

**PAY MORE ATTENTION TO ECONOMIC,
EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL
IMPROVEMENT RATHER
THAN TEMPLE ENTRY**

“Poona, October 18, 1932

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar came to Poona yesterday and spent some time in the Legislative Council but did not disclose to anybody the fact that he had been given permission to visit Mr. Gandhi in Yeravda Jail. In the evening, however, he made use of this permit and spent almost an hour and a half with Mr. Gandhi. Letter he left for Sawantwadi on professional business. He will return to Bombay on October 26 and hopes to sail for England on November 7.

Dr. Ambedkar is of opinion that the Round Table Conference will not begin before November 22 as it will be impossible for many delegates to be present in London by November 12. While it is difficult to draw a line between politics and social welfare in the present situation between Caste Hindus and the Depressed Classes, it is understood that politics proper were banned under the terms of the permit and that therefore the Poona Pact was not dealt with to any extent.

Dr. Ambedkar, however, placed before Mr. Gandhi his views on the future constitution of the Anti-Untouchability League, its Provincial and District Committees and its general progress. He took up the matter of the composition of the committees and expressed very firmly his opinion that there should be a majority of Depressed Classes people on these committees. He was of opinion that their voice must be predominant and that nothing must be done which might prove unpalatable to them. If the uplift work was to proceed satisfactorily the Caste Hindus must assist the Depressed classes people to work out their own salvation and not attempt to uplift them by inducing them to follow the ideals of the Caste Hindus in every way.

Special Census

He also drew Mr. Gandhi's attention to the proposal of the League to arrange for a special census of the Depressed Classes people in India and pointed out to the Congress leader that such a proceeding was unnecessary.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu was present during the interview and Mr. Gandhi and those who met Dr. Ambedkar after the interview appear to have received the impression that Mr. Gandhi favoured Dr. Ambedkar's proposal regarding the composition of the Anti-Untouchability League Committees.

Mr. Gandhi is "perfectly fit" according to the latest news from Yerawda and Dr. Ambedkar has told his friends that the Congress leader is full of life and is completely restored to normal health.

ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES

Dr. Ambedkar's Advice to his Community

"There certainly is a general slackening off in the Anti-Untouchability Movement," said Dr. Ambedkar in an interview. "But, as the movement only dealt with the spectacular removal of the ban against Untouchables entering temples and with inter-dining, I am greatly perturbed over this fact. That with spectacular certainty, they caused much ill-feeling between the people and brought them no substantial advantage.

"The attention of the Anti-Untouchability League and workers in the same cause should be directed more to the economic, educational and social improvement of the Untouchables rather than to temple entry and inter-dining. Public opinion should be mobilised by them to throw open wells and to admit Untouchable children to public schools."

Referring to Belgaum district where a request had been received from the Depressed Classes people themselves for the construction of a separate well, he said that the Board should not grant such a request. Untouchables should insist on their right to draw water from the general public wells. He suspected that in this case there might be some interested party influencing them."¹

●●

¹: The Times of India, dated 19th October 1932.