

Servant of India

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Office: SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY, POONA 4.

Vol. XX. No. 29.

POONA—THURSDAY JULY 29, 1937.

{	INDIAN	Rs. 6
	FOREIGN	SUBSN. 15s.

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Topics of the Week.

Mahatma's Another Suggestion.

MAHATMA GANDHI has commenced making constructive suggestions to the Congress Ministries in the *Harijan*. In the latest issue of the 24th inst., he deals with the impediment which paucity of funds places in the way of the Ministries. He does not think much of this difficulty and says that the Ministers need not be deterred by it at all in carrying through their measures of reform. For he believes that such measures can be put in force almost without any expenditure of money. Quoting "an English financier who has held high office in India", he says: "Whatever is being done to-day with 'money motive' should in future be based on 'service motive.' Why should teachers and doctors be paid high salaries? Why cannot most of the work be done on a co-operative basis?" While fully agreeing, not only with a view to economy, but with a view to social reconstruction, that service motive should replace profit motive, one cannot but be appalled by the financial difficulties that confront the Ministers. Besides if co-operation is to solve the whole problem, where was the need for waiting for the new constitution? It could as well have been promoted under the old constitution. Anyhow, it is certainly an advantage that the Mahatma's help can now be enlisted in the cause of co-operation. At one time we remember, perhaps because of the anti-thesis in the words "co-operation" and "non-co-operation", he thought that the co-operative movement was opposed to the non-co-operation movement, and Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya who was in favour of both had to do a lot of propaganda work to show that there was no opposition between the two, as co-operation was to be among the people and non-co-operation with the Government.

Mr. Masani Gagged in Bangalore.

MR. M. R. MASANI, General Secretary of the Congress Socialist Party, was on arrival at Bangalore on Saturday last served with an order prohibiting him from speaking there. Mr. Masani had gone to Bangalore in order to preside over the Mysore Youth Conference but was thus prevented from keeping the engagement. Frankly, we cannot pretend to be shocked or surprised at this doing of the Mysore Government. It is popularly believed to be a progressive State. All that is meant by this, we suppose, is that the administration is efficiently conducted and that the people do not have to suffer from the intolerable whimsicalities of the ruler, as in several other States, in a variety of ways. But so far as civil liberty goes, one doubts if there is very much to choose between the most backward State and "progressive" Mysore. Congress propaganda, not of the non-co-operation days, but even of the present day is unbearable to Mysore, as was shown by its recent ban on the speeches of well-known Congress leaders. As if to leave nothing to chance, all public meetings in Bangalore are banned except such as may be allowed by the local magistrate. Who can say after all this that the gagging order on Mr. Masani was in the nature of a surprise? A State which cannot stomach Congress propaganda cannot of course stomach Congress Socialist propaganda.

Now, there is nothing in the speech (since published) which Mr. Masani was to deliver at Bangalore which can be said to lend even the least justification for the prohibitory order. It is not our intention to imply that his speech would be liked by the ruler of any State. Far from it. With his well-known views on public affairs nobody had a right to expect from Mr. Masani an utterance which would be anything but an eye-opener to the Princes. He refers to them as "props of British rule" and dilates upon the "sinister role" which is allotted to them in the new constitution. Nor did he conceal the fact that his party stands for the elimination of the Princes. It may be conceded that all this is very distasteful to the Princely order. But is that any reason for stopping Mr. Masani from propagating his views? The Indian National Congress avowedly stands for the elimination of British rule inasmuch as its aim is to achieve complete independence. Have the British Government gagged Congressmen in the same way as Mr. Masani was in Bangalore? But we can never afford to forget the very obvious fact that, from the point of view of civil liberty, there can be no comparison between British rule based on law and Princely rule based on autocracy and personal whims.

Mr. Parulekar's Adjournment Motion.

UPON his unanimous and uncontested election as Speaker of the more popular house of the Bombay

Legislature Mr. G. V. Mavlankar is naturally the recipient of universal congratulations. But we are afraid we cannot allow our joy at his elevation to the Speakership to stand in the way of our expressing our disapproval of the manner in which Mr. Parulekar's notice of motion of adjournment was handled by him. Mr. Parulekar apparently wanted to voice, by his adjournment motion, some labour grievance, connected with the Bombay Government's orders under the Payment of Wages Act, but his motion was ruled out by the Speaker on the ground that the mover had failed to see the Speaker beforehand, as required by the standing orders. A little cool reflection would have shown the Speaker the physical impossibility of Mr. Parulekar satisfying this requirement. It was not as if a permanent Speaker had been elected and was not seen by Mr. Parulekar at the prescribed stage. The fact was that Mr. Mavlankar was elected Speaker only a few minutes before Mr. Parulekar drew the attention of the house to his adjournment motion and Mr. Parulekar took the earliest opportunity of thrusting himself on the new Speaker's attention. For he did so as soon as the usual speeches congratulating Mr. Mavlankar were over. He could obviously not have brought his motion to the notice of the Speaker earlier. In these circumstances it seems unfair of the Speaker to have disallowed Mr. Parulekar's motion on the ground it was.

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MR. PARULEKAR was also asked why he did not consult the temporary Speaker appointed by the Governor pending the election of the permanent one. If Mr. Mavlankar had been in touch with what happened on the opening day of the Assembly we are sure he would have refrained from making this inquiry. Mr. Parulekar did raise the question of his adjournment motion after the swearing in ceremony was over but was asked by the temporary Speaker to wait till the election of the permanent one took place. Following that advice, Mr. Parulekar waited till Mr. Mavlankar was elected Speaker only to be found fault with by him for his supposed failure to apprise the temporary Speaker of his motion. If Mr. Parulekar had not previously understood the meaning of the idiom about sending a man from pillar to post he has surely learnt it now to his cost.

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THE Speaker's handling of this motion has earned for him the plaudits of an Anglo-Indian paper published in Bombay, the prejudice of whose special correspondent against Mr. Parulekar is to be clearly seen in his studied attempt to prevent his writing being contaminated by any mention of his name. We do not know how the new Speaker relishes this compliment from an unexpected quarter. But the very fact that he has been patted on the back by a journal which is known to be none too friendly either to Mr. Mavlankar personally or to the cause he represents ought to make him pause and seriously consider whether his conduct in relation to Mr. Parulekar's motion really left nothing to be desired.

* * *

Excessive.

So the Members of the Punjab Legislative Assembly would receive Rs. 22/8 by way of residence and conveyance allowances for every day spent on legislative business. That is the decision of the Assembly or—shall we say?—that of the party in power in the Punjab. In no case can the decision be said to represent the unanimous wish of the legislature. The Opposition consisting mostly of Congressmen considered the proposed scale as excessive and having no relation to the needs of the situation,

one speaker even going so far as to characterise it as "legalised robbery and extortion." This is doubtless very strong language, but there can be little doubt that the scale is excessive.

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THE new scale exceeds the old one by about 70 per cent. Whereas the members used so far to receive only Rs. 12 daily, they would henceforth receive Rs. 22/8. Where was the need for the increase? We expected the Government spokesmen to make out a case for it, but a perusal of their speeches leaves us disappointed. A rise would have been justifiable only if the old scale had been found inadequate. So far as one can see, no complaints from any responsible quarter on the score of its inadequacy were heard either in the course of the debate or at any other time. Nor, even if made, could such a complaint be looked upon as legitimate or proper, for none but the most spendthrift would find the old scale not enough to meet his reasonable needs. We cannot help feeling, therefore, that, in fixing the scale at the new level, the Punjab Assembly seems to have been needlessly free with the tax-payer's money.

* * *

Police Corruption in Sind.

WE are pleased to note that serious attempts are in progress in Sind to tackle the long-standing and deep-rooted evil of official corruption. A committee is engaged at the present moment in grappling with the problem, in so far as it affects the police department, which is in charge of the Chief Minister Sir G. H. Hidayatalla. The general complaint is that when police inspectors go out into the villages on investigational work, they do not pay for the supplies made to them. The existence of the evil was admitted by witnesses before the Committee and the urgent need of action to stop it pleaded. One of the remedies suggested was the taking of a pledge from every public servant to refrain from receiving bribes. We do not know that such a pledge is going to be any more successful in stopping corruption than the oath administered to witnesses in courts in stopping them from giving false evidence. Such a pledge will be no more than a paper pledge unless the authorities at the top are determined to bring every offender against it, be he high-placed or low-placed, strictly to book. That is the only way to bring the sanctity of the pledge home to all concerned.

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A SUGGESTION was also made that touring officers should stop only at police stations and carry their supplies with them so as to obviate the need of having to order anything locally. This is generally done through subordinates who in order to win the favour of their superior officers make the dealers part with their goods without paying the price. The best way of stopping this practice is to expect officers to go on tour only after taking all reasonable care that they are properly equipped. This might cause them some inconvenience in the beginning, but it can only be short-lived and need not be minded. A different form of corruption is to be met with in connection with *shikar* parties when forced labour on a large scale is resorted to. As in the case of provision supplies, so in this case too, officers need to be prohibited from impressing local labour for the purpose of hunting expeditions. It is a matter for satisfaction to learn that the Committee has every intention of not only making these suggestions but impressing on all concerned the need of making them effective.

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"Outrageous Survivals from the Past."

THE Maharaja of Bikaner is an important figure in international politics, having acted as India's representative in several international gatherings.

Therefore, it is only reasonable to expect him to be alive to the importance of discharging his international obligations in a loyal and faithful spirit. Yet, strangely enough, the international convention about opium is not observed in his State. According to the *Indian Express*, the consumption of opium in Bikaner is not less than 600 maunds, which is six times what is prescribed by the League of Nations. It is high time steps were taken by him to reduce the opium consumption in Bikaner. But if he fails to do so, is it not up to the Paramount Power to intervene with a view to impressing on him the desirability of keeping to the League standard of opium consumption in his State?

IT is also a scandal that his palace expenses should be consuming every year as high a percentage as 12 of the State revenue. The inequity involved in such a large proportion of the taxpayer's money being appropriated for the comfort of the Ruler and his family is brought out even more vividly when it is remembered that the ruler's expenses are more than ten times what is spent on the education of His Highness's subjects numbering about a million. Then, person residing within the limits of Bikaner are said to be subject to different legal codes. There is reported to be a privileged circle of 150 nobles who cannot be criminally prosecuted under any circumstances. If a State, says the paper with great truth, governed by a Prince, whose contacts with modern culture and the standards of civilised government are so well-known, abounds in these outrageous survivals from the past, the condition of affairs in other States blessed by less favoured rulers can be easily imagined.

Hyderabad People's Grievances.

AN office is shortly going to be opened at Masulipatam for the receipt and ventilation of the grievances of the people of Hyderabad State. To many it may be a puzzle why such an office should have far-off Masulipatam for its location rather than Hyderabad itself. The answer is furnished by the lengthy justification of the proposal which Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya attempts in the course of a press statement. It may be remembered that he presided over the All-India States' People's Conference held at Karachi in 1935. Since then he has undertaken extensive tours of States in the Deccan and Kathiawad with a view to awakening the States' people to a consciousness of their rights. Dr. Pattabhi would gladly have gone on a similar mission to Hyderabad but is doubtful whether such a tour would be allowed by the Government of the Nizam.

PUBLIC meetings are a well-recognised means of educating the public to a sense of their own rights and responsibilities. But the people of Hyderabad labour under serious disabilities in that matter. No public meetings not permitted by the State authorities are possible in the State. To secure such permission the authorities need to be supplied not only with very detailed information about the arrangements for the meeting but even with copies of intended speeches. Even after conforming to all these requirements a permission is not a certainty; it may be granted or withheld at the will of the Government. In these circumstances public meetings are a virtual impossibility in the Nizam's Dominions.

WITH public meetings thus ruled out, the question was: What should or could be done to give help to the Nizam's subjects in the redress of their grievances. The device of opening an office where their

grievances could be received and given wide publicity was decided upon. There can be no two opinions that though it is not the ideal way of giving a helping hand to the people of Hyderabad State, it is the best in the circumstances. The *Hyderabad Bulletin*, on the contrary, whose claim to speak for the people of the State has yet to be indisputably proved, considers it an "ill-advised" move. Though in his statement Dr. Pattabhi has unequivocally disclaimed all desire to interfere in the day-to-day administration of the State, the paper reads into the move an attempt on the part of British India to have a finger in the Nizam's pie. In thus trying to discredit the move, the paper is obviously acting as the mouth-piece of the Nizam's Government instead of his people. But the journal's biased attitude towards the proposed action is to be clearly seen from its refusal to give publicity to Dr. Pattabhi's very reasoned statement. Was it because it was ashamed of its contents which were clearly damaging to the Nizam's Government as showing how shadowy was civil liberty under his rule or because it was afraid that if the statement was published its readers would see through the paper's pretensions? Any way there can be no doubt that Dr. Pattabhi's new venture deserves the blessings of all who have the real and lasting good of the country at heart.

Articles.

RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS.

THE first act of all the Congress Ministries was in every province the release of political prisoners on a fairly large scale. The Ministries in five non-Congress provinces also took some steps in this direction and so the interim Ministries in six Congress provinces too. But the Congress has carried further this reform tentatively initiated by the interim Ministries. This is but natural. It is an inexpensive, if a fundamental, reform and requires no previous planning. The assumption of office, therefore, was signalled by the restoration to freedom of those who were put under restraint for the peril their opinions and activities were supposed to cause to the State. One of the most sensational acts in this connexion was the release of Mr. Vinayak Damodar Savarkar by the interim Ministry in the Bombay Presidency, and the Congress Ministry has now matched it by another in the release of Mr. P. M. Bapat. We do not know how far the popular Governments have rid themselves of the *damnosa hereditas* which they have derived from the bureaucratic Governments, and how far they have yet to rid themselves of it, in the way of setting at liberty those persons who suffered for their opinions, of freeing political institutions from the official ban, of returning the securities taken from presses, of removing the restrictions imposed upon the movements of internees, etc. But there is no doubt that there is still much room for similar action to be taken. And we hope that it will be taken promptly, though one must admit that some time must necessarily elapse before the whole of the coercive regime is completely liquidated. Popular Ministries can naturally go a much longer way in carrying through this reform than the official Governments could ever have gone. They can take much bigger

risks in administration than the latter, from the very nature of their position, would be prepared to do. They are expected in the first place to be less suspicious of popular movements and in the second place they can afford to give them a longer rope. It is but right that the new era that has opened in India should be ushered in by a practical demonstration of a perfect tolerance that will be shown to opinions and practices, however radical and dangerous they may appear even to liberal-minded foreigners.

We hope that the people at large will refuse to believe that the opening of the prison-gates to political prisoners that has taken place or will take place is a boon which the Congress Ministries or other Ministries have given or are to give to them out of charity, as a concession made by the strong to the weak. It is no more but the recognition of a right which the men under restraint can claim as human beings. It is a right which is theirs by their very human nature; it is theirs inalienably, and no one can rob them of it without doing a grave wrong to humanity as a whole. In our constitution which is modelled on the British constitution it would appear that the Government and the legislature are free to impose any restrictions they like or think are required by the immediate ends of the State upon civil liberty, provided the electorate are somehow kept quiet. The British constitution does function sometimes in this fashion, and invasions on individual freedom take place without effective opposition on the part of the liberty-loving. But the real spirit of the constitution should be what animated the authors of the United States constitution. They granted certain enumerated powers to the Government and the legislature and provided for limitations on these powers in the interest of the citizen. The humblest citizen can invoke the constitution against the most powerful official and against the Government itself. He can as well invoke the constitution

against the legislature. In the United States it will be no sufficient defence for a Government, as it is in Great Britain, to plead that the legislature has given it powers of coercion and that it is entitled to use them at its discretion. In Great Britain the legislature is supreme; not so in the United States. Here limitations are placed upon the powers of the executive Government and the legislature by the fundamental law or the constitution, which is above both. If the Government and the legislature seek to impose undue checks upon the citizen, the constitution will restrain them. The constitutional guarantees thus provided ought to be a strong bulwark of defence for the rights of every man and for the exercise of every proper function by him, though the guarantees do not always prove effective in practice. Nor indeed are we sure that civil liberty is in fact more secure in U.S.A., where the powers of the legislature are restricted, than in Great Britain, where they are not. Where a whole people goes wrong nothing can check it. But the fact of civil liberty being enshrined in the U. S. constitution which affords sure redress, humanly speaking, to a man when the Government attempts to usurp his legitimate rights ought to be an inspiration to us and we must so work our constitution as if we had a tribunal, as in U.S.A., endowed with the power of invalidating a law which encroaches on the just rights of individuals, and these rights appertain not only to politics but to all social activity. We are all conscious these days of a citizen's rights in the political field because the field was occupied so long by foreigners. We must be equally alert to assert those rights when the field is occupied largely by our nationals and also in our social activities in which a clash comes not between a private citizen and the Government but between one private citizen and another or between one class of citizens and another. The need for watchfulness has not disappeared.

“ DELAY FEDERATION.”

THE rulers of Indian States will readily acknowledge that of all the newspapers in this country *United India and Indian States* has the strongest moral claim to advise them in their interests, and when it warns them against allowing themselves to be hurried into accession to federation they must pay good heed to what it says. *United India* is by no means against federation. It is not discouraged too much by the fact that the essential condition which the Princes made to their joining the federation has not been fulfilled in any degree. This condition was that the federal government to be formed should be invested with full powers of self-government in at least the sphere in which responsibility is to operate. Our contemporary frankly admits that the responsibility conferred by the new constitution is “homeopathic in quality as well as in content.” Even so *United India* would advise the Princes to enter federation, provided a guarantee was forthcoming that on their entry they would not find themselves in the position of unwelcome guests or interlopers. The condition of

a reality of responsibility in the federal government may be waived; but the other condition of a hearty reception and an offer of a harmonious collaboration from British India must be satisfied in full. Of such reception and possibility of co-operation, however, it is not at all assured. In the circumstances it asks the rulers to delay signing the treaties of accession, which now are going the round of the States.

“It would be wise,” says the journal, “to defer federation till the Princes and Indian politicians come to an understanding to the end that a federation is possible on terms recognising and respecting each other's rights. The Indian provinces have the right of electing representatives to the federal legislature and in six provinces the Congress has an unassailable majority which must be reflected in the representation from six provinces in the federal legislature. This will mean that a successful federation cannot ignore Congress views on federation. In our view, whether the India Act says so or not, a federation in which six provinces will refuse to co-operate will be still-

born. What happened for three months since 1st April, 1937, in the provinces will be repeated in the centre. It seems, therefore, that it will be the part of highest wisdom for the Princes (not) to make the final decision till Indian politics has found its level. The Congress decision in the provinces is a hopeful augury, but it is better to wait and see before taking the irrevocable step." This, everyone must admit, is sound advice, and seeing that it comes from the quarter from which it does come, we hope that it will find acceptance at the hands of the rulers of States. We do not of course share the hope of *United India* that acceptance of office by the Congress will pave the way to a weakening of Congress opposition to federation. But we agree that the Princes' accession to federation should depend upon the Congress showing itself friendly to the federal structure. For the moment a postponement of the decision which the Princes are being urged by the spokesmen of imperialism to take immediately is required, but we believe that if *United India's* advice is followed, a postponed decision will become a decision in the negative.

United India takes no notice of Moslem opposition at all. It thinks only of the possible Congress opposition in six out of the eleven provinces in British India; but all the five non-Congress provinces are Muslim provinces, and opposition to federation is, to put it at the lowest, no less strong or more uncertain than in the Congress provinces. But let us put this fact on one side. It is difficult to understand why our contemporaries should think that acceptance of office by the Congress in the provinces is a sort of friendly gesture to the Princes. Probably it argues in this way. "The Congress condemned the whole constitution bell, book and candle, but it has now shouldered ministerial responsibility in the provinces. It no doubt says that office has been accepted only in order to combat the constitution, but anyone can see that this is done only to reconcile its present action to its past utterances. It will therefore have to speak of destroying the constitution, but every day it will be strengthening it. Virtually, its destructive politics has been laid aside in the provinces for good. Similar transformation will take place when federation is formed. Now the Congress speaks of preventing the formation of federation, but it knows that it cannot prevent it, and when time for the working of the federal constitution draws near it will also cease to have any desire to thwart federation. And if some minor Congress leaders do evince a desire to do so Mahatma Gandhi, whose tenderness to the Princes is well-known, will again emerge from his solitude and give a twist to the Congress policy, in which he is past master, which will make federation secure against all attacks. Let Jawaharlal rant as much as ever he can; Mahatma Gandhi will see to it that the Congress members will offer whole-hearted co-operation in making federation successful. There is no need to get the Congress resolution on federation changed. The Mahatma will provide an interpretation, as he often does, which will nullify the resolution."

Here we cannot but think that *United India* is

sadly mistaken. Two facts stand out about the federation, which will only make any lover of democracy and self-government hostile to federation. The States' representatives will be nominated by the Princes, and whatever else the Congress members will stomach, they will not be able to stomach this autocratic element, one-third in the lower chamber and two-fifths in the upper. It is sheerly impossible. Again, the Princes are given in the constitution a liberum veto, which makes it impossible to establish, for instance, control over the army without the consent of every individual Prince. Even if some Congressmen be not too attached to democracy, no Congressman will ever be prepared to place self-government, even oligarchic as it may be, at the complete mercy of the Princes. Neither of these rights are the Princes willing to give up, and there will be a deadlock from the first in the federal legislature even if the Congress fails in its attempt, to which it is committed, to sabotage federation. The feeling of British Indians, no matter to what party they belong, towards the Princes will be very like the feeling which the Arabs have towards the Jews of Palestine. The Arabs in Palestine see all the other neighbouring countries—Iraq, Egypt, Syria—achieving independence. However backward they may be, they are not more backward, as the Peel Commission has fully admitted, than their confreres of other Arab countries which have moved or are moving on to self-government. They themselves however cannot have even the beginnings of self-government, not even an advisory legislative council because of the presence amongst them of the Jews, whom certainly they did not invite into Palestine.

As early as 1922, two years after the mandate over the country was received by the British Government, the Secretary of State informed an Arab delegation: "The position is that H. M. Government cannot allow a constitutional position to develop which may make it impracticable for them to carry out a solemn undertaking given by them to the Allies (i.e. about the Jewish National Home)." The Walter Shaw Commission said in their report in 1930: "Those who wish for similar developments in Palestine (i.e. experiments in self-government such as had taken place in other Arab countries) have grounds for the opinion that, were it not for the obligations cast upon H. M. Government by the policy contained in the Balfour Declaration, their hopes and expectations might to some extent have been realised." The Arabs of Palestine feel that the Jews have robbed them of independence. British Indians will similarly feel, and with every justification, that the Princes are robbing them both of democracy and self-government. If there are any people who have not done so yet, they will soon realise that the political ambitions of the two parts of India are irreconcilable, as the Peel Commission has now found about the ambitions of the two communities in Palestine. The "irrepressible conflict" of the Jews and the Arabs has forced the Peel Commission to recommend partition of Palestine. The Princes themselves would wish, after they see the irrepressible conflict in India, that they had remained separate; but then it would be too late. Now is the

time to think whether they should take what *United India* well calls the irrevocable step. There is no doubt that the conflict in India too will be irrepresible so long as the Princes remain firmly addicted to their autocracy. The moment they give it up, Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru will be the first to welcome federation. Till it happens, however, there is no hope for the conflict to be resolved, and the federation must not, therefore, be delayed, but prevented. But we agree with *United India* that the Princes should at least give themselves adequate time to think about the consequences before they sign away their present freedom—and peace.

TREATMENT OF NATIVES.

SQUATTER SYSTEM IN KENYA.

IT will be recalled that in the Colonial Office debate in the House of Commons last month a fear was expressed that the minimum period of compulsory labour to be prescribed for natives working on European farms in Kenya would be extended from six to nine months in a year. The Bill published in the Official Gazette of Kenya of 7th July, however, shows that the Government does not intend to extend the period. It maintains the period at 180 days, though of course, if agreed to by the native labourer, the period might be longer. The maximum term of the contract, which is now three years, is, however, to be extended to five years.

A change is made in the penalties provided for in the report of the Committee appointed recently to consider the matter. A squatter who fails or refuses to perform the duties mentioned in the contract is liable to a fine of 100 sh. or in default of payment to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one month, while one who is guilty of more serious offences like wilfully doing any act tending to the damage of property was to be liable, according to the Committee's report, to a fine not exceeding 150 sh. and in default of payment to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months. The Bill, however, reduces the maximum term of imprisonment to be inflicted on the native labourer in default of payment of fine from six to two months. This is a small concession, but in the right direction.

The European farmer too is not altogether exempt from penalties. The Committee had proposed that a farmer who failed to pay wages due to his labourer, etc. would be liable to "a fine not exceeding 200 sh. and in default of payment to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one month, or to both such fine and imprisonment." The Bill makes a modification in this recommendation and provides that he would be liable "to a fine not exceeding 150 sh. and in default of payment to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two months." The changes now introduced should be noticed. The maximum fine is reduced from 200 sh. to 150 sh. and the maximum imprisonment increased from one month to two, but while, according to the Committee's recommendation, it was possible to inflict both a fine and imprison-

ment, in the Bill imprisonment is only an alternative to non-payment of fine.

At first sight it would appear that if imprisonment is a cruel way of dealing with persons who fail to perform their duty, the law is at least equal in the case of both natives and whites. On closer observation, however, this reciprocity will be found to be non-existent. A labourer who, for instance, fails to report himself on the appointed day for work, is liable to a fine of 100 sh. Here the fine to be imposed is not the maximum, which is capable of being reduced as circumstances would require. Conviction would automatically make him liable to a fine of 100 sh., whatever the circumstances. A white farmer is liable to a maximum fine of 150 sh. Perhaps he may be fined only 20 sh.; but a native must be fined 100 sh. It is not merely that in fact a native labourer may be fined five times as much as a European settler, but to the former money has perhaps a hundred times more value than to the latter. The threat of imprisonment that is held out to the white man is of course an empty threat, for to no European who is engaged in farming or stock raising would a fine of 150 sh. be a serious matter, while natives, being unable to pay 100 sh., which in their case is the minimum, would in a large majority of cases have no alternative to imprisonment. The seeming equality is thus a gross inequality.

EDUCATION OF WHITE AND BLACK.

The Rev. A. G. Fraser wrote in the *Spectator* of 27th November last year that in Southern Rhodesia, a self-governing colony, all white children were educated, and only a fraction of the black; that £40 was spent annually on the education of each white child and only £1 on the native; and that for the last financial year £338,000 was voted for European education and only £80,000 for native development, although the natives numbered twice as many as the Europeans.

These criticisms are naturally very much resented by the average European of S. Rhodesia. But has he any answer to them? Apparently not, for see what Mr. R. H. Dickson, formerly a member of the Legislative Assembly writes about them in the *United Empire*:

Fees for tuition of Europeans were abolished last year, though there was no adequate reason for the Government throwing away this revenue and there was no demand on the part of the electorate for the abolition of the small payment previously charged. . . . The education which the native receives to-day in Southern Rhodesia tends to make him discontented as there are so few vacancies open to him or for which he is fitted. It is not likely that the occupations now filled by Europeans will be thrown open to the educated native, whether in the civil service, railways or other offices, until such time as the European population starts to decline in numbers. . . . It would be unwise if not impossible to increase the poll tax (now £377,000) which the native pays. . . . It is true that the income tax on the wealthy residents of Southern Rhodesia was reduced by sixpence and a shilling in the pound two years ago, but the re-imposition of the old rate on these Europeans for the purpose of native education would not receive much support.

This is defence indeed!

INDIANS IN CEYLON.

VILLAGE COMMUNITIES ORDINANCE.

IT is understood that the Select Committee on the Village Communities Ordinance is considering the question of giving Indian labourers the right to vote in elections for the Village Committees, and the Committee is hearing representations made by different interests. It is hoped that the Select Committee will give serious consideration to Indian representations and grant their request. However, a statement of the case for the Indian labourers may be set down here to enable the public in India to understand the correct position.

As the Minister in charge of the Bill explained in an interview with the press, the proposed ordinance is designed, as far as possible, to assimilate the powers, duties and functions of Village Committees to those of District Councils. It is a laudable object and no one will demur to it. But advantage has been taken of this to introduce one important provision for enfranchising the European and burgher residents of estates who were till now exempted from Village Committee tax and the jurisdiction of village tribunals. Under the proposed law, while they are required to pay the tax and exercise the franchise, they will continue to remain outside the jurisdiction of village tribunals. There can be no quarrel over this provision also. But the position of the Indian estate labourers who were also till now occupying the same position as the Europeans and burghers is not altered in any way. The Indian community in Ceylon was greatly exercised over this invidious distinction and pleaded that the Indian estate labourers also should be placed on the same footing as the Europeans and burghers, and even one of the European representatives in the State Council pleaded strongly for the inclusion of Indian labourers. If the circumstances that necessitated the exclusion of the Europeans and burghers in 1924 do not hold good now, it is equally so in the case of the Indian labourers also.

But the real cause for retaining the principle of exclusion in the case of the Indian labourers was given by the Minister in the interview to the press when he not only quoted from the speech of the then Attorney-General, Sir Henry Collan, but also stated that "it would be unfair to the Ceylonese to give Indian labourers a preponderating influence in purely local bodies". Did not Mr. Senanayake openly declare in a speech delivered recently that "making Ramasamy pay" is to give him a right to acquire land? Is it contended then that even Indian labourers who are domiciled in Ceylon, have become part and parcel of the population of Ceylon,

and are willing to identify themselves with the interests of the Ceylonese should for ever be treated as aliens and deprived of the rights and duties of citizenship? Are not the European and burgher residents in estates also in the same position as the Indian labourers who also live a life quite apart from the village life? In the evidence tendered before the Immigration Commissioner, Sir Edward Jackson, it has been contended, and rightly too, that a very large number of Indian labourers in Ceylon are domiciled in Ceylon and that they should be treated in the matter of rights as well as duties in the same way as other communities. In accordance with this principle, the Indian labourers claim the right of franchise for the Village Committees. In regard to jurisdiction of village tribunals, while the non-labourers do not claim any exemption, the Indian estate labourers seek exemption for the reasons that the Europeans and burgher residents enjoy that privilege even under the proposed ordinance. It is hoped that the State Council will not grudge giving this privilege to the Indian estate labourers as well.

While in regard to voters, adult suffrage for both sexes is to be introduced, subject to a residential qualification, for the candidates for election, the qualifications are to include literacy and property of the value of two hundred rupees. This differential property qualification in regard to candidates virtually deprives many Indian labourers from any prospect of being elected as members unless they possess landed property of the value prescribed in the village, which is unlikely. To prevent the Indian estate labourers from playing their part in the village community and enabling them to identify themselves with the interests of the Ceylonese, with whom they have cast their lot, by imposing a high property qualification, is not quite just and proper. They should be enabled to contribute their share to the development of village community life by providing that anybody who pays the tax shall be eligible to be elected to the Village Committee. Need I say such a provision will be welcomed by the Sinhalese labourers as well, as amongst them there may be even fewer men possessing this high property qualification?

It is earnestly hoped that, as stated by the Ceylon Indian League, the enjoyment of certain rights by immigrant labourers would not be treated as a bar for the enjoyment of elementary political rights and that the considerations urged in regard to the Europeans and burghers resident on the estates will be considered to hold good in regard to Indian estate labourers also in regard to rights and duties to be conferred by the proposed Ordinance.

R. SURYANARAYANA RAO.

B. P. SCOUTS & SEVA SAMITI SCOUTS.

By DR. G. S. ARUNDALE.

I MUCH regret the controversy that has arisen in connection with the alleged remarks about India on the part of the World Chief Scout, Lord Baden-Powell. I regret them for two reasons, the first being that Scouting in India is already far from being as national as it must become without delay;

the second being that even Lord Baden-Powell looks upon India through the eyes of officialdom, and even though I feel sure his words have been exaggerated, the probability is that he holds views about India to no small degree coloured by official atmosphere and by his own innate prejudices.

Ever since the amalgamation of the two scout movements under the auspices of Lord Baden-Powell and Dr. Annie Besant in Madras, officialdom has gradually taken away all the splendid Indian life which animated the Indian Boy Scouts' Association. I do not regret the amalgamation. It was a great gesture on the part of Dr. Besant. But the moment it was effected, all the reality of Indian scouting began to disappear, and only the forms remained. The European scouts held entirely aloof, and have led their own Scout life independently. The Anglo-Indian scouts followed suit. And we were left with an organisation which was composed of Indian scouts as of old, but with unfortunate substitution of foreign scout orthodoxy for the Indian spirit which made the Indian Association under Dr. Besant so splendid, and which makes the Seva Samiti Scout Organisation under Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya so infinitely superior to the comparatively lifeless Baden-Powell counterpart so far as Indian scouts are concerned.

WERE DR. BESANT ALIVE.

Being constantly away from Madras and also being much preoccupied with world-wide work, I found myself, as an officer of the Baden-Powell movement, powerless to vivify it with the Indian spirit. Some time ago, therefore, I resigned my office of Vice-President and sought membership of the Seva Samiti movement wherein I knew I should find India once more. I confess quite frankly that the amalgamation has proved a failure, and I feel sure that, had Dr. Besant been living now, she would have declared that while the amalgamation had to be tried, it no longer fulfils the expectations we all hoped from it, and I think she would have urged the importance of making scouting in India Indian.

I have not resigned from the Baden-Powell movement. I still contribute regularly to its funds. I hold Lord Baden-Powell in the deepest respect, and had I won the Medal of Merit I should certainly not have thrown it back at him. I should have cherished it. The World Chief Scout has given the boys and girls of the world a wonderful stimulus to right living and good citizenship. He is one of the great benefactors of the age.

But I do not think he understands India, and even he must not be allowed to interpose between Indian youth and the fine scout training forms which are unnational, and perhaps life which belongs to another race.

INDIAN SCOUTING MUST BE INDIAN.

I want Indian scouting to be Indian, and I can well appreciate the resolutions of the Bombay and Madras Corporations, though I cannot understand why the former has not ordered the affiliation of its scout work with the Seva Samiti which is wonderfully Indian, at all events in northern India, where I have seen displays which put to shame our shabby and puny little efforts in the south. I am frankly glad that the Madras civic authorities should have decided to affiliate their scout work with our Seva Samiti here in Madras.

I do not know that we shall be able to make their scouts look so much like the pattern scout as developed in the West. But I do not think we at all want to do this. We want, through the medium of the great principles of scouting adapted to Indian needs and conditions, to help Indian youth to become happy individuals themselves and worthwhile citizens of their awakening Motherland.

SCOUTING AS BUILDER OF UNITY.

In India, Indian scouting must build its own superstructure upon the universal principles of scouting. Through Indian scouting we must draw Hindus and Mussalmans together, all castes together, all warring differences together into a great Indian solidarity wherein differences of whatever nature strive for the common good. Indian scouting must never be at the mercy of political parties or of communal interests. It must receive financial help from the various Governments, but no Government must make its financial assistance an excuse for dictating scout policies or for demanding official representation. There are already too many officials officially connected with scouting, too much red tape, too much bureaucracy, too much foreignism.

On the other hand, when India takes over her own scout organisation, as she is just now beginning to do, there must be no slackness, no lack of discipline, no confusion, no graft, no weakening of efficiency. India must show that she can manage her own scout movement better than it is being managed now, that she can maintain the great spirit of scouting while giving full scope to patriotic enthusiasm. There is nothing more disgraceful from a scouting point of view than a slovenly troop, out of tune singing, and general carelessness. Scouting is self-discipline, and the moment we have a mob instead of troops, we have flouted the whole of the scout spirit.

A TIP TO THE PUBLIC.

Unfortunately, the Indian public is not at all scout-conscious. The Indian public does not care a rap about Indian scouting and in Madras, for example, where I have the honour to be the Provincial Commissioner for the Seva Samiti movement, there are just about half a dozen people who take an interest in our scout work. We are hampered at every turn by lack of interest and lack of support, and we have no Government grant to help us as has the Baden-Powell movement; so we are left high and dry. Perhaps we shall now gain new life. I do not want that we should be in the lime-light. God forbid. Still less do I want that we should become a kind of political puppet enjoying a little brief popularity because Lord Baden-Powell is alleged to have said something which he ought never even to have hinted. Indian scouting is a serious matter for India's future. I shall be glad for it to become independent, though I am sure it ought to have some kind of affiliation to the international scout movement, as any other country may have. But I want India's best citizens to take a practical interest in it, and to guide it strongly along Indian lines. The Seva Samiti was perhaps, wise not to have affiliated when we of the Indian Boy Scouts Association affiliated, for now an admirable organisation is ready to our hands. But we must beware of anything which is tinsel—and there is so much tinsel in politics—and concentrate on the pure gold of a truly Aryan character and a deep love for Aryavarta.—*Kaiser-i-Hind.*

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