

sophy of India. This rather holds that the present life is for each only one of a series of existences; that the position of each individual in this life has been determined for him by his merit or demerit in previous births ; and that, therefore, his place in the social organism is irrevocably fixed and cannot be changed. It may therefore be safely asserted that the root notions of democracy run counter to all the ideas which for thousands of years have formed the common stock of popular belief in India.

“3. Closely connected with the doctrine, that each man’s place in the present birth has been determined by his actions in the past existences is the institution of caste which has the effect of stereotyping and fixing unalterably the position of each individual in the social scale. Thus a man born a Brahman cannot be other than a Brahman and a man born Pariah can never be other than a Pariah. Equality of opportunity is impossible under such conditions and it is neither recognized nor desired by Indian public opinion.

“4. At the apex of the caste pyramid stands the Brahman. This caste, originally representing, at least in Southern India, a racial difference, has established through a long period of time its absolute supremacy over all other castes. The Brahman’s claim to supremacy is based not only on race and intellect but also on the injunctions of religion. The sanctity of a Brahman’s person and religious merit to be obtained by feeding him, paying for his education, providing money for the marriage of his daughters, endowing him with land, has been an established belief in India for centuries..... Brahmins possessed numberless privileges.....

“6. With such predominance in most walks of life, it is not surprising that the Brahman has easily secured control in politics. No representative of the great Pariah community nor of the Christian community has ever sat, or would ever have a chance of sitting, for one of these constituencies. This experience strongly suggests that the political machine in the future as in the past will be under the control of the Brahmins, unless special measures are resorted to, to secure adequate representation of the other classes.

“8. Next to the Brahman *sed longo intervallo* comes the great group of Hindu—castes, some higher, some lower, generally grouped together as non-Brahmins but all equally exclusive and largely antagonistic to one another. It is notorious that if a member of one of these castes attains to a position of influence he fills the offices in his gifts with his fellow castemen. The Standing Orders of the Government recognize this tendency and contain directions to counteract it. The joint report is not ignorant of this, for it says, ‘ there runs through Indian Society a series of cleavages of religion, race and caste which constantly threaten its solidarity.’ These distinctions of castes do not merely threaten the solidarity of Indian Society—they prevent such solidarity from ever existing.

“9. Below both the Brahmins and the non-Brahman caste Hindus, come the low castes or more correctly the persons of no castes who number

in this Presidency [*i.e.* Madras] some ten millions of people. For convenience they may be referred to as the Panchama or Pariah community. These people are regarded, not merely as belonging to a lower class, but as conveying by their very presence an actual pollution which requires purificatory religious ceremonies.

“13. The difficulty of introducing democratic institutions into a society such as this, illiterate, divided into hard and fast castes, with Brahman at the top, with the various Non-Brahman Hindu castes in the middle and the low castes liable to be oppressed impartially by both, at the bottom must be very great. Nor does this difficulty seem to have been sufficiently realized by the writers of the Joint Report. *Surely the first essential of any scheme of reform is that adequate safeguard should be provided for the good government of the inarticulate masses of the population*”

19. If this is a correct description of the existing state of affairs then the Minorities of Europe cannot be said to have a better case for obtaining guarantees of their rights than the Depressed classes. *Many people in the world have fallen low by force of circumstances. But having fallen they are free to rise. The Depressed classes on the other hand form a solitary case of a people who have remained fallen because their rise is opposed to the religious notions of the majority of their countrymen.* Much was made before the Muddiman Committee by certain persons of the resolutions passed by the various Legislative Councils, throwing open wells, dispensaries and dharamshalas to members of Depressed classes and of the circulars issued by Ministers of Education requiring children of the Depressed classes to be admitted to schools in common with the rest. But what a mockery such resolutions and circulars are will be apparent to the Commission from the perusal of Annexure A to this statement. It will illustrate the attitude of the majority towards the Depressed classes as evidenced by incidents reported from time to time in the various newspapers in the country (item Nos. 1 and 10). From a perusal of these news items it will be realized that the Depressed classes cannot be employed in the army, navy and the police, because such employment is opposed to the religious notions of the majority (item No. 8). They cannot be admitted in schools, because their entry is opposed to the religious notions of the majority (item No. 12). They cannot avail themselves of Government dispensaries, because Doctors will not let them cause pollution to their persons or to their dispensaries (item Nos. 2 and 5). They cannot live a cleaner and higher life, because to live above their prescribed station is opposed to the religious notions of the majority (item Nos. 1 and 6). So rigorous is the enforcement of the Social Code against the Depressed classes that any attempt on the part of the Depressed classes to exercise their elementary rights of citizenship only ends in provoking the majority, to practice the worst form of social tyranny known to history (item Nos. 4, 7 and 11). It will be admitted that when society is itself a tyrant, its means of tyrannising are not restricted to the acts which it may do by the hands of its functionaries and it leaves fewer means of escape,

penetrating much more deeply into the details of life, and enslaving the soul itself. Protection against such tyranny is usually to be found in the Police power of the state. But unfortunately in any struggle in which the Depressed classes are on the one side and the upper class of Hindus on the other, the Police power is always in league with the tyrant majority (item No. 11), for the simple reason that the Depressed classes have no footing whatsoever in the Police or in the Magistracy of the country.

20. In view of this, it is unfair to the Depressed classes to be lulled into the belief that their interests would be safe in the hands of their countrymen, because some Councils have passed resolutions and some of the Ministers have issued circulars favouring the Depressed classes. The Sabha desires to caution the Commission against being lured into forming a better opinion of the Hindu majority from its best instances. Pictures of loving exercise of authority on one side, loving submission to it on the other, of superior wisdom ordering all things for the greatest good of the dependants are very gratifying to read. But such pictures would be to the purpose only if any one from the Depressed Classes denied the existence of good men in the Hindu society. Nobody among the Depressed classes doubts that there would be great and universal happiness under the government of a good Hindu. But the fact is that laws and institutions require to be adapted not to good men but to bad. From this point of view, it is safer to grant the minority the necessary protection by the inclusion of guarantee clauses than to leave it unprotected on the fanciful ground that the tyrant majority has in it a few good men sympathetic to the minority. Such guarantees may be looked down upon by persons other than the Depressed classes as being unnecessary ; but from the standpoint of the Depressed classes it is but an essential safeguard. There is such an enormous dread of the Reforms prevalent amongst the Depressed classes that they have from the very beginning opposed their introduction. So strong was their feeling against the Reforms that in one of the addresses presented to Mr. Montague the Depressed classes declared "we shall fight to the last drop of our blood, against any attempt to transfer the seat of authority in this country from the British hands to the so-called high class Hindus." Nothing can allay such fears as the system of guarantees can do. Government is based upon faith and not upon reason. If the Depressed classes can have no faith in the new constitution it is statesmanship to buy that faith if it can be done so with the concession of guarantees herein demanded.

ANNEXURE A

Item No. 1

(From the *Times of India* 8th February 1928)

NO UPLIFT FOR ANTAYAJAS

As a landmark in the rapid progress of Indian social reform, a lecture delivered last month by Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Ananta Krishna Shastri (Professor, Calcutta University) to an audience of Sanatanist (orthodox) Agrawal Marwadis of Bombay in the local Nara-Narayan temple, deserves to be rescued from unmerited oblivion. The subject of the discourse was "The way to uplift the Patits (i.e. 'fallen' untouchables)", and the chair was graced by Shri Jagadguru Anantacharya Maharaj of the new Vaishnav temple in Bombay. The lecturer proved by citations from the Shastras that the various castes have always been in existence and will continue so to exist till the end of all time. He added that those who talk of uplifting the "Fallen" (Antyajas) are merely talking, and that, in fact, there is no way of uplifting the Antyajas in the sense of getting them admitted into any of the four castes or taking them out of their present social position.

ORTHODOX GENEROSITY

The learned lecturer suggested the only possible way of uplifting the "unupliftable Fallen", namely, generously restoring to them some of their inalienable professions at present encroached upon by unthinking and unorthodox caste people. "In this 20th century," said the Mahamahopadhyaya, "people on getting up in the morning sit down to clean their costly shoes instead of performing their appointed morning ritual. Next they sit down to shave themselves. And instead of cleaning their teeth in the Swadeshi style (i.e., with twigs of babool, etc.), they sit down to rub powder on their teeth with brushes. By doing all these things they deprive Mochis (cobblers), Hajams (barbers), and tooth-stick sellers of their livelihood. Let everyone do his duty according to Dharma and rest content. This is the only way to bring about the uplift of the Antyajas,—let those who have deprived these Fallen people of their means of livelihood restore it to them."

Item No. 2

(From the *Times of India* 2nd March 1928)

ANTYAJAS IN INDIA

But, the patriots will protest, all this happened in British India, not in Indian India. Well, we know what happened to Balais only the other day in a big Central India Native State for wearing gold and silver ornaments and absurdly presuming to behave like touchable caste Hindus. And this is what the *Saurashtra* reports about the Antyajas in Baroda territory where the Maharaja himself sympathises so deeply with these unfortunates : "The order to admit Antyaja boys into Gujarati schools is on paper only. In nearly

95 per cent. of schools the Antyaja children are made to sit outside in the cold, heat or rain, and they are made to fetch cowdung, fuel, droppings, dust etc..... In April 1927 an Antyaja went to the Damnagar dispensary for medicine. The Doctor made him wait for twelve hours and then examined him—from a distance and gave him medicine—from a distance. This happened in the presence of an Antyaja member of the Baroda Legislative Assembly.” And the *Pratap* of Surat tells us that when a teacher in the Navasari Antyaja Ashram took an ailing boy to the local hospital, the doctor in charge drove them both away with these remarkable words : “Get away ! This is not Gandhi Raj but Baroda Sarkar’s Raj !”

Item No. 3

(From the *Evening News* 11th May 1926)

UNTOUCHABLE IN JAMBUSAR MUNICIPALITY

FOUR HINDUS RESIGN

A sensation has been caused in Jambusar at the election of an untouchable to the Jambusar Municipality. Four Hindu members have resigned, while the rest have promised not to touch the untouchable member and to bathe if ever they touched him.

Item No. 4

(From the *Bombay Chronicle*)

KOLABA DEPRESSED CLASS CONFERENCE

ROWDYISM OF UPPER CLASS HINDUS

The *Times of India* in its issue of the 24th gives a statement of the riot at Mahad. But as that statement is incomplete and fails to give a correct idea of what happened it is necessary to give a complete and correct account of the riot.

A Conference of the Depressed Classes of the Kolaba District was held at Mahad on the 19th and 20th instants [*i.e.* of March 1927] under the Presidentship of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Bar-at-Law. The attendance of the depressed classes was over 2,500 and great enthusiasm prevailed. But the work of the Conference was severely marred by a riot, the responsibility for which rests entirely upon the upper class Hindu residents of the town of Mahad. On the first day of the Conference after the President had delivered his address, several upper class Hindus addressed the Conference assuring the depressed classes that, they were willing to help them in all ways and urging that the depressed classes should not cultivate hatred of the upper class Hindus. In pursuance of this, the Subjects Committee drafted a resolution among others laying down what the upper class Hindus should do for the uplift of the depressed classes. In the Subjects Committee attention was drawn by some people to the fact that there was a great difficulty at Mahad for the depressed classes in obtaining water for drinking purposes and that this difficulty was felt not only by the resident depressed classes of Mahad but also by the depressed classes from villages who resorted to Mahad for private business or for the purposes of Government

work. So great was the scarcity that water worth Rs. 15 had to be bought each day to satisfy the needs of the Conference. The Municipality of Mahad had sometime ago passed a resolution declaring the tanks in the city to be open to the public but as it had not placed a board there, people feared to resort to them. The Subjects Committee, therefore, decided after taking the sense of the upper classes who attended the Conference in this matter, that the Conference should go in body to the Chowdar tank and help the depressed classes, in establishing their right to take water.

A FALSE RUMOUR

When, therefore, the Conference met on the morning of the 20th, and the first resolution which declared what the upper classes should do for the depressed classes was put before the Conference by members of depressed classes the President requested Messrs. Purushottam Prabhakar Joshi and Govind Narayan Dharya [as representatives of the upper classes] to speak on the resolution. With the exception of one clause in the resolution dealing with inter-marriages they both accepted the resolution. Having thus assured itself that there was general support behind it the Conference when the Session was over, went in body to the said tank. The procession was a most peaceful one and everything passed off quietly. But after about two hours some evil minded leaders of the town raised a false rumour that the depressed classes were planning to enter the temple of Vireshwar, whereupon a large crowd of riff raffs were collected all armed with bamboo sticks. The crowd soon became aggressive and the whole town at once became a surging mass of rowdies who seemed to be out for the blood of the depressed classes.

TWENTY WOUNDED

The depressed classes were busy in taking their meal before dispersing to their villages. When a large part of them had left the town the rowdies entered the kitchen where the depressed classes were taking their food. There would have been a regular battle between the two forces; but the depressed classes were held back by their leaders and thus a far more serious riot was averted. The rowdies finding no occasion for provocation began patrolling the main street and assaulting the members of the depressed classes who in stray batches were passing along on their way to their villages and committed trespass in the houses of several depressed class people and gravely assaulted them. In all, the number of wounded, among the depressed classes is supposed to be as large as 20. In this the attitude of the depressed classes was commendable whereas the attitude of many of the upper classes was unworthy. The depressed classes assembled vastly out-numbered the upper classes. But as the object of their leaders was to do everything in a non-violent and absolutely constitutional manner they set their faces against any aggression on the part of the depressed classes. It speaks a great deal in favour of the depressed classes that although the provocation given to them was immense they kept their self-control. The Mahad Conference has shown that the upper classes are not willing to allow the depressed classes to enjoy such elementary civic rights as taking water from public water-courses.

The most reprehensible part of the conduct of the upper caste Hindus in Mahad and Kolaba District was that messages were sent immediately to the different villages asking the upper class people there to punish the delegates of the Conference as soon as they returned to their respective villages. In obedience to this mandate assaults were committed on a number of Mahars returning from the Conference either before or after they reached their villages where the depressed classes have the disadvantage of being overwhelmingly out-numbered by the upper caste Hindus. The leaders of the depressed classes have appealed to the authorities for protection and the District Officials including the D. S. P. are making enquiries on the spot. It must, however, be stated that if the Resident Magistrate had not allowed two precious hours to pass without doing anything the riot would have probably been averted.

Item No. 5

(From *Young India* 5th May 1927)

MAN'S INHUMANITY TO MAN

(By *M. K. Gandhi*)

In another column will be seen an extract from *Navajivan* of a most disgraceful case of calculated inhumanity of a medical man towards the dying wife of a member of the suppressed class in a Kathiawad village. Sjt. Amritlal Thakkar who is responsible for giving the details of the case has withheld the names of the place and parties for fear of the poor suppressed class schoolmaster being further molested by the medical man, I wish, however, that the names will be disclosed. Time must come when the suppressed class people will have to be encouraged by us to dare to suffer further hardships and tyranny. Their sufferings are already too great for any further sufferings to be really felt. Public opinion cannot be roused over grievances that cannot be verified and traced to their sources. I do not know the rules of the Medical Council in Bombay. I know that in other places a medical practitioner, who refused to attend before his fees were paid, would be answerable to the Council and would be liable to have his name removed from the Council's list and be otherwise subject to disciplinary action. Fees are no doubt exactable; but proper attendance upon patients is the first duty of a medical practitioner. The real inhumanity, however, if the facts stated are true, consists in the practitioner refusing to enter the untouchable's quarters, refusing himself to see the patient, and refusing himself to apply the thermometer. And if the doctrine of untouchability can ever be applied in any circumstances, it is certainly applicable to this member of the profession which he has disgraced. But I am hoping that there is some exaggeration in the statement made by Sjt Thakkar's correspondent and, if there is none, that the medical practitioner will himself come forth and make ample amends to the society which he has so outraged by his inhuman conduct.

READ, REFLECT AND WEEP

There is a school for the children of the suppressed classes in a village in Kathiawad. The teacher is a cultured, patriotic man belonging to the *Dhedh* or Weaver (untouchable) class. He owes his education to the compulsory education policy of His Highness the Gayakwad and had been doing his little bit for the amelioration of his community. He is a man of cleanly habits and refined manners, so that no one can recognise him as belonging to the untouchable class. But because he had the fortune or misfortune of teaching the children of his own community in a conservative village in Kathiawad, everyone regards him as an untouchable. But unmindful of that he had been silently working away. There are some moments, however, when the most patient man living under intolerable conditions may give vent to agony and indignation, which are evident in the following letters from the schoolmaster. Every little sentence in it is surcharged with pathos. I have purposely omitted the names of the village and all the people mentioned in the letter, lest the schoolmaster should come into further trouble.

Namaskar. My wife was delivered of a child on the 5th instant. On the 7th she was taken ill, had motions, lost her speech, had hard breathing and swelling on the chest, and her ribs were aching painfully. I want to call in Dr.—, but he said ‘I will not come to the untouchable’s quarters. I will not examine her either.’ Then I approached the Nagarsheth—and the Garisia Durbar—, and requested them to use their good offices for me. They came and on the Nagarsheth standing surety for me for the payment of Rs. 2 as the doctor’s fee, and on condition that the patient would be brought outside the untouchable’s quarters, he consented to come. He came, we took out the woman who had a baby only two days old. Then the doctor gave his thermometer to a Musalman who gave it to me. I applied the thermometer and then returned it to the Musalman who gave it to the doctor. It was about eight O’clock, and having inspected the thermometer in the light of a lamp, he said: ‘She has pneumonia and suffocation’. After this the doctor left and sent medicine. I got linseed from the market and we are applying linseed poultice and giving her the medicine. The doctor would not condescend to examine her, simply looked at her from a distance. Of course I gave Rs. 2 for his fee. It is a serious illness. Everything is in His hands !

II

The light in my life has gone out. She passed away at 2 O’clock this afternoon.

Comment is needless. What shall one say about the inhumanity of the doctor who being an educated man refused to apply the thermometer except through the medium of a Musalman to purify it, and who treated an ailing woman lying in for two days worse than a dog or a cat ? What shall one say of the society that tolerates this inhumanity ? One can but reflect and weep.

A.V. THAKKAR

Item No. 6(From the *Times of India* dated 1-4-28 and 10-2-28)**TYRANNY OF HINDUS**

RULES FOR BALAIS

Mode of life laid down

Last May high caste Hindus, viz., Kalotas, Rajputs, and Brahmins including the patels and patwaris of villages Kanaria, Bicholee Hafsi, Bicholi Mardana, and of about 15 other villages in the Indore district informed the Balais of their respective villages that if they wished to live among them, they must conform to the following rules :—1. Balais must not wear gold lace bordered pugrees ; 2. They must not wear dhoties with coloured or fancy borders ; 3. They must convey intimation of the death of any Hindu to relatives of deceased—no matter how far away these relatives may be living ; 4. In all Hindu marriages, the Balais must play music before the processions, and during the marriages ; 5. The Balai women must not wear gold or silver ornaments ; they must not wear fancy gowns, or jackets ; 6. Balai women must attend all cases of confinement of Hindu women ; 7. The Balais must render services without demanding remuneration, and must accept whatever a Hindu is pleased to give ; 8. If the Balais do not agree to abide by these terms, they must clear out of the villages.

BALAIS REFUSE COMPLIANCE

The Balais refused to comply ; and the Hindu element proceeded against them. Balais were not allowed to get water from the village wells; they were not allowed to let go their cattle to graze. Balais were prohibited from passing through land owned by a Hindu ; so that if the field of a Balai was surrounded by fields owned by Hindus, the Balai could have no access to his own field. The Hindus also let their cattle graze down the fields of Balais. The Balais submitted petitions to the Darbar against these persecutions ; but as they could get no timely relief, and the oppression continued hundreds of Balais, with their wives and children, were obliged to abandon their homes in which their ancestors lived for generations, and migrate to adjoining States, viz., to villages in Dhar, Dewas, Bagli, Bhopal, Gwalior, and other States.

COMPULSORY AGREEMENT

Only a few days ago the Hindus of Reoti village barely 7 miles to North of Indore City ordered the Balais to sign a stamped agreement in accordance with the rules framed against the Balais by the Hindus of other villages. The Balais refused to comply. It is alleged that some of them were beaten by the Hindus ; and one Balai was fastened to a post, and was told that he would be let go on agreeing to sign the agreement. He signed the agreement; and was released. Some Balais from this village ran up to the Prime Minister, the next day, i.e., on the 20th December, and made a complaint about the ill-treatment they have received from the Hindu villagers of Reoti. They were sent to the Subha of the District. This Officer, with the help of the Police, made inquiries at the village, and recommended that action be taken against

the Hindus under Sections 342 and 147 and against the Balais under Section 147, Indian Penal Code.

BALAIS LEAVE VILLAGES CASTE TYRANNY

IGNORANCE OF LAW, A HANDICAP

There has been no improvement in the treatment of the Balais by the Hindu residents of certain villages. Balais, it has already been reported, have been ill-treated by the higher caste Hindus. From the Depalpur Pergana alone, Indore District a large number of Balais have had to leave their homes and find shelter in adjoining States. The villages from which Balais have been forced to clear out are Badoli, Ahirkheral, Piploda, Moof-khera, Pamalpur, Karoda, Chatwada, Newri Pan, Sanauda, Ajnoti, Khatedi, and Sanavda. Pamalpur village has been altogether deserted, and not a Balai, man, woman, or child, is to be found there. Nanda Balai, a resident of one of the above villages, it is alleged, was severely beaten by the Hindus of the village. In one village, the report goes, the Hindus burnt down all the dwellings of the Balais but the offenders have not yet been traced.

Balais are ignorant village folk, who are ignorant of legal procedure and think that if a petition is sent to the *Sirkar* all that is required will be done for them. They have not the knowledge, or the means and practice to pursue a complaint to its end ; and, as they, it is said in some cases, failed to attend or produce witnesses in support of their allegations, the Magistrate had no alternative but to dismiss their complaint.

Item No. 7

(From the *Bombay Chronicle* 25th February 1928)

ORTHODOXY RUN MAD

ALLEGED BARBAROUS TREATMENT OF "UNTOUCHABLES"

CRIME OF BEING MAHARS

Mr. Keshavaji Ranchhodji Vaghela from Ahmedabad has informed Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, President, Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha as follows :

One Bapoorao Laxman and his brother Kaurao have been residents of Ahmedabad during the last six years. They used to mix with some people from the Deccan belonging to Maratha caste, Kaurao's two sons viz. Damoo and Laxuman used to take part in the Bhajan parties of the Marathas. The latter, however, recently came to know that the brothers Damoo and Laxuman were Mahars by caste and in order to ascertain this, two Mahars employed on the Parcel Train between Surat and Ahmedabad were specially called to identify Damoo and Laxuman. After it was ascertained that Damoo and Laxuman were Mahars they were called at a Bhajan party at Kalupur, Bhanderi Pole, at midnight on the 11th instant. Asked as to what caste they belonged to, Damoo and Laxuman replied that they were Somvanshis. This reply enraged the Marathas who freely abused them for having defiled their persons and places. The Mahar brothers were also assaulted by the Marathas. One of the brothers had a gold ring on his person. It was forcibly taken

away from him and sold for Rs. 11. Out of this amount Rs. 6 was paid to the Mahars who had been called from Surat to identify the brothers. Damoo and Laxuman entreated the Marathas to allow them to return to their homes, the latter refused to do so unless a fine Rs. 500 was paid. On the Mahar brothers pleading their inability to pay such a heavy sum, one of the Marathas suggested that the Mahar brothers should be fined only Rs. 125. But then one of the Marathas opposed the proposal for fine saying that they should not be satisfied with fine, but should punish the Mahars severely for their crime of concealing their caste. Having decided upon the course, the Mahar brothers were detained and at about 9 O'clock in the morning they were subjected to barbarous indignities. Their mustaches in the left side and eyebrows on the right side were shaved, their bodies besmeared with soot mixed in oil and also with dirt, garlands made of old shoes were put around their necks, and one of them was asked to hold a broom in his hand and the other to hold a placard on which it was written that the punishment was meted out to the culprits for venturing to touch high caste people. The Mahar brothers were taken in procession consisting of about 75 people, a drum being beaten in the front.

A complaint has been lodged with the Police by the said two Mahar brothers. The accused in their statement have admitted that Damoo and Laxuman were treated in the alleged manner, but pleaded that, the complainants had willingly agreed to undergo the punishment. Obviously Damoo and Laxuman were helpless when they were abused, assaulted and threatened with severe punishment and actually subjected to barbarous indignities. This case has created a great sensation among the people belonging to the so-called untouchables castes and efforts are being made to give proper legal aid to the complainants.

Item No. 8

(Bombay Legislative Council Debates 1927, Vol. XX)

(Part XVI, p. 1373)

Police : Enlistment of Mahars

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Will Government be pleased to state whether there is any rule prohibiting the enlistment of the Depressed classes in the police constabulary force of the Presidency ?

The Honourable Mr. J. E. B. Hotson : There is no such rule.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Will the Honourable Member please inform me why the Commissioner of Police for the city of Bombay refuses to appoint depressed class members in the police constabulary if there is no restriction ?

The Honourable Mr. J. E. B. Hotson : This opens up a very large subject, I can only say that there are practical difficulties which are known to every member of this House, and which stand in the way of the more extensive enlistment of these classes in the police. There is no prohibition against it.

N.B.—The practical difficulties referred to by Mr. Hotson are evidently difficulties arising **out** of untouchability.

Item No. 9

(Bombay Legislative Council Debates 1928, Vol. XXII)

(Part II, pp. 96-97)

Clerks in Government Service

Mr. R. S. Asarale: Will Government be pleased to state the total number in the clerical ranks in the offices of the various departments of [Government] ?

The Honourable Sir Chunilal Mehta: A statement giving the requisite information is placed on the Council Table :

	Marathas and allied castes	Muham- madans	Depres- sed classes	Advan- ced Hindus	Parsis	Chris- tians and Jews	Others	Total
I The Secretariat.	31	11	..	268	38	81	11	440
II P. W. D.	6	..	..	64	8	10	3	91
III Collector of Bombay	3	8	..	28	..	4	1	44
IV Commis- sioner of Excise.	1	..	..	12	5	..	..	18
V Small Causes Court.	9	7	..	58	1	5	8	97
VI High Court.	4	15	..	125	22	23	9	198
VII Bombay Police Courts.	7	4	..	32	..	4	..	47
VIII Com- missioner of Police, Bombay.		7	..	59	..	4		87

Item No. 10(From the *Times of India* 30th May 1928)

THROUGH INDIAN EYES

“CHAMARDAS AND MAHARDAS”

How sincere the political lions are when they roar about the disabilities and hardships of the Untouchables, was clearly brought out at the Maharashtra Conference when the question of the removal of untouchability was adroitly shelved. Among the half dozen or so of protestants against this trick were men belonging to the *Swarajya*. One of them wrote in that paper an outspoken article, exposing the general Hindu outlook on the thorny problem,

which throws much light on what the Maharashtra Conference did. "While speaking to me the other day," says the writer about the Samata Sangha (Social Equality Society) of Poona, "a friend of mine said : 'Because people like you join them, these Chambhardas and Mahardas (contemptible Chamars and Mahars) become insolent' From this utterance one can realise what a terrible hatred of the Untouchable classes still exists among the upper classes."

RESOLUTIONS AND ACTS

The sad reformer continues : "Mahatmaji issued a proclamation that untouchability was a blot on Hindu dharma; Swamy Shraddhanand and Lala Lajpatrai have said all along that we shall never be able to win Swaraj if untouchability is not removed from Hindu Society ; during the last seven years resolutions for its removal are being adopted by the Congress; but what is the actual result of all these activities ? Utterances like the one given above are still coming out of the mouths of highly educated persons !

We pass resolutions in the Congress and the Hindu Sabha advocating temple entry of Untouchables and urging that public tanks, wells, etc., should be thrown open to them. But when the time for putting them into practice comes, we condemn the Untouchables, nay, we assault them and then proceed legally against them and send them to jail."

Item No. 11

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE DEPRESSED CLASSES

CONFERENCE HELD AT DAPOLI (District Ratnagiri)

1. (a) This Conference express indignation at the campaign of persecution carried on by the so-called high caste Hindus in this district against the depressed classes for the refusal on the latter's part to eat the meat of dead animals.

(b) This Conference is extremely grieved to find that the Police officers and Magistrates in the district systematically abuse the depressed class people instead of giving them protection against the tyranny and injustice to which they are being subjected by the so-called high caste Hindus through impounding the cattle of the former, committing assaults on them and making it impossible for them to obtain the necessities of life in the bazars by observing a strict social boycott against them.

(c) This Conference appeals to the Government to take steps for having the usual *baluta* remuneration paid to the Watandar Mahars who have been deprived of the same by the high caste Hindu villagers owing to the former's refusal to eat the carrion and carry dead animals, beg alms and do other unclean things.

2. (a) Having come to know that in a number of villages it is the Police Patel who countenances the campaign of persecution against the depressed class people, this Conference requests the Government to take proper steps against such Police Patels.

(b) This Conference requests the Government to appoint in each district a special Police Inspector from amongst the depressed classes for the protection of these classes and to admit recruits from these classes in the police service.

(c) This Conference requests the Government immediately to quarter punitive police under the command of military pensioners belonging to the depressed classes, at the villages of Vadval, Matven, Tulsi, Degaon, Mandan-gad, Satara etc. at the expense of the so-called high caste Hindus residing in these villages in view of the fact that owing to harassment and social boycott and open assaults it has become impossible for the depressed classes to live in these villages.

3. This Conference is emphatically of the opinion that no further instalment of self-government be given to India except with proper safeguard for the interests of the depressed classes.

Item No. 12

(From the *Bombay Chronicle* dated 20-10-27)

MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS [IN THE CITY OF BOMBAY]

The Schools Committee has made itself ridiculous by taking fright at the little question of drinking "lotas" (pots). It seems that, in spite of the Corporation's resolution that there should be no caste discrimination in the Municipal Schools, "depressed" class children are given separate pots for drinking water. A sub-committee of the Schools Committee recommended that all children should be given the same pots. But the members of the Schools Committee gravely cogitated over this recommendation and entertained all sorts of fears. Some said that the change would be resented by the caste Hindus ; evidently, the resentment of the "low" caste Hindus does not count for much. Prof. V. G. Rao said that it was a revolutionary change and Mr. D. G. Dalvi, himself a well-known social reformer, added to these fears a legal one, that some parents might file a suit against the Committee. Ultimately the Schools Committee referred the question back to the sub-committee, which was tantamount to saying that the latter's recommendation was not acceptable to them.

A CALCULATED INSULT

The fears mentioned above are absurd, as every boy is expected to wash a pot well before using it, on sanitary and—if he is so minded—on caste grounds. That a pot once used by an "untouchable" boy becomes itself untouchable or unusable by the "high" caste Hindus in spite of its being washed clean, is a calculated insult to the unfortunate "depressed" classes, which we certainly did not expect the Schools Committee to countenance. Mr. Dalvi stated that in view of compulsory education in some Wards parents might file a suit against the Committee "for enforcing an obligation which was by no means a legal one". But nobody is under an obligation to

use the common pots in the schools. Those parents who are so over scrupulous may give their own pots to their children and thereby protect their “religion”. As for the “depressed” classes the insult to them remains, whether they bring their own pots or betake themselves to other schools where better notions of justice prevail.