, any more than the Egyptians, or any more than the Cypriots or any more than the Ionian Islanders in old days, not to make the principal plank in their platform, "Get rid of England"? At the time when the Ionian Islands were to be handed back to Greece by Mr. Gladstone there was first a plebiscite to ascertain whether the people wished to remain under English rule or go to Greek rule, and they all voted in favour of returning to Greece, but when they saw it happening they petitioned in vain to remain under English rule. Very similar things happened in Egypt not so long ago. When it means taking away all that we have stood for and substituting someone else, there comes the rub. Here we are taking away all that England has contributed in the way of justice and security and fair play and toleration for the last hundred or two hundred years in parts of India. They have asked for the removal of King Log and have suddenly found themselves with King Stork. Is it any wonder that they prefer the *status quo*? Is it any wonder that things now go so smoothly in India that even

this Government have no trouble with the management of India? They have no trouble because the Indians are afraid, and they are afraid of this Bill.

The Government know perfectly well that this Bill is no longer a present to India. This is the punishment of India—the punishment of India for having asked, foolishly I agree, for the removal of English control. If you were to ask the present Legislative Councils of India, if you were to ask the Assembly, of course, whether they would have this Bill or the *status quo* there is no sort of doubt what the response would be. If you were to ask the new Legislative Councils elected under that part of the Bill which is not so dangerous, the decentralization proposals, which they would have, there is no shadow of doubt what the answer would be. Previous federations have been carried through with the consent of the peoples federated. Canada, Australia, South Africa—all those great federations, the work of great men of our nation in the past, were all accepted federations. This is coercion; there is no acceptance here. The very idea that a provision should be inserted in this Bill for the consultation of the Indian people upon this Constitution which we are presenting to them has been turned down over and over again during the 40 days in which we have been discussing this Bill. They shall not have a voice. It is their punishment.

If I were an Indian I should try to avoid this punishment, try to avoid being put for ever under the control of Indian Princes, Indian Rajahs, Indian millionaires, Brahmins so conservative that nothing on the Treasury Bench is so Conservative—put there for ever without any possible chance of freedom or democracy. If that were the prospect before me, as an Indian, it is not the *status quo* I should vote for, I should want to go back to the Morley-Minto Reforms; I would even go back to the India before the Morley-Minto Reforms rather than accept these chains for all times. We are handing them the anummy of freedom, wrapped round in its cerements, endless bandage after endless bandage—dead for ever.

We were told by the Secretary of State, in his opening speech, that there was no alternative. There is the alternative that is desired by India—leave us alone, leave us as we are. And who here does not wish to leave them alone, if that is their wish? If we left them alone or if we merely gave them the option of being left alone and they made that choice, it is said that the position would be more difficult and more dangerous. Not a bit of it. They have had their lesson. They see now the dangers that lie in their path—now they have asked for more than we are prepared to give. We can always force this Measure on them. If we leave them alone we shall have a peaceful contented India, thankful above all that they have been saved from this danger. If we do not leave them alone, if we push this Measure through, if the Princes do come in and they had far better not—what will be the condition of India then? We shall, in a completely un-English way, directly contrary to the whole traditions of our race, have forced a reactionary Constitution upon people who do not want it, at the same time depriving them of any chance of saying they do not want it.

In what frame of mind will they then accept that Constitution? They will work it, but they will not work it with us or for us, they will work it against us. There is no possible chance for the ryot and the untouchable and the Labour people; they, with their statutory minorities, are to have no voice whatever. As long as the working men have not got votes for people who are not of their class they may just as well have no votes whatever for people who

are of their class. There will be no hope of change. This is the cementation of reaction for ever. What can we expect? Here is a scheme in which we put all the power, or almost all the power, that we in this House have had over India into the hands of people who by their training, by their birth and by their education, are unfitted to govern others. We are putting them in the place of the India Office, in the place of our experience. We are giving such people power, and there is no doubt they will make a mess of it, and the blame for everything in which they fail will be put on us. All the safeguards will have to be used—they will make them have to be used. The Princes and the millionaires, harried and terrified all the time by the rising, surging unrest of people who can get no justice, will seek a scapegoat, and we shall be the scapegoat.

How is the Constitution going to work? How can it work, except tempestuously for us and disastrously for the people of India? Whatever happens, we shall have the maxim guns and they will not. Yes, but the maxim gun is not so useful as an argument when you want to deal peacefully with friends. I said we should have trouble with this Constitution if it is passed, and we shall rightly have that trouble because we are not giving to the Indians what we believe to be the best. If we were giving India the Constitution which we believe to be the best and then said, "Take it or leave it", we should be doing our duty. Now we are not doing our duty, but are forcing down their throats a Constitution which we know is not the best. As the hon. and gallant Member for Bournemouth (Sir H. Croft) remarked, we are in this Constitution handing over law and order and education to the Provinces and we are starting every one of those Provinces on perverted foundations. We are establishing in every one of those Provinces a statutory majority, a master Government which cannot come to an end, and with statutory minorities which will have no votes whatever for their masters. Sometimes it will be Hindus who will be trampled upon by Moslems and at other times Moslems will be trampled upon by Hindus—whichever is in the minority. The minority has no vote for the masters. The minority is disfranchised. We give the majority power over justice, over water, over schools, over everything which is intimate to the life of the people.

The other day there was a shouting, screaming frantic mob moving down on Karachi, intending to smash the shops and break the heads of every Hindu there. And they would have done it, had it not been that British troops were called out to keep them back. They did hold them back. We are putting in Sind, for all time, a Government which can never be removed, over a minority of 25 per cent. of Hindus—putting over them that fanatical Government. How do you expect minorities to get justice; how do you expect to get fair treatment for the minorities in any of those Provinces when you have inflicted upon them a Constitution which makes justice impossible and toleration a vice? If the Hindus had been allowed to have a vote for a Mohammedan in Sind, then the Mohammedan representatives on the Sind Council and the Mohammedan Government in Sind would at any rate have felt that they might lose their seats if they were unfair to the Hindus. Communal representation was introduced at the request of the Mohammedans in order to protect Mohammedan minorities, and to ensure that they might have a chance of sending a minority member, in places where the Mohammedans were in a minority; but the Hindus are refused the right to have a vote for their masters. They are told that they can send 25 per cent. representation to Parliament, can send a minority but

as they can never be a majority they can never have the slightest influence on the Mohammedan Government. We asked that Sind might be saved, that Sind, which has been part of Bombay for over a century, should remain part of Bombay, governed as the rest of Bombay is governed—Bombay, the most educated, intelligent and Western of all States of India. No; that has to go. That is part of our pledge to the Mohammedans. Why not leave things as they are? All we want is things as they are—not for ever, but things as they are rather than this crime which you mean to inflict upon the Indian people.

### SHORT NOTICE.

**TIBETAN TREK.** By RONALD KAULBACK. (Hodder & Stoughton.) 1934. 25cm. 300p. 12/6.

THIS book contains a description of a journey undertaken to Tibet by Ronald Kaulback, a young explorer in the company of F. Kingdon Ward, the famous explorer and botanist. It is not everyone that can be an explorer. Exploration demands endurance, resourcefulness, and courage, and these qualities Mr. Ronald Kaulback possesses in abundance. So keen was his desire to explore that he preferred "to brouse on herbs in the wilds than live as a stalled ox in the stables of civilisation."

The record of adventures encountered by Ronald and Kingdon Ward in the inhospitable Tibetan mountains makes interesting reading. The journey to Tibet is a long story but full of interest with many glimpses of strange places and queer peoples, occasional thrills and some amusing incidents. The maps make it easy for the ordinary reader to follow the journey. As a book of travel, "Tibetan Trek" is unsurpassed.

M. V. SUBRAHMANYAM. HQ

### BOOKS RECEIVED.

**HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT, 1821-1894. Vol. I: Bengal.** By BIMANBEHARI MAJUMDAR. (University of Calcutta.) 1934. 23cm. 509p.

**MODERN CAPITALISM.** By HENRI SES. Translated by HOMER B. VANDERBLUE and GEORGES F. DORIOT. (Noel Douglas.) 1928. 21cm. 225p. 12/6.

**DOCUMENTS ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, 1933.** Ed. by JOHN W. WHEELER-BENNETT. (Oxford University Press.) 1934. 25cm. 536p. 25/-

**AN ECONOMIC SURVEY OF GAJJU CHAK.** BY ANGHAL DASS under the supervision of O. F. STRICKLAND. (The Board of Economic Inquiry, Punjab.) 1934. 25cm. 270p. Rs. 3.

**SURVEY OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, 1933.** By ARVOLD J. TOYNBEE. (Oxford University Press.) 1934. 25cm. 636p. 24/-

**A SHORT HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, 1930-1934.** By G. M. GATHORNE-HARDY. (Oxford University Press.) 1934. 22cm. 351p. 7/6.

**STABILISED MONEY.** By IRVING FISHER. (Allen & Unwin.) 1935. 21cm. 443p. 10/6.

**PRESENT DAY PROBLEMS OF INDIAN EDUCATION.** By M. M. ZEHURUDDIN AHMAD. (Author, Ismail College, Andheri, Bombay.) 1935. 20cm. 89p. Rs. 1-4-0.

**IF I WERE DICTATOR.** By JULIAN HUXLEY. (Methuen.) 1934. 20cm. 122p. 2/6.

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