

CONSTITUTION FOR INDIA.

SWARAJ MEASURE.

COMMONWEALTH BILL AS BASIS.

MADRAS, August 21.

In a statement to the Associated Press, Mr. B. Shiva Rao the General Secretary of the National Federation, makes an analysis side by side of the Commonwealth of India Bill and the draft of the Swaraj Constitution recently drawn up by some members of the Independent Labour Party. He remarks that "There seems to be a general impression that in the I. L. P. draft some considerable changes have been incorporated. The point I wish to bring out is that the framers of that bill express their heavy obligation to the Commonwealth of India Bill. The Commonwealth Bill has quite frankly been taken as the foundation for the I. L. P. measure. Not only the foundation but practically the whole of the superstructure is identical in the two Bills. More than three-fourths of the provisions of the I. L. P. Bill are identical with those of the Commonwealth Bill. On practically all the essential points the two Bills are identical."

IMPORTANT CHANGES.

Mr. Shiva Rao then proceeds to note the differences and states that "A somewhat important change in the new draft is that it vests the power of appointing the Governors of Provinces in the Governor-General in Council and not in the King. This may affect the autonomy of the Provinces. The most important differences between the two Bills are in regard to defence, local self-government and the system of franchises. The I. L. P. Bill has eliminated the whole chapter on defence. That has also been the treatment accorded to the chapter of the Commonwealth Bill on sub-provincial Government."

"Mr. Shiva Rao also points out that while the Commonwealth Bill left the problem of Indian States as not relevant to the framing of a Swaraj constitution, the I. L. P. Bill gives a guarantee that the treaty rights enjoyed by the rulers of the Indian States will be respected by the Swaraj Government and also provides for the States being included within the jurisdiction of the Central Legislature. He concludes."

A JOINT MEASURE.

"I have analysed the two drafts because of the misconceptions now prevailing about the scope and the character of the Commonwealth Bill. As Dr. Besant has repeatedly said in India and also in a memorable speech on the occasion of the anniversaries of Shiva-ji and Tilak in London towards the end of July this year. If all parties in India should agree to back up a measure which does not give to India less than the Commonwealth of India Bill, she and her co-workers would be prepared to withdraw the latter. As many Indian papers have suggested, it would be well in my humble opinion for the various political organisations to take the two drafts for a comparative study and come to an agreement. A small committee of different parties may do considerable preliminary work in this direction and submit a draft acceptable to all to the next Congress in Madras."