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Topics of the Week.

Gandhiji's Advice to Congress Ministers.

IN the *Harijan* of the 17th inst., only about half a page in which has anything to do with Harijans, Mahatma Gandhi lays bare his ideas of how Congress Ministries, by working strictly within the new constitution, could carry out a large programme of constructive work. While what he says about introducing a simple and inexpensive machinery of administration at the top will be readily agreed to in a general way, the concrete suggestions which he makes, in the way of illustrations, of the policy the Congress Governments might initiate will not, we fear, be acceptable even to those Congressmen who have shouldered the responsibilities of office. Education, he thinks, can be made self-supporting. If hand-spinning were taught to scholars, the yarn they would produce would, according to him, yield the revenue needed to meet the cost of education. This is an old idea of Mahatma Gandhi but has nowhere been translated into a reality. We wonder if the Congress Ministry in any province would seek to test its practicability. Will at least Mr. C. Rajagopalachari who of all the Congress leaders adopts the Gandhian ideology to the largest extent seek to give effect to what appears to Mahatma Gandhi to be "perfectly feasible and eminently reasonable"?

ANOTHER suggestion Mahatma Gandhi puts forward is that "all purchases of cloth should be in khadi." If he means that Government should purchase only khadi, the suggestion is of exceedingly diminutive dimensions. If, however, the public in general are to be compelled to buy khadi cloth alone, the suggestion is open to the gravest objection as making an inroad in a field which is everywhere reserved for every individual's own judgment. The Mahatma also

recommends that salt should be made free to the poor. If something more than the tiny concession made in the Gandhi-Irwin pact is meant, two considerations suggest themselves: salt cannot be made free to the poor unless it is made free to everybody, i. e. unless the salt duty is abolished, and the salt duty cannot be abolished by the provincial governments; such abolition falls within the sphere of the central government. Taking the suggestions as a whole, one cannot say that they are particularly helpful or enlightening. We would watch in this connection Mr. Rajagopalachari's career as Premier with especial interest, for he if any one will make it his consistent aim to implement Gandhiji's ideas and ideals.

Gokak Strike.

IT is a great pity that the strike in the Gokak mills is still dragging on, even though seven months have elapsed since its commencement. And be it noted that its prolongation is not the result of any unreasonableness on the part of the workers but that of sheer obduracy on the part of the employers. Let us explain how. Thanks to the intervention of the Labour Office, a settlement of the strike by mutual agreement was in fact reached in April last. Under it all the employees excepting the 84 discharged ones were to be taken back in permanent employment. The employers, however, failed to carry faithfully into effect this part of the settlement. Instead of re-engaging all the strikers as their permanent staff, as many as 400 were taken back only on a temporary basis and 15 clerks were sent away, after the conclusion of the settlement, for no other reason but that they had joined the strike. But this is not all. As if to break the back of the strike, a large number of employees were served with notices asking them to vacate the quarters provided by the management. We leave it to the reader to decide as to which party was really responsible for the continuation of the dispute.

IF all this was done with a view to forcing the strikers into submission, it must be stated that it had a contrary effect on them. Far from their morale being lowered as a result of this high-handedness on the part of the employers, it only helped to strengthen them in their determination to continue the struggle to the bitter end. A sit-down strike was the sequel, which was met by the declaration of a lock-out on the last day of May. Since then nearly 3,000 workers have been undergoing the pangs of hunger and other hardships inseparable from unemployment, but with all this their determination to pursue the struggle peacefully till success is achieved remains inflexible. This is doubtless as creditable to them as the stubbornness of the employers is condemnable. One thing is clear. It is that if the fight is to be kept going, it cannot be done without help from the general public. And Mr. Dinkar D. Desai, of the Servants of India Society, who is making himself useful to the strikers

in their hour of trial, earnestly appeals to all having the well-being of labour at heart for such succour. We are confident the needed help will be available in full measure.

Infringements of Civil Liberty.

THE latest list of encroachments on civil liberty published by the Civil Liberties Union contains an unusually lengthy catalogue of prosecution for sedition and demands for or forfeiture of security deposits from newspapers and printing presses. About the merits of the sedition cases nothing can be said so long as the cases are sub judice. This, however, need not stand in the way of public surprise being expressed at the touchiness exhibited even by popular governments on this point. One could understand bureaucratic governments in the provinces prior to the advent of provincial autonomy scenting sedition in every strong criticism of official acts and policies indulged in by organs of public opinion. But why, it is wondered, should the new provincial governments deriving their power from the people be equally, or perhaps even more, sensitive? It is not intended by any means that they should deliberately connive at public writings and speeches which may be unquestionably seditious. But would it be expecting too much of them to hope that towards public criticism in general they would adopt an attitude of good-tempered tolerance?

A CASE of flagrant abuse of the power to refuse to send objectionable communications vested in Government under the Post Office Act took place in connection with the recent Khalsa College students' strike. A telegram handed in by the Secretary of the students' union was not sent on the ground that it was seditious. The telegram merely referred to the lathi charge on students and required the immediate presence of the addressee on the scene. We do not know how even by the widest stretch of imagination its contents could be regarded as fomenting disaffection towards the Government established by law in British India. The students' disaffection may be directed against the management of the College but had no possible connection with the rulers of British India. Yet, curiously enough, have Government in this case behaved as if the students were revolting against their authority. Should not the functionary responsible for the abuse of this power be called to account?

THE Bengal Government's ruthless campaign for the last twelve years and more against the supposed danger of terrorism has by now familiarised the public with all kinds of arbitrary restraints on individual liberty. But we did not know things were equally bad in the adjoining province of Bihar. There, under what is known as the Ordinance Act or Black Law as it is popularly called, an internee was put under arrest because he was found talking to one who did not belong to the village of his internment. The action might at first sight appear unbelievable but is, nonetheless a fact. Who can doubt after this that truth is sometimes stranger than fiction? Any popular Minister worth his salt must put his foot down on such police excesses, as we hope the new Congress Minister will do.

Fundamental Rights Day.

THE authorities of the Deccan States' People's Conference and the Indian States' People's Conference are organising the observance of August 1st as a day devoted to focussing public attention on the need of fundamental rights for States' subjects.

The endeavour is praiseworthy and will, we hope, meet with success. In most States even the most elementary rights are either conspicuous by their total absence or are subject to very stringent restrictions. Public meetings can be held only on sufferance of the authorities and an independent press has rarely prospered or promises to prosper in an Indian State. The reason is not far to seek. Due to the autocratic nature of the rule prevailing in the States the authorities have learnt to become so impatient of criticism that all independent journalism, whenever it may try to raise its head, is mercilessly throttled by them. Where, as in the States, public liberty is so severely restricted, there can be no public life and no growth of healthy public opinion.

IT is, therefore, intended that on the first of next month public meetings should be organised from which the demand for the elementary rights of liberty of speech, writing, association and worship for the people of the States would be voiced. The demand is so simple that there can really be no objection to it from any quarter. And as a matter of fact all political parties in British India are united in pressing the demand and will heartily co-operate with the Deccan States' People's Conference and the Indian States' People's Conference in making the proposed celebration a success. About the desirability of interfering in the affairs of Indian States there may be a difference of view amongst public workers in British India, but there can be none about the necessity of States' people enjoying full civil liberty.

BUT it really depends upon the rulers of States to make a success or failure of the celebration, as they like. They would be wise in their generation if, looking to the democratic spirit of the times, they forestall the celebration by issuing a charter of fundamental rights for their subjects. This is, of course, too good to come true. Even if, however, they find it difficult to rise to the importance of the occasion, let them at least not obstruct the celebration. But past experience forbids us to expect even this much tolerance from the traditionally autocratic rulers of States. In any case their attitude towards the celebration will be a test of their desire to grant fundamental rights to their subjects. And in so far as the celebration will help to put this desire to the test it will be doing a public service, even if it results in no other practical gain.

Railway Disaster near Patna.

THE whole country is shocked by the news of the disastrous railway accident near Patna last week, which is said to be the most serious during recent years. According to official reports, over 100 persons were killed and very nearly double the number injured as a result of the accident. It is somewhat of a relief to learn that everything possible was and is being done to afford medical aid to the wounded and the injured. Even so, their suffering and pain must have been terrible and the heart-felt sympathy of the country goes out in full measure to the dependants of those who are dead and to those who have received injuries. The fact that the Governor felt compelled to run down from Ranchi to Patna and pay a visit to the wounded in the hospitals shows the serious view taken even in official quarters of the calamity.

THE cause of the accident is not yet known, but we hope an inquiry, not a mere departmental one, will soon be set on foot so as to ascertain the circumstances in which the accident occurred. So far as one

can see, all railway accidents are as a rule followed by inquiries. There is greater need of following this rule on the present occasion not only in view of the magnitude of the calamity but also having regard to certain disquieting reports, now in the air, about malicious mischief being at the root of the trouble. Every one would be pleased if the inquiry proves these reports to have been groundless. If mischief is found to have anything to do with it, let no stone be left unturned with a view to mischief-makers being adequately punished.

Indianisation Forsooth.

THE *Hindu* must be thanked for exposing to public view the anomalies connected with recruitment for what are called scientific appointments under the Central Government. These posts, we are told, are sometimes filled without their being advertised, as happened recently, e. g., in the case of the secretaryship of the Jute Committee. The appointment was quietly conferred on a person who was already in the service of the Bihar Government as Deputy Director of Agriculture. Another post on the same Committee has now fallen vacant, which happily is advertised. But the sense of pleasure at its being advertised is nullified by its advertisement only in England and not in India. This means that an Englishman will find his way to the post. This is how the policy of Indianisation to which the Government of India stand committed is given effect to! One wonders whether any efforts were made to secure the services of a suitable Indian before it was decided to advertise the post only in England. Public opinion has the right to expect full information on this point.

APART from the inconsistency involved in the recruitment of a non-Indian, such appointments impose on this country needlessly heavy economic burdens. The lucky Britisher who may be selected will, it is said, draw as high a salary as Rs. 1,500 per month, whereas it should not have been difficult, given the will, to find qualified Indians who would be content with much less. It is wrong, when Indians with the required qualifications are available, to go out of the country for recruitment and doubly wrong to recruit outsiders on exorbitant terms. To do so is nothing short of an unpardonable waste of public funds, which must be put a stop to without delay.

BUT the scandal does not end here. The journal gives some instances in which the so-called experts brought out from England soon found themselves unable to do justice to the duties of their posts and showed the good sense to resign their jobs. In one such case the appointment subsequently went to an Indian with one-third of the salary that was being paid to his British predecessor. In another case a European woman was brought out to fill a scientific post without apparently possessing the needed qualifications. If the Government of India do not find it in themselves to carry the Indianisation policy faithfully into effect, let them at least not perpetuate the scandal of dumping on this country at enormous cost incompetent and unqualified foreigners.

Asiatic Labour Congress.

THE second session of the Asiatic Labour Congress was held recently at Tokyo in Japan and is pronounced to be a success. India was represented at the Congress by five delegates, who included Mr. R. R. Bakhale of the Servants of India Society. The Congress aims at the realisation of the ideals of the International Labour Conference, in so far as Asiatic

countries are concerned and takes its stand on labour's magna carta laid down in the Treaty of Versailles.

AS the President Mr. Bunji Sazuki explained in his speech, these principles (embodied in the labour magna carta) constitute the very foundation of international peace and world progress. The work of the Congress has thus a close bearing not only on the amelioration of labour conditions but on the promotion of universal peace and has great international value. The removal of racial inequalities and of capitalistic and imperialistic domination under which Asia's working classes are placed is also an objective of the Congress. All which considerations emphasise the desirability of the working classes in Asia standing behind it and doing everything in their power to strengthen it.

BY one of its resolutions the Congress favoured the convening of an International Economic Conference under the auspices of the League of Nations in close collaboration with the I.L.O. The Congress apparently feels that the present-day economic difficulties in the fields of currency, banking, exchange, trade, commerce, etc., cannot be resolved without effort on an international basis. And it is felt that the suggested Conference would pave the way for the lifting of the economic depression which hangs over the world like a pall. It goes without saying that such a Conference should have on it adequate and effective labour representation. It may be hoped the idea will be soon translated into action.

Third Class Passengers in Ceylon and India.

THE third class railway passenger in Ceylon is apparently a more lucky being than his Indian counterpart. According to the *Ceylon Daily News*, he soon expects to travel in carriages fitted up with electric fans and cushioned seats. Such comforts for the poor third class traveller in this country are simply unthinkable. It is not as if, commercially speaking, the third class is a losing concern. In point of fact it everywhere yields a huge profit, but it is utilised for providing more and greater comforts, not for the third class passenger, but for the higher classes. The railway authorities see to it that he exercises self-abnegation to the full and learns to feel happy and pleased when others are comfortable. He must not expect any addition to his own travelling amenities. That would be selfishness which the railway authorities would have him shun like mortal sin. He should be content to play the very important and selfless role of a dispenser of comforts to his better placed fellowbeings travelling in upper classes.

THE railway authorities in Ceylon are obviously not equally bent upon giving the third class traveller these lessons in self-abnegation. The result is that fans and upholstered seats for third class passengers appear to be a possibility in the very near future, at any rate on the Government railways. Who can deny that their solicitude for the comfort of the third class traveller is deserving of praise? If the Indian railway authorities had even a small part of it, we should be hearing less about making higher class travel more and more comfortable and more about the need to make third class travel if not comfortable, at least bearable. Instead, to give the latest instance, we hear a lot about air conditioned coaches for higher classes, but not about the provision of fans for the lowest class. Let us hope the example of Ceylon will be soon copied in India.

Indianisation and Mr. S. Sinha.

OUR readers may remember that in March last Mr. Kunzru brought before the upper house of the Indian Legislature a resolution which urged Government to accelerate the pace of Indianisation in regard to the higher appointments in the Secretariat. With the help of facts and figures Mr. Kunzru showed how Indianisation had made virtually no progress during the last fifteen years and how Government's oft-repeated professions of sympathy in the cause of Indianisation had actually proved to be little better than mere lip sympathy. Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha who during his two months' sojourn in the Simla Hills was able to verify the facts and figures mentioned by Mr. Kunzru in his speeches regarding the Defence, Political and other departments fully supports Mr. Kunzru's conclusions in the course of a press statement.

INDIANISATION, as already stated, has not progressed even at a snail's pace in the Government of India Secretariat but has remained stationary all these years. Which argues a studied disinclination on the part of the authorities to confer on Indians

the responsible posts of secretaries, etc. This tendency is deserving of very strong censure, but it is specially noticeable in respect of the Defence Department where Indians are treated practically as untouchables. "Never," says Mr. Sinha, "has distrust of Indian talent and capacity been so marked in the Defence Department as it is to-day."

IN the Education Department, the distrust of Indians is, comparatively speaking, less noticeable. But even there the fact is not without its significance that a Britisher holds the Directorship of the I. M. S. in disregard of the claims of a more senior Indian officer for the post and that even his Deputy will soon be a Britisher who will replace an Indian. And is it not worthy of note, as Mr. Kunzru pointed out, that even the Educational Commissionership under the Government of India has so far never been held by an Indian? It is too much to look upon this merely as an accident having no deliberate policy behind it. In face of these facts one cannot but share Mr. Sinha's conclusion that the Government of India are very far from promoting closer association of Indians with the administration.

DOMINION STATUS & INDEPENDENCE.

IT is unfortunate, though perhaps inevitable, that in our country public attention should time and again be diverted from the practical questions of great moment that await solution to the barren controversy of whether the goal of our political ambition should be the achievement of dominion status within the British Empire or of independence without. This controversy has now been revived by Mr. Kalinath Roy, the talented editor of the *Tribune*, who in the pages of the *Hindustan Review* challenges certain statements made by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in his recent visit to the Straits Settlements. The Congress President not merely stated that "the ultimate aim of the Congress was definitely complete independence and not dominion status," but that dominion status was at once unworthy of acceptance and impossible of attainment, and Mr. Roy with his usual clarity combats the reasons advanced by Pandit Jawaharlal for rejecting dominion status.

On this issue it must be remembered that Pandit Jawaharlal's view is entirely different from Mahatma Gandhi's though both purport to speak for the Congress, and we must frankly admit that though with Mr. Roy we stand for dominion status, the Pandit's position is more logical and less vulnerable to attack than the Mahatma's. The Congress, after considering the relative merits of dominion status and independence, abandoned the former for the latter, and it must be presumed to have done so because it came to the conclusion that, though a dominion in Mr. Cecil Rhodes's words is "practically an independent republic," it still has what he called "the privilege of the tie with the Empire," and that it is just this tie which, in Congress opinion, is not a privilege but a badge of slavery, that must be severed in order that India may attain truly national freedom. Juridically, every one must admit that dominion status is lower than the status of independence inasmuch as a dominion owes allegiance to the British Crown, and if the Congress, with the full

knowledge that a dominion is no less free both in internal and external affairs than a State possessed of titular sovereign independence, still opted for independence, it could only be because the Congress has made up its mind to rid India, whenever it has a chance, of the theoretical subordination which allegiance to a foreign power involves.

Pandit Jawaharlal is at any rate loyal to the ideology that stands behind the Congress's choice of independence. Mahatma Gandhi, however, while nominally accepting the Congress creed, is in fact false to it when he says that if dominion status confers the right of secession he will not press for independence in preference to dominion status. This implies that all that Mahatma Gandhi wants is that India should be free to step out of the Empire when she wants to, while the rejection of dominion status by the Congress in favour of independence means that India as represented by the Congress has made up her mind to step out of the Empire as soon as she is in a position to do so. The Congress resolution requires every loyal Congressman to work not only for the constitutional right of secession to be exercised at will, but for the power of secession to be brought into practical operation at the earliest practicable moment. According to the Congress, it is only the power that is lacking but not the will; according to the Mahatma, the power is of course lacking, but also the will. Mahatma Gandhi's interpretation of the Congress creed is a matter for the Congress to deal with; we are not concerned with it. But we are entitled to point out, and we must point out, the confusion of ideas which lurks behind his reasoning and which he is propagating through his obiter dicta.

It is agreed on all hands that if we apply the calculus of the actual political powers wielded by the Dominion Governments dominions are no whit inferior in status to sovereign independent States. The allegiance which dominions owe to the British Crown is

the only mark of their inferiority, but barring this factor, they are the equals of Independent States in every respect. The British King is guided in all dominion affairs, external as well as internal, by dominion Ministers and dominion Ministers alone. Some words of the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, Mr. Amery, in 1927 may be quoted here. He said that the concept of freedom which underlay the definition of the position of the British Commonwealth as embedded in the Balfour declaration meant that there could be no subordination of any one nation in the Commonwealth to any other; there could be no power or function of national life which could not be exercised by any one of the members; that the member States of the Commonwealth "enjoy every liberty and enjoy every power enjoyed by the ordinary run of independent States." And the Balfour declaration itself said that "every self-governing member of the Empire is now the master of its destiny." If people fancy the word "independence" in particular, the Status Act of the Union of South Africa, 1934, declaratory of the status of the Union, also states in its preamble that the Union is a sovereign independent State. Nor does the South African Party whose loyalty to the British connexion cannot be impugned boggle at the word "independence." General Smuts stated in a memorandum before the passing of the Status Act: "We have attained an independent national status... embodied in the South Africa Act (1910) and the Statute of Westminster." The quantum of self-government enjoyed by dominions is in no way less than that enjoyed by independent States.

Dominion status is also interpreted by some (e. g. the Nationalist Party in South Africa) as going very much farther. According to them it includes the right of secession, the right of neutrality in war and divisibility of the Crown, thus attenuating a great deal the allegiance which the dominions owe to the British Crown and which alone differentiates dominion status from independence in theory. The constitutional right of dominions to secede from the Empire at will is not universally admitted by all constitutional authorities. In that respect Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is certainly right when he said in Penang that "English jurists had denied that the Statute of Westminster gave the dominions the right to secede. It only meant that if any dominion seceded Britain would not go to war against that dominion." There is the famous statement of Mr. Bonar Law, then Premier, in 1920 on that subject, and there are other equally authentic statements of other imperial statesmen in the same sense. Which proves that whether the dominions have the constitutional right of secession or not, they have the power of secession. "If any member of the British Commonwealth desires, in accordance with the wishes of its people, to leave the Commonwealth, there is no power on earth which can, in effect, say it nay." (Mr. Hofmeyr in the debate on the Union Status Bill). The only difference here made between "right" and "power" is that if the right is admitted, secession will be a constitutional act; otherwise it will be an

act of revolution. But it will be a bloodless revolution; in fact an unresisted revolution, in which the seceding dominion will be able to translate its will into a reality, without opposition on anybody's part and without opposition on the part of the British Government. Is Pandit Jawaharlal so squeamish about revolutions that he need reject dominion status because it will require a revolution, very quiet though it be, to be turned into independence if India wishes it?

Then comes a dominion's right of neutrality in the event of the British Government going to war. This is a disputed right, but it is already agreed that every dominion has the sole right to determine the extent to which it will actively participate in a war in which the British Government is engaged. It is not forced to participate, for such participation will be, in Lord Balfour's words, "co-operation in handcuffs." Abstinence from active co-operation will be quite the right thing for a dominion, for it is covered by the words in the Balfour declaration: "Every dominion is now and must always remain the sole judge of the nature and extent of its co-operation." But since the King of Britain and of the dominions is the same, and declaration of war is an act of the King, it follows that every dominion is in theory at war with a country with which Britain is at war. It is a belligerent like Britain herself; only while Britain is an active belligerent, a dominion may be only a passive belligerent; that is to say, a neutral for all practical purposes, but a belligerent only for the purposes of theory. But General Hertzog claims that a dominion has the right not only of passive belligerency but even of neutrality: and to establish this claim he contends that the King of a dominion, though he may be the same person as the King of Britain, is in theory a different entity altogether. Thus he contends that the Crown is divisible. In this connection it may be stated that though the Statute of Westminster provides that there shall be a common law of succession for the whole of the British Empire, when the law was recently changed on the abdication of King Edward VIII by the consent of all the self-governing members of the British Empire, an extremely difficult situation would have arisen if the consent of any of the dominions to the change then made had not been forthcoming.

But it will be admitted that these rights which cut deep into the allegiance to the British Crown are mere academic questions which have no relation whatever to realities, particularly when dominions can go out of the British Empire when they choose to do so. The right of neutrality, for instance, if it comes to be exercised by a dominion, will be exercised not with reference to any constitutional theory, but in pursuance of the cold logic of facts. Perhaps before a dominion exercises the right it will be expelled out of the Empire rather than have a chance of secession, and in any case it will thus secure its independence. General Smuts explained this point thus: "Whether it is neutrality or secession or any of these things, they will be decided, not by legal documents, ... but by the ordeal of facts, of great events which might

shake not only this country, but even this world, to its foundations." We may leave the British Empire in ripeness of time, said General Smuts, but for the present the question has no practical value. What we wish to point out here is that within the bosom of the Empire far-reaching theories about the rights of dominions are evolved, and India, when she becomes a dominion, may adopt all these theories and, if she desires, even leave the Empire on the morrow of her attaining dominion status.

The new constitution of the Irish Free State does not mention the King or the Empire, but continues the policy of external association with the British Empire embodied in the legislation of last December; and thus Southern Ireland, as the *Round Table* for last month puts it, "will apparently remain a member of the British Commonwealth and recognise the King for external purposes so long as it pleases its Government to do so." If General Hertzog and Mr. de Valera do not choose to break away from the British Empire, but, remaining within its fold, put forward extreme claims, it may be presumed that they do so, only because they think that breaking away will

bring no advantages, but staying in will bring some. May not Indians too follow the course which these statesmen have followed, not certainly to oblige the British Government, but in national interests as conceived by them? The question, however, may be asked, as it has been, by Pandit Jawaharlal. Is it possible to secure dominion status? We cannot pretend that it is easy to do so. The new constitution, which requires for further expansion, the consent not only of the British Parliament, but that of the ruler of every individual State which accedes to federation, makes it certainly as difficult as possible. But unless Pandit Jawaharlal shows that the winning of complete independence is easier than that of dominion status, he gives no convincing reason why dominion status should be discarded and independence adopted instead. The real question is not about the goal, but about the means to be employed in obtaining freedom by whatever name it is called. We very much wish that no time were wasted in discussing the goal, but every ounce of energy reserved for devising means to obtain freedom for our country.

PUT FEDERATION INTO THE DISCARD!

AN uncharitable critic may say that the recent fulmination of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru against federation was intended only to cover up his defeat on the office acceptance issue. Having failed in persuading the Working Committee to impose a ban on office as he would have liked, he wishes to make out that the Congress has not weakened in its main objective of preventing federation, and the test of whether it has weakened or not being yet a year or two ahead he has shown himself to be possessed of nimble statesmanship in diverting popular attention from the present and riveting it on the future. But his words have a deeper meaning than what would appear to a casual observer. He said: "It is not to work the constitution in a normal way that we go to the Assemblies or accept offices. It is to try to prevent the federation from materialising and thereby to stultify the constitution." In the provinces themselves the Congress would, according to him, work to destroy the constitution, but whether it so works or not and whether, if it so works it succeeds in destroying the provincial part of the constitution or not, it will surely avail itself of the great opportunity that it will soon have of sabotaging federation. If Congressmen do not play the role of saboteurs in the provincial sphere, they will assuredly play this role in the central sphere, for they are committed to this policy by an express resolution of the Congress to this effect. Insofar as the provincial part of the constitution is concerned, the Congress leaves to its members a wide latitude and they may use it, as apparently Mahatma Gandhi desires, in honestly operating the new powers conferred by the constitution with all their limitations, but the Congress leaves no such latitude to its members in the central sphere. Congressmen are under a solemn obligation to do all in their power to prevent the formation of

federation, and if they carry out the resolution in the letter and in the spirit they can certainly make federation still-born. What, however, will be the effect of this? It will be not only that federation will not come into being, but the so-called autonomous provinces will also go the way of federation. The federal government is intended, in the official scheme, to hold the independent provinces together, and if federation is scrapped the reconstituted provincial governments also will go bang with it. The effect of this strategy will thus be to destroy the whole constitution, and not merely the federal part of it. The significance of Pandit Jawaharlal's statement thus lies, to our mind, in this: it assures Congressmen opposed like him to acceptance of ministerships that all is not lost; that they may yet achieve their object by redoubling their efforts in strangling federation, in which they are entitled to receive the support of even the most fanatic of pro-office Congressmen.

It is too late in the day to point out the dangers of federation as it is embodied in the Government of India Act, but the most unambiguous denunciation of it from constitutional authorities will be of immense help in dispelling any doubts that may still be lingering in the minds of some doubting Thomases. We, therefore, give here a summary of Professor Berriedale Keith's views as cabled to the *Hindu* on this subject. In a letter to the *Scotsman* he says:

Much might be said in favour of Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru's declaration approving of the taking of office for the dual purpose of amelioration of the people's conditions and preventing the operation of the federal system.

India would have secured genuine democracy by a process of showing in the provinces a capacity to work the constitution, but as a result of the errors of both British and Indian politicians, a federal structure is now provided which creates a permanent conservative and even reactionary Central Government and under which

Parliament calls in the autocratic rulers to nullify the votes of British subjects. The Princes who contemplate entering the federation do so solely for the clear purpose of securing a voice in fiscal and other federal issues and for ensuring the maintenance of their autocratic rule.

No State should be admitted unless it is willing to adopt the principles of responsible government and democracy. Many of the complications and defects of the federal constitution are due to the unnatural commingling of freedom and autocracy and if Congress would show, as it has a chance of doing, its competence for responsible government in the provinces, it would have every moral right to repudiate the imposition on India of the bastard federalism planned in hostility to democracy. But it is now for Congress to show its power to construct.

Professor Keith is, we are afraid, wrong in thinking that the Congress or any other party would win a moral right to shipwreck federation only by making a success of the job of provincial autonomy, for the reason among others that provincial autonomy cannot remain in being to be made a success of unless federation comes into being. With the central government as contemplated in the Act demolished, the provincial governments will themselves topple down; for the British Government is surely not going to maintain the independence of these governments with nothing at the apex to co-ordinate them. Nor will Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru be sorry if the so-called provincial autonomy goes into the discard with federation. That in fact is his objective, as we understand it. He recognises, of course, that federation is far more noxious than provincial autonomy; but he is certainly not keen on the latter as the Moslems are.

How will office acceptance by the Congress in the provinces react on prevention of federation? Will it hinder or help in the achievement of this object? Anti-office Congressmen naturally make it out that the Congress has missed a good chance of throttling federation by accepting offices. Mr. Masani, for instance, in his speech as President of the Trichinopoly Taluk Political Conference, said on this subject: "Working the constitution in the provinces may result in its working at the centre also. How easily the federation could have been wrecked if the constitution had been suspended in six major provinces and their representatives to the Federal Assembly could not have been elected! What a farce federation would have been with half of India unrepresented! Our efforts now should be to see that six provinces where we are in a majority refuse to participate in the proposed federation." We have never believed that mere refusal of office will automatically jettison federation. If the provincial constitution is suspended under section 93 of the Act, it is yet possible for the British Government to keep the provincial legislatures in being for the election of British India's representatives to the federal legislature. And if the members of the provincial legislatures will refuse to take part in the election to the federal Legislative Assembly, they can do so as well under acceptance of office as under non-acceptance. Nor is the contention of the pro-office group in the Congress tenable, on the other hand, viz. that they will be better able to destroy federation if they accept office in the

provinces than otherwise. For instance, the *Indian Express* says: "It is now possible (after the formation of Congress ministries) to get all the provincial governments to reject the federation plan of the Government of India Act and call upon the British Parliament to take steps to revise it according to Indian wishes." Passing of resolutions in the provincial legislatures opposing federation will no more put federation to death automatically than the suspension of the legislatures themselves. The legal position will still be that the British Government will have the technical right to proceed with federation. A Simla dispatch puts the position clearly. It says:

The authorities here have fully examined the position and have armed themselves with legal opinion. One question examined is whether provincial Assemblies could by passing a resolution opposing federation frustrate the federal scheme coming into being. The legal opinion is that the provincial units are not independent entities like the States which can contract themselves into federation. For the purposes of federation there are only two parties, namely, the Crown representing British India and the rulers representing the States. The Crown need not, therefore, take cognisance of any resolution passed by a provincial Assembly.

Considering the matter purely from the legal point of view this is true. But, speaking practically, the British Government, in spite of all its protestations to the contrary, will be compelled to pull down the federal structure even if it is foolish enough to set it up in face of stubborn opposition of the whole of British India, Hindu and Moslem. But for such a result to be achieved the opposition must remain strong and must not weaken at any stage. The British Government will continue to say for a long time that it will persevere in the path it has mapped out for itself and will never yield to pressure, but it *will* yield. That is the British Government's way. The most recent example of it is afforded by Palestine. To the Arabs it has always said during the last fifteen years: "We will try and redress your legitimate grievances, but our action will always be within the limits of the Balfour declaration. We shall never agree to renounce the responsibilities assumed by us by the declaration. To this we are irrevocably committed. We shall never swerve from that path." Now, however, the British Government has offered to give up the policy of the declaration, and the lesson it teaches all struggling peoples is: Keep up the pressure long enough and the British Government will be the first to come down not a peg or two, but the whole way.

We are not, therefore, in the least perturbed by the legal implications to which the Simla dispatch draws attention, but we are somewhat perturbed by what the dispatch says in another part about the Princes. Political opinion in Simla inclines to the view that as a result of the Wardha decision, "the inauguration of federation will now be possible according to the time-table outlined by the Viceroy. Until the Congress voted for the acceptance of ministerial responsibility there was a feeling here that Princely India might be diffident about volunteering to co-operate with British India, in the major part of which the constitution might be suspended. Now

that fear is dissipated." If the fear in the breasts of the Princes is really dispelled, we shall have a very much poorer opinion of their intelligence than we actually have. Why should the Princes hesitate about joining federation if British India's opposition to the constitution takes one form and be reassured in their minds if it takes another form? Will the situation in the country be easier for them if, instead of the provincial governments being suspended on account of Congress intransigence, the Congress concentrates all its opposition on the prevention of federation? Or do the Princes believe that the Congress acceptance of offices is also an indication that it will abandon its opposition to federation? Perhaps they feel that Mahatma Gandhi is in favour of federation, and that as Pandit Jawaharlal had in the end to

yield to him on the office question, so too will the Pandit yield on the question of federation. If this is their feeling they have no real comprehension of the Congress mind at large. The Congress has passed a specific resolution about federation, and even Mahatma Gandhi, assuming he is against it, will be unable to get round it. The Princes know that Mohamedans are against federation, and they will find that the Congress too is against it. Anyhow since the Princes seem to entertain some doubts on the matter yet, it behoves the Congress leaders to give them indubitable proof that they are unalterably opposed to federation and that if the Princes are so unwise as to accede to it they will be compelled to offer uncompromising opposition to them too.

THE ZANZIBAR CRISIS.

THE outcome of the negotiations between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the representatives of the Government of India on which hung the fate of our countrymen in Zanzibar has profoundly disappointed both the Zanzibar Indians and this country. Not only are the Binder recommendations to be carried out, but the Government of India have shown a reluctance in pressing the demand of Zanzibar Indians for restoration of freedom of trade in cloves subject to reasonable safeguards in the interest of the growers, which was totally unexpected. Of the decrees passed by the Zanzibar Government in 1934 those which most perturbed the Indian community and created the strongest resentment among them related to the export of cloves and the future position of the so-called Clove Growers' Association in relation to the exporters of cloves. These decrees gave the C. G. A. full control over the export market but not over the purchase of cloves. Nevertheless, by exempting it from the stamp duty and certain other charges, including for all practical purposes the export levy of 7 as. per frasila (35 lbs.), which the other clove exporters were required to pay, they enabled it to compete successfully with private exporters in purchasing cloves by offering facilities gratis to growers which private exporters could not. In other words they empowered the Zanzibar Government both to tax the exporters who were mostly Indian and to enter into rivalry with them in the clove trade. The Zanzibar Indians, faced by the alarming prospect of being driven out of the clove business and the land which to an overwhelming majority of them is their home, appealed for protection to the Government of India who took up their case at once.

The main question at issue, as Mr. Menon's report showed, was that of the complete monopoly of purchase and sale of cloves which the Zanzibar Government were aiming at, and it was this question which the Government had to deal with. We hoped that their intervention would relieve the Indians of the gnawing anxiety which they felt with regard to their future, but after two years of persistent advocacy of the Indian cause by the Indian Government, the Indian community found

themselves confronted with a more serious danger in the shape of the Binder report, which asked the Zanzibar Government to carry the policy already embodied in their legislation to its logical conclusion. Its main recommendations were that the purchase of cloves should be controlled as their export had been, and that, in the first instance, the Clove Growers' Association alone should be allowed to buy cloves. The report added to the consternation among the Zanzibar Indians because it supported and extended the principle against which they were fighting and left them more than ever at the mercy of the Government. By proposing that the Clove Growers' Association should be authorised to add the monopoly of purchase to the monopoly of export it raised the question of monopoly more acutely than the decrees referred to above had done. This was emphasized in the debate on the position of Indians in Zanzibar which took place in the Council of State last March, and it was fully expected that the Government of India would concern themselves mainly with combating the principle of monopoly, whatever the result of their efforts might be. The position now taken up by them on this matter has, therefore, come to us as a very painful surprise. They say that, while still maintaining their objection in principle to monopoly, they "are reluctant to press their view-point on another Government in a matter which is essentially one of internal economic adjustment." When did the Government of India develop this scruple? If their conscience ever troubled them before and was making them timid, it was highly unfair of them not to have made their position clear either to the legislature or to the Standing Emigration Committee.

We were prepared for their unsuccess, but not for the revelation which they have made of their position. No one who knows the strong attitude taken up by His Excellency the Viceroy and the anxiety of Sir Jagdish Prasad with regard to the protection of the just rights of the Indians of Zanzibar will accuse them of having consciously betrayed Indian interests, but the Government of India have themselves to blame if they are charged

by the public at large with weakness and insincerity. They could have frankly admitted their failure to secure the abandonment of the principle of monopoly without putting forward a defence which will not add to their reputation for courage or honesty. Their position as a subordinate branch of the Imperial Government may have compelled them to accept the decision of the Colonial Office and to waive their right to stop the import of Zanzibar cloves into India, but they have no right to justify their action by advancing pleas, the only effect of which will be to add to the serious difficulties under which the Zanzibar Indians are already labouring.

Although the principle underlying the Clove (Purchase and Exportation) Bill which follows the Binder recommendation remains intact, we have yet to examine whether the share now accorded to the Indian community in the administration of clove laws adequately secures their position. Two Indians will be appointed on the recommendation of the Zanzibar Chamber of Commerce to the Board of Management of the Clove Growers' Association, which may consist of a maximum of seven members. One of the two members of the Sub-Committee of the Board which will consider all applications for licences to purchase cloves will be an Indian. There will be two Indians on the Advisory Committee which will recommend the fixation of purchase and sale prices and consist of five members at the least and seven at the most. As regards existing rights in connection with the purchase of cloves, no licence for the purchase of cloves, will be refused to any one who possessed it in 1933 or 1934. In regard to the export trade, although the Clove Growers' Association will retain the right to limit the number of exporters, their number will be dependent on the business available and not on the will of the Association, and the licence fees will be considerably reduced. In addition to this, it is assumed, says an Associated Press report, by the Government of India that the Association will not deal direct with overseas buyers except to break any ring which may be formed by exporters to push up prices. These, it is claimed, are substantial concessions which go far to prevent discrimination against Indians and to safeguard their interests.

The most important concessions relate to the continued participation of Indians in the purchase and sale of cloves. Let us compare them with the Binder recommendations on the same points to assess their value. As regards the purchase of cloves, the Binder report recommended the appointment of "purchasing agents from the most reliable and experienced existing local dealers and, if necessary, shopkeepers irrespective of nationality." With reference to exports, it made the following recommendation: "Export licences to be issued by the Government, and the export licence fee to be reduced to such a sum as will be within the means of a small exporter who should be encouraged to explore for new markets and bring orders, however small, from the countries outside the main markets and thereby broaden consumption. The right to limit the number of exporters to remain." Thus while the Government of India have

succeeded in preventing any curtailment of the existing number of Indians interested in the purchase of cloves which the Binder recommendation might have led to, they do not seem to have secured any advance on the export side. The participation of Indians in the administration of the Clove decree is certainly a new point gained by the Government of India, but as the Indians will be in a minority on the Board of Management of the Clove Growers' Association the value of the new right will depend entirely on the spirit in which the agreement which the Government of India have come to, probably under compulsion, with the Colonial Office, is observed by the Zanzibar Government.

The reports that come from Zanzibar on this point are very disquieting. The hostile attitude of the Zanzibar Government so far towards the Indian community is well-known. In the cable sent by the Indian National Association to the Government of India, they complain that "the officials are doing open propaganda, inciting the Arabs and natives to boycott Indians." Mr. Tayab Ali, whose sobriety and judgment will not be questioned by anyone, also says that the relations between the Indians and Arabs are strained owing to the anti-Indian activities of the Government. A British ex-Judge, speaking at a meeting held in the island of Pemba to protest against the Clove Bill, said: "These Bills will probably break up long-established friendship between decent Indians and local people." Instances of the methods alleged to have been employed to injure Indians have been mentioned to us which, if true, show to what lengths the opponents of Indians are prepared to go to ruin them. Mats in which cloves are packed are manufactured at a place called Lamu (East Africa). They are imported into Zanzibar and sold during the export season by both Indians and non-Indians. The mat-makers, it is complained, have been asked not to supply them to any exporter except to a European firm. The same complaint has reached our ears in connexion with the import of gunny-bags. The Indians are alarmed by the growing ill-feeling between them and the Arabs, which the National Indian Association say will endanger Indian life and property. Mr. Menon states in his report that while he was in Zanzibar he received numerous complaints of acts of criminal trespass committed by natives on lands belonging to or mortgaged to Indians. The apprehensions of the Indians do not, therefore, appear to be a product of their heated imagination.

The Indian clove merchants of Zanzibar think so little of the concessions obtained by the Government of India that they have expressed their determination to withdraw from the clove trade altogether and have appealed to India to boycott Zanzibar cloves. The Bombay merchants who deal in cloves and who, it is understood, control an overwhelming proportion of the import trade in them, have responded to their appeal with alacrity and decided not to import cloves, pending a satisfactory solution of the grievances of the Indians. This is an eloquent proof of the strength of the feeling which has been roused in this country by the unjust treatment of

Indians in Zanzibar, but the decision of the Bombay merchants notwithstanding their strong position does not appear to be enough to stop the import of Zanzibar cloves. Success seems difficult of realisation without the help of the Government of India. This Government, however, by agreeing to the concessions which, contrary to Indian opinion, they regard as valuable, have morally surrendered their right to place an embargo on Zanzibar cloves which they threatened to exercise in May last if justice was not done to Indian trading interests. They cannot, therefore, be expected to introduce or support legislation designed to prohibit the import of Zanzibar cloves. The breach between them and Indian public opinion is highly unfortunate. Perhaps this is the first occasion during the last twenty years on which the Indians overseas have not received the support of the Government of India on a major issue. The disagreement between Government and the Zanzibar Indians is obviously highly detrimental to the interests of Indians, but it is not less so to the interests of Government themselves. If the boycott of Zanzibar cloves proclaimed by the Bombay merchants at a sacrifice of their own interests fails, as it well may, because of the refusal of Government to countenance it, the political repercussions of the attitude adopted by Government can be easily imagined. In view of the facts before us, it appears to us that the Government of India seriously misjudged the situation and gave up its right to place an embargo on Zanzibar cloves in return for concessions which, it is feared, will prove illusory in practice. Even if they had refused to be satisfied with anything short of the restoration of free trade, subject, however, to such regulations as might be reasonably required in the interests of the Africans, they might not have been permitted by His Majesty's Government to take retaliatory action against Zanzibar. But the responsibility for their inability to help the Indians would have had to be borne by His Majesty's Government and not by them. Now, however, they have made themselves responsible for what we cannot but consider to be a sacrifice of Indian interests.

Review.

OPEN PRICE ORGANISATION.

THE ECONOMICS OF OPEN PRICE SYSTEMS. By LEVERTT S. LYON and VICTOR ABRAMSON. (Brookings Institution, Washington.) 1936. 22cm. 165p. \$1.25.

THIS monograph is one of a series of publications of the Brookings Institution, devoted to Research and Training in Social Sciences. It is a careful study of one aspect of American industrial organisation which has been of considerable interest for the past two decades. The scheme variously called "open price system" "open price association" is one under which "individual members of an industry make available to one another (and sometimes to others as well) information concerning the prices at which their products have been sold, are offered, or are to be offered." This system of exchanging data regarding price terms, and other aspects of production and sale among different firms of an industry originated in the Eddy Plan of 1911, and since that time it has been increasingly

adopted in American industrial life. In the initial stages of its development, it was the subject of important Supreme Court decisions. Under the National Recovery Act, its growth was stimulated by the creation of a vigorous agency for its formulation and supervision.

The authors start with a brief but accurate analysis of the function of prices as guides for productive decisions under the system of private enterprise. They then point out that the accuracy of economic calculations and decisions depends upon the degree of knowledge regarding price data possessed by producers; and this enables them to unfold the significance of "open price systems" as providing the requisite knowledge. Understood in this way, the open price mechanisms can be shown to be contributing to the economic efficiency of the system of private enterprise.

Then follows a detailed examination of the effects of these plans on competition, on the stability of prices and outputs, and on the economic status of small concerns. In this connexion, the authors examine critically the views of various committees and private investigators, and come to the just, but somewhat tame conclusions: (1) That no definite rule can be laid down regarding the effects of open price plans in restricting or expanding the sphere of competition. (2) That they are more likely to lead to stability of output than to that of prices. (3) That their incidence on the position of small business is likely to vary from industry to industry. Finally, the authors proceed to examine the technical problems of constructing open price plans which would satisfy the criterion of social utility, and then indicate the most suitable type of relation which should subsist between them and the Government.

The systems and the author's study of them have a large significance for industrialists and students of economic organisation. The study is informed by a healthy social outlook; and it reveals the authors' faith in the promotion of economic welfare by suitable improvements in the technique of private enterprise.

T. M. JOSHI.

SHORT NOTICE.

THE PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER. By ESTHER LUCILE BROWN. (Russel Sage Foundation, New York.) 1936. 20cm. 86. 75 cents.

THIS little book deals with the present status of the engineering problem in the United States of America. The author first takes a review of engineering education and the engineering associations in the U.S.A.—their evolution and present position, and then discusses how far they meet the present day requirements. The question of the number of engineers trained in various grades and branches, their regional distribution and the demand for their services together with their emoluments are dealt with with the help of statistics.

The book contains a number of tables giving statistics and diagrams, and these are suitably interpreted. The latter part of the book is really an economic survey of engineering as a profession in the U.S.A., giving as it does the salaries and earnings of workers in the various grades and branches of the engineering profession over a number of years and also the regional distribution of the engineering talent and its earning capacity. A perusal of the book makes one feel the necessity for similar compilations in respect of professions in this country, especially when there is so much talk of flooding the professions and of unemployment.

P. G. DANL.

"NON-INTERVENTION" IN SPAIN.

Mr. Lloyd George in a powerful speech in the House of Commons on 26th June thoroughly exposed the impotence of the so-called non-intervention policy of Great Britain in Spain. An extract from the speech is given below:

JUST see what has happened. First of all there was an effort made by the right hon. Gentleman (the Foreign Secretary). I forgot whether he initiated it or the French Government, but it does not matter. I rather think it was initiated from here, but I am making no point of that. It was an effort to secure an arrangement whereby none of the Powers should permit war materials to be supplied to either of the belligerents in Spain. It was a comprehensible policy. I never thought it would work, but there it is. It was a defensible policy, and if it had been kept it would have been a success.

What happened? First of all they delayed. They accepted the principle, but they were not satisfied about the details. Negotiations were prolonged day after day and week after week. Germany at last accepted it, but Italy did not. She had to be persuaded upon other trivial details, and when Italy accepted it Portugal—and this is vital—said, "Oh no, we cannot come in." What does it mean? The British Government felt themselves bound by the fact that they had made the proposal not to send any stuff. We had discouraged anything being sent, and we were in the position of being responsible for initiating the policy. The French Government as a Government did the same thing. These other Powers said, "Let us take advantage of this delay to pour in aeroplanes, guns, ammunition, technical details." Portugal came last, because a good deal of the stuff was sent, not to Spain but to Portugal, a neutral country, and she passed it on.

Let us remember the facts. At that time almost everybody on both sides was convinced that Franco had an easy job. So he had. He had a trained army with officers. He had about the best fighting troops in Spain on his side. On the other side you had nothing but an ill-organised and wrangling mob of sectaries who had never been trained to fight. That was the condition of things at that time. It was an easy job. I met a Spaniard then who, on the whole, was in favour of Franco but not very much in favour of him, and he said it might be taken then that Franco would be in by October. Everybody thought so, but it just miscarried. They supplied him with just enough ammunition to break through and get the thing into his own hands, and then they signed the Pact—after the last parcel had arrived. Those things happen in civil war just as they happened in civil war here. Anybody reading the story of the civil war here will see why it failed, through some stupidity on the part of somebody, on the King's side in that case, because he had trained men, he had the better army, too, and he ought to have won according to all the rules of the game, but he just failed because of one or two little acts of stupidity. And Franco did. But by that time the Pact had been signed.

What happened then? Germany was bound by her signature and Italy was bound by her signature. Franco then said, "Unless I get more material, I can't never get in." Without hesitation they brushed it on one side, and they poured in men and material. (Interruption.) I am coming to the question of what was on the other side—I am not going to ignore that—but they poured in material. They did not give permission to their armament companies to sell; they did it *qua* Governments. The men who were sent were

on their pay roll; they not merely got their permission, but their command to go there. The material came out of their arsenals. It was a Government transaction as much as the invasion of Abyssinia was. What did we do? We held meetings of the Non-Intervention Committee, and I have no doubt that Herr von Ribbentrop and Count Grandi thought it was the greatest joke they had ever taken part in. I have no doubt they chortled together over this sham while they were pouring the ammunition in defiance of treaty obligations—one of them the country which is coming to us to sign another pact of non-aggression in Europe.

Then the right hon. Gentleman said, "This has got to be amended, we must stop volunteers." They were not volunteers; they were units in the Italian army, complete units, and so were the aeroplanes and the guns sent by Germany. However, they said, "We will stop volunteers." How did they get round that? By sending conscripts. They sent conscripts to Spain, and we said to them, "You promised not to send volunteers," and they said, "We have not; we have sent men who have been conscripted and were ordered by our Army." Who can doubt that Signor Mussolini sent these men there? He has congratulated them, he has placed on the tablets the names of those who fell side by side with those who fell in the war which he initiated and was responsible for.

What we want to know is this: Is this cruel imposture going on any longer? The right hon. Gentleman knows quite well what happened in Bilbao. Bilbao was not a Red Republic, but I had rather be charged with being a Red than with being a Green. Just take what happened there. Here is a little Province that, at any rate, was very friendly to us at a critical moment. I have been talking to men who were there up to the very last moment, Englishmen who were there, and they said to me, "There were about 200 aeroplanes, German"—sent by the country that signed that Pact with the right hon. Gentleman not to send any war material into Spain. What had the Basques against that? One obsolete, little anti-aircraft gun. That is how we left our friends when they were being attacked, the people who only a few years ago had helped us to protect our ships against enemy submarines in the Bay of Biscay. There was one man who had been in the Great War and who told me that he had never witnessed such a bombardment from the air. He said he had never witnessed a greater concentration of artillery bombardment on any front—all German guns, German ammunition, followed by Italian troops, sent by the man who signed the Pact of Non-Intervention.

What had the Basques against the artillery? They had practically no ammunition, with very inadequate artillery. Why was it stopped? Ha! the Pact of Non-Intervention. This was not one of the gaps. The gaps happened to be always at the wrong point from the Government's point of view. It will be said, and I believe it is true, that material has been sent there from Russia. I believe that is so. Once the thing began, I wish they had been able to send more. But let us see what has happened. It is no use pretending that the thing has worked impartially, even from the point of view of the breaking of treaties. The French Government have sent nothing. You had a Socialist Prime Minister, presumably in sympathy with the Government, and the French Government could easily have sent plenty of material there to overwhelm completely what had been sent by either the Italians or the Germans.

They could easily have sent material. They are right on the Frontier, and they had every facility.

They could easily have sent, but they did not. The Russians I am informed—I think it was in the *Times* or some other paper—sent some material there, but look at it from the point of view of impartiality and the working of the pact of non-intervention. You have nearly 100,000 Germans and Italians there. You have 12,000 of every other nationality, including Russians, and Russians are in a minority I am told. That is a proportion of eight to one as far as men are concerned. As far as aeroplanes are concerned, the overwhelming majority have been supplied by the others. If you are to have a pact of non-intervention with gaps, why should the gaps be so arranged that it tells eight to one in favour of Franco's forces as against those of the Government? If the gaps are to be filled, let them be filled on both sides.

There are only two or three courses that the Government can take. The first is to enforce the pact of non-intervention. If the Powers do not carry it out, I agree that it cannot be enforced. The second is to have an agreement with regard to volunteers. That, again, depends on the Powers carrying it out. These two courses are dependent on your coming to an agreement with people who have not kept a single agreement they have ever entered into. The third course is to cry "Hands off," and to wind up this fraudulent pact, and let them on both sides buy their material where they can get it. You are talking as if this had never happened before. In every war which has been engaged in, certainly within my recollection, and long before that, neutral countries by international law have been entitled to supply war materials to the belligerents, and they do it. The first war I can recollect is the Franco-Prussian War. We sold material to both sides. In the Russo-Turkish War and in the Balkan War we did the same thing, and we were very glad that that rule was applicable in the great War, because America sold materials to us, France, Italy and Russia. They could not get it through to Germany, and that was our fault.

SIR JOHN WITHERS: Would the right hon. Gentleman recognise both sides as belligerents?

MR. LLOYD GEORGE: That is a question I should like to think about. On the whole, I should personally have taken the attitude which this country took in regard to the Civil War in America, when we recognised the Government, although it was in doubt for some years which of the two sides would win. Mr Disraeli was one of those who opposed the recognition of the rebels. Mr. Gladstone, I believe, took rather a different view, but Lord Palmerston and Mr. Disraeli took the other view, and fortunately it prevailed. I should take the same attitude here, I should only recognise the Government and would not recognise the rebels until they became the Government *de facto* for the whole of Spain.

VICE-ADMIRAL TAYLOR: Both sides in America had belligerent rights.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE: We refused recognition. I want to pursue this point. It is a very deplorable alternative, but it is better than the present system. Under the present system the machinery of war is being sent by foreigners in the proportion of eight to one to one side. You are not stopping equipment, you are not stopping the war, you are not stopping bloodshed. All you are doing is to give the overwhelming advantage to one side. It would be far better to have an honest return to the old principles of neutrality. Then nobody could complain what happened.

After all, however much we may regret it, Spain is not the only country that has settled the issue of good government by reference to the sword. The Spanish people of both sides have decided that it is to be settled in that way. That is why I do not think they would accept the intervention of the League of Nations. I wish it were possible that the advice of my right hon. Friend the Member for Caithness (Sir A. Sinclair) could be accepted and that the League of Nations could intervene. We must, however, look at the facts. Neither of the two parties will accept that—so I am assured. We have to face the facts when we are at war as well as when we are at peace. If they were to return to the ordinary machinery for the expression of public opinion, that is, of course, the proper way of settling these issues. But Spain is not the only country that has refused to do that. The very existence of Parliament and the liberties of this country have been settled by these means. What is happening in Spain shows that we have not yet got out of that obsession of the human mind. It is for the Spaniards in Spain to decide.

If the landed aristocracy in Spain have got the loyalty of their peasants and their workers to such an extent that they will fight for them and under their banners to the death; if the hierarchy of Spain have got the devotion of their flock—the Catholics number, after all, almost the entire population of Spain—if the hierarchy have got their devotion; if the great financiers of Spain are so respected by the workmen that they would support them, the battle is won by Franco. There is no one to stand up to him. An hon. Gentleman the other day when I was here said, "Franco occupies the greater part of Spain." If the black troops were withdrawn and their Aryan confederates from Germany and from Italy were withdrawn he would occupy but a very ragged small area. But if it is true that the population is overwhelmingly with him, there is no doubt the way it would be settled. I beg the Government to make up their minds that, whatever happens, they are not going to have a continuation of this deception, this evasion of this treaty which is not a treaty, this pact which is not honoured. It is a peril to Europe; it is humiliation to them.

The whole trouble, I agree with my right hon. Friend, is that we have retreated from one position after another for the last five years until these dictators have come to the conclusion that we will stand at no point. If you take the great Powers—France and Russia—that are acting with us, and we talked quite frankly, brutally if you like, these three great Powers together have got such a force that there is no one in Europe could stand up against them. But what has happened? These dictators are very clever men, very daring men, very astute men, in fact very exceptional men. They have taken advantage of the weakness of the government in France and here. What has happened in the last day or two shows that if we stand up to them we are able to deal with them. They are taking at the present moment rather a low view of the intelligence and the courage of our Government, very low. I wish to God I could say it was too low. I can only judge the right hon. Gentleman from his speeches. I think his intentions are sound and his aims are high. Let him make up his mind to stand up to these people who have driven the British Government from one position to another of retreat, and then you would find the peace of Europe would be established.