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Topics of the Week.

The Muslim League.

THE speech which Mr. Jinnah delivered as President at the special session of the Muslim League held in Calcutta to consider the Shahidganj affair was, to say the best about it, utterly unhelpful. He said nothing very much about the particular question to consider which the session was convened, except that he advised the Sikhs to rise above prestige and *amour propre* and the Muslims to realise that the way to settlement is not achieved by dictation from one community to the other. This is not so bad, but his speech was mainly taken up with fulminations against the Hindus and particularly the Congress and with boasts that the Muslims have thrown off their lethargy and awakened to a sense of the danger of their position, with a view to meeting it. In making the speech, however, he betrays only too plainly a consciousness that his community has not yet realised the oppression to which it is being subjected in non-Muslim provinces and that it does not yet understand fully the imperative need that there exists of enlisting under the banner of the Muslim League to counter the oppression. What the oppression consists in, however, he has carefully avoided saying. We are falling upon evil days indeed when a leader of Mr. Jinnah's calibre in incorruptibility and patriotism considers it his primary duty to stir up Muslims against other communities.

If this speech is a true index to the prevailing sentiments of Mahomedans, it seems useless, and indeed, perilous, to enter upon conversations with Mr. Jinnah as the Congress is supposed to be doing. It may be that, by making a ferocious and inflam-

matory speech before the conversations start, Mr. Jinnah is trying to manoeuvre himself into a strong bargaining position. If this is true not much significance need be attached to what he says. But we are afraid that the speech is not intended merely to secure a tactical advantage. It is intended to form an anti-nationalist block by detaching the Muslims from the Congress and all other parties who are trying honestly to get their followers to rise above all communal, religious and racial bias and to evince a spirit of pure nationalism free from all kind of antipathy towards anyone. If our reading is true we cannot but feel that Mahatma Gandhi's conversations with Mr. Jinnah, for which next Monday is fixed, look dangerously like the conversations initiated by Mr. Chamberlain with the Fascist dictator. The resolutions passed at the meeting of the Muslim League only support the opening of talks with the Congress. All we can say is that the omens are not too good, and we would like the Congress to walk warily.

Agricultural Income Tax in Bihar.

THE Bihar Legislative Assembly has recently passed a Bill relating to the levy of tax on agricultural incomes. According to the Bill, the assessable income of an agriculturist will be determined after deducting expenses incurred for producing the income such as sums paid as revenue and rent to the Government in relation to agriculture under the various Acts of the province, collection expenses up to 10 per cent. of the gross income, expenses incurred on the maintenance of the capital assets of cultivation, transport expenses, maintenance expenses of cattle and implements, interest paid on mortgages and on depreciation at the prescribed rates. In the case of a person who is unable to submit accounts for expenses incurred under the various items mentioned above, his income for purposes of levying income tax will be presumed to be six times the rent or cess that he paid to the Government.

UNDER the Bill, insurance premiums not exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$ of the gross income will also be deducted. This is as it should be. But we fail to understand why the taxable limit of agricultural income has been fixed at Rs. 5,000 while it is only Rs. 2,000 under the Indian Income Tax Act. We believe that the zamindars whose income is within the Rs. 2,000 and Rs. 5,000 limit are more numerous than those whose income is above Rs. 5,000. By exempting the former from the levy of income tax the Government is foregoing a considerable share of income from a class of people who can afford to pay the tax. We feel that it is desirable to bring down the taxable limit to Rs. 2,000. Correspondingly, the 100 acre limit, from the point of view of the extent of the land liable to agricultural income tax, ought to be brought down to 40 acres.

IN Bihar, agricultural incomes between Rs. 2,000 and Rs. 5,000 are not taxed. Incomes of Rs. 5,000 and above up to Rs. 1,00,000 are taxed at the same rates as general incomes in India. But there is no provision for super tax under the Bihar Bill. Instead, in Bihar, tax on agricultural incomes of Rs. 1,00,000 and over is to be levied at a higher rate than the corresponding rate in India. The net result, however, is that the rate of income tax on agricultural income in Bihar is considerably lower than the rate of income tax and super tax taken together under the Indian Income tax on incomes over Rs. 50,000, as the table below will show.

Income grades.	Rate of In- come-tax and super-tax in India.	Rate of tax on agricul- tural incomes in Bihar.	Difference in favour of Indian In- come-tax.
Rs.	as. ps.	as. ps.	as. ps.
50,000—99,999	8 10	3 1	1 9
1,00,000—1,49,999	4 5	2 6	1 9
1,50,000—1,99,999	4 11	2 6	2 5
2,00,000—2,49,999	5 5	2 6	2 9
2,50,000—2,99,999	5 11	3 0	2 11
3,00,000—3,49,999	6 5	3 0	3 5
3,50,000—3,99,999	6 11	3 0	3 11
4,00,000—4,49,999	7 5	3 0	4 5
4,50,000—4,99,999	7 11	3 0	4 11
5,00,000—14,99,999	8 5	3 6	4 9
15,00,000 and over	8 5	4 0	4 5

The omission of super tax in the Bihar Bill is without justification and deprives the Government of an appreciable source of income from those who could afford to pay.

THE Bill provoked a great deal of controversy in respect of the provision relating to Muslim Wakfs or trusts, which were sought to be exempted from the operation of the Act, but did not exempt similarly other trusts. It was but natural that the members of the Assembly demanded that all trusts should be treated alike and no discrimination should be made on communal or religious grounds. If we are to be guided by the practice in other countries all charitable and religious trusts ought to be excluded from the operation of the Act and the Indian Income tax Act exempts all such trusts from the operation of the Act. Public charitable trusts in other countries are perhaps efficiently controlled and there is always a strong public opinion which makes it incumbent on the trustees to administer the trusts impartially and usefully. But in India the management of trusts, whether Hindu, Muslim or any other, is anything but satisfactory. It requires to be set right. However, that is a matter that is not immediately relevant to the point. What is relevant is whether the agricultural income of such trusts should be taxed or not. After a great deal of discussion the Assembly has now accepted the formula of Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad who was consulted by the Premier on the phone, that only public wakfs be exempted from the operation of the Act. The Hindu and other trusts are made liable to tax.

Revision of Treaties with States.

IN a letter to the *Times* Sir Albion Banerji, at one time Dewan of Mysore, welcomes Earl Winterton's reply in the House of Commons that full-power States cannot and will not be restrained by the paramount power from introducing responsible government within their borders. Still he maintains that in order that the States should establish a democratic regime it is necessary that the terms of the old treaties which impose restrictions upon the States ought

to be revised. In corroboration of his statement that restraints are in fact placed upon the power of the States he refers to the correspondence that took place between himself and the then Resident. He seems to imply that a reference to the paramount power became necessary before a scheme of constitutional reform could be promulgated in Mysore in 1922 on account of a provision in the Mysore Treaty which says: "No material change in the administration now in force should be introduced without the consent of the Governor-General in Council."

THIS in itself, however, does not prove anything. The point is whether the admitted restrictions were worked in the direction of giving more power or less power to the people. It is conceivable that, under the cloak of introducing a measure of constitutional reform, a State might deprive the people of even the little power they possess; and in order to prevent such a thing happening the paramount power must have the constitutional means of stepping in. The restraints which in such a case are obviously necessary and desirable are not unnaturally expressed in general terms in the treaties entered into, and even a good measure might as a consequence of the form which the treaties have taken require the prior consent of the paramount power as a bad measure ought to. The question that is of real importance is whether, in point of fact, the legal restraints on the powers of the States are so used as to make the democratisation of the States' constitutions more difficult. Sir Albion Banerji does not allege that on the occasion to which he refers the authorities of Mysore State wanted to go far ahead in liberalising its constitution, but that the paramount power put impediments in their way, with the result that the Mysore people had to be content with a smaller measure of constitutional advance than the authorities were prepared to offer. No State has so far made a complaint in this sense although a good few weeks have elapsed since Lord Winterton's pronouncement, and in the absence of such a complaint one is forced to the conclusion that though the paramount power has not put pressure on the States to march forward it has not compelled them to slacken their pace either.

AS to a general revision of the treaties, that of course is neither possible nor desirable in the sense of striking off all restraints and leaving the States free to do just as they please. The States' people would like the restraints to remain if these are to operate in not allowing the Princes to go backwards without due cause. Earl Winterton's pronouncement ensures that the restraints would not operate in the other direction, and there is therefore no reason for revising the treaties by the removal of restrictions. The treaties may remain as they are; the consent of the paramount power that is required to a real reform will be a mere formality; but it will be and should be a live reality when the so-called reform only means a step back. A general relinquishment of all control by the paramount power will and should follow only when the paramount power's control is replaced by popular control. But until this happens, the paramount power must hold certain powers in reserve for use against reactionary and oppressive rulers in the interest of the people.

Dr. Mahajani's Suggestion.

A COMPLAINT is being voiced—and it is a legitimate complaint—that members of the upper chamber in Bombay are denied the opportunities that they are entitled to have of participating in adequate measure in the deliberations on bills before they are passed into law. Members of the Legislative Council can of

course express their views when the bills come up for discussion in their house, but in most cases this stage is reached when the measures have already taken a definite shape in the select committee of the lower house, to which of course only the members of that house are and can be admitted, and when the Government is committed to a particular policy. Members of the Council should be given a chance such as members of the Assembly get in a select committee in giving assistance in the formative stages of bills, and Dr. Mahajani suggests that this would be done by the appointment of joint committees, for which there is provision in the Act, for the purpose of going into the merits of important measures. A bill like the Small Holders Bill affects the Council more than the Assembly, and yet members of the second chamber were not taken into consultation on it at all but were confronted as it were with an accomplished fact. This unfairness, unintentional as it is, can be easily remedied and deserves to be remedied. Second chambers are no doubt unwanted impositions, but it will not help anyone to present them, as long as they are in existence, with grievances which are capable of being satisfactorily met.

Repression in the Punjab.

DURING the last few months the Punjab Government has forfeited the securities of six journals in the province amounting in all to Rs. 6,000, under the Press Act, by a fiat of the executive. This is utterly undemocratic in a government which is supposed to be representative of and responsible to the people. It is a well-established rule of ordered society that no man is to be condemned or punished without being given an opportunity to defend himself against the charge made against him.

Conditions in the Punjab are not in any way different now from what they are in other provinces. Some of the provinces have already repealed the repressive laws as, for instance, Bombay, thereby relying entirely upon the ordinary civil and criminal laws of the province. The Punjab Government, instead of taking a leaf from the experience of provinces like Bombay, has chosen to exploit the repressive laws for suppressing civil liberties and freedom of the press in the province. We hope that the Government of Sir Sikander Hyat Khan will realize the unwisdom of this policy and will not try to lean on a crutch which other provinces have found useless and unnecessary. Instead, the policy of prosecuting offending papers in a court of law ought to be adopted by him if popular rights are not to be trampled upon and the confidence of the people in the Government is not to be shaken.

Disasters at the Hardwar Kumbh.

It is deplorable that this year's Kumbh at Hardwar should have been marred by two disasters of no small magnitude, one a huge conflagration destroying the village of Mayapur resulting in a loss of property worth over 60 lakhs of rupees and the other a railway disaster at the Hardwar station-yard resulting in loss and injury to several lives. These incidents have naturally cast a gloom over Hardwar.

It appears that there were not enough fire engines in Hardwar to meet such outbreaks of fire, excepting the one that was brought from outside by a social service agency. It is a sad commentary on the affairs of the Municipality of Hardwar and the Mela authorities. At every Mela the authorities make arrangements to safeguard the public health and sanitation and the safety of pilgrims at Hardwar, but it passes one's understanding how they did not make necessary arrangements by way of a liberal provision of fire engines to meet such emergencies. The public is entitled to know why they failed in their duty in this respect and what they propose to do in future.

THE railway disaster at the Hardwar station-yard which resulted in loss of life and limb appears to be due to the negligence of the railway servants, if the reports are true. The Government ought to appoint a committee immediately to inquire into the conduct of the railway servants. The question of paying compensation both to traders for the loss caused by the fire at Mayapur and to the dependents of the dead and the injured in the railway accident must be immediately gone into.

Ryots to Foot Bill for Prince's Marriage.

It appears that the Ruler of Ratlam has levied a marriage tax of Rs. 5 on each cultivator in his State to meet the expenses in connection with the marriage of his son, the Rajkumar. The marriage is estimated to cost Rs. 8 lakhs. The Rajkumar was born in 1927 and is scarcely 12 years of age. But still he is considered grown up enough to enter on matrimony. It is something that he has passed out of the cradle! For a State with an annual income of Rs. 10 lakhs to spend 8 lakhs of rupees on the marriage of a Prince is preposterous, and to levy a tax for the purpose on the cultivators is most unjust and arbitrary. In other words the Ruler of Ratlam is collecting illegally from his subjects an amount almost equal to the annual revenue of the State.

COMBINATION OF POLARIAL OPPOSITES IN A FEDERATION.

MAHATMA GANDHI met the Viceroy in Delhi last week and had a long talk with him on diverse subjects, among which, it is said, federation figured prominently. It is rumoured that the Mahatma laid before the Viceroy the changes in the federal scheme which would be required in order that the Congress might be persuaded to abandon its policy of blank rejection and to work the federal part of the constitution. So far Gandhiji has acted on the principle that "a still tongue makes a wise head;" he has not confided the secret of his thoughts to anyone. The Congress itself has this year made

specific mention of what it regards as the worst features of the scheme and made it clear that unless these features were removed it would maintain its uncompromising hostility to the Act. But a considerable section of the people including several Congress leaders are haunted by the fear that if and when negotiations are started, Mahatma Gandhi, who would inevitably play a decisive role in these negotiations, might water down the minimum demands of the Congress, in so far as the States are concerned, on account of the tenderness which he is known to feel towards the Princes. It is therefore necessary at this

time to utter a word of warning to all those to whom it may be given to carry on conversations either with the Government of India or with the Princes that, while there is much room for concessions on details, no compromise must be attempted on fundamentals.

The most vicious part of the whole scheme is, of course, the marriage (in Lord Lothian's words) of feudal India to democratic British India, the bringing together of two polarial opposites under the umbrella of one common government. That such an attempt would end in an ineluctable disaster is not yet fully realised by the average politician, and was certainly not realised by most of those who participated in the Round Table Conferences; but the truth is now dawning upon them. Only the other day, writing on international politics, the *Statesman* remarked that "the 'pretty pretty' philosophy that it does not matter to us what form of internal government another country has is out of date". If only in making commercial treaties or forming military alliances a country must take account of the system of internal government of other countries with which it wishes to enter into relations, it is evident that where an organic federal union is to be formed the form of internal government of the component parts of the union is a matter of vital concern to each of them. The "pretty pretty" philosophy it would be suicidal to embrace in establishing an indissoluble union, a perpetual federation. The Haripura Congress resolution hits off the indispensable requirement in this case very well when it says:

The Congress is not opposed to the idea of federation; but a real federation must, even apart from the question of responsibility, consist of free units enjoying more or less the same measure of freedom and civil liberty, and representation by the democratic process of election. The Indian States participating in the federation should approximate to the provinces in the establishment of representative institutions and responsible government, civil liberties and method of election to the federal houses. Otherwise the federation, as it is now contemplated, will, instead of building up Indian unity, encourage separatist tendencies and involve the States in internal and external conflicts.

The qualification "more or less" is both desirable and necessary in this resolution. No one out of Bedlam can hope to see the States transformed overnight from autocracies into democracies. The passage from one kind of government to another is a matter of years and tens of years, if the progress is to be solid and not merely showy. It is unnecessary to hold up the federation for all this long interval, provided that before admission the States make a fairly good showing in democracy and, what is even more important, they undertake, by entering into binding commitments, to make rapid strides towards full-blooded democracy in a specified period in the future. We for our part shall have no objection to a federal union even with budding democracies if guarantees are forthcoming that they will in no remote future become full-blossoming democracies. But while we think that no more than an "approximation" to the level of British Indian provinces need or can be required on the part of the States, there is a serious danger that those who care more for nationalism than

for democracy and for Indian self-government than for popular government will find in these qualifications "more or less" and "approximation" loopholes for defeating the whole purpose of prescribing a minimum initial standard and requiring full development at an early date.

Window-dressing is going on at a furious pace at present in the States. The question of constitutional reform is proclaimed to be on the tapis in some; the appointment of committees to this end has been announced or is said to be under consideration in some others. All this ostentatious activity on the part of most of the States is no doubt for the purpose of establishing their credentials and giving proof of their qualification for entry into a federation with British India. We do not despise this activity; we welcome it. It betokens in any case a strategic retreat from the resolute determination of the State rulers not to wear the Nessus-shirt of discredited democracy to which public expression was given some time ago by the late Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, of whom one wishes it were possible, without doing violence to one's conscience, to speak "well even after his departure from this world. But we must not overrate these signs of activity as if they indicated a real trend away from autocracy. In this matter we can rely only upon the practice of democracy, and not its profession. Schemes of constitutional reform are of no use; they must be translated into action. Representative institutions must be actually introduced and they must be in working order. Moreover, they must confer some real power, limited as it may be, on the people. Only too often do we find that the State Legislative Assembly is a compost of hypocrisy and tyranny, concealing the naked tyranny of autocracy under the mask of Pharisaic solicitude for the people's welfare. We shall not require, as a mark of eligibility for the high privilege of being admitted to federation, the establishment of a full-grown democratic regime; but this condition can be waived with safety only if in present circumstances the States have already made a certain genuine advance towards democracy and if British India, the other partner to federation, has a measure of control over the advance yet to be made. The States will no doubt plead their internal sovereignty. If they stand firm against any possible impairment of their internal sovereignty, British India must stand firm against any possible impairment of its democracy by the infusion of outside autocracy and refuse to keep political house together with men who, undesirable at present, will give no surety for amendment in future. If British India allows itself to be immeshed in a tangle of contradictions between autocracy and democracy and if it takes no power to resolve these contradictions at a time that may appear right to it, it will most certainly be involved in ruin.

On the more limited question of the States' representation in the federal legislature too a warning appears to us to be necessary. "Representation by the democratic process of election" is what the Congress resolution requires. That, of course, is the only

correct position, but here too a compromise is possible. And while we would be all in favour of a reasonable compromise, the danger is that, in exploring compromises, the limits dictated by reason would be passed. The solution that passes muster even in supposedly progressive circles is that in States where representative institutions obtain a proportion of the representatives should be elected by such institutions. Some who are more daring press for the whole of the representatives being so elected. This would be an admissible solution only if such States alone are accorded the privilege of entry into federation as are endowed with representative institutions of an advanced kind. But to get a proportion or the bulk or even the whole of the representation of States by election from Legislative Assemblies in which there is an excess of nominated or of nominated plus semi-elected over elected members is in effect to accept nomination. Indeed, it is worse than accepting nomination, pure and simple. This point must be properly appreciated: disguised nominees are more dangerous than open nominees. This is sober truth; we do not speak the language of exaggeration. There is as wide a gulf between a genuine Representative Assembly and a faked Representative Assembly as between (to take an illustration from labour organisations), a free union and a company union. Formerly the great barons of industry would not tolerate any kind of trade union; later, when they found that some kind of union was a necessary part of industrial organisation, they formed company unions which they could control. But these unions are no less injurious to the wage-earner than the want of any union; in fact more. In confirmation of this we would point to the decision rendered by the Supreme Court of U.S. on 28th February in which it upheld the ban placed on company unions by the National Relations Board. On this occasion Mr. Justice Stone observed that "these unions had no procedure for meetings, except that dictated by the companies, no representatives with authority to bring the workers' grievances before the companies, and no power to amend rules or procedure without the companies' consent. In point of fact, they were not unions at all, but schemes adopted by the employers to prevent the formation of unions." The

company unions and the harm they do are well described in the following passage from an American journal commenting upon the Supreme Court's decision:

In no sense did the company union represent the wage-earner, even when it provided an elaborate machinery to guarantee his rights. The essential flaw was that the machinery was owned by the employer. He alone issued rules and regulations, appointed the "union's" officials, or controlled the elections, and by threats and promises managed to use the group for his exclusive benefit. When he sat down to bargain with representatives of the workers he bargained with himself, for while he was the party of the first part, he was also the party of the second part. The representatives did not in fact present the case for the workers but betrayed it, and their chief value to the employer was that they acted as ill-paid but useful labour spies.

Similarly, the people in a State would not be represented but betrayed by those representatives who are elected by members of a Legislative Assembly which is indirectly controlled by the ruler of the State. There may be room for bargaining as to the minimum proportion of elected representatives that may be required at the start; but there must be no weakening on the question of the quality of representation. The least that we must insist upon is that if there is to be indirect representation via Representative Assemblies, only the elected members of the Assemblies should have the right to elect representatives to the federal legislature. Further, whatever compromise is arrived at about the proportion of representatives to be elected, we must not leave the matter there but must impose upon the Princes a definite obligation that, after an interval to be specified, they shall assimilate the mode of election in their States to that in British India. We must maintain a continuous hold on this business till uniformity is established, and the Princes must be estopped from bringing in a plea for the maintenance intact of their internal sovereignty.

The Princes must also be made to shed their *liberum veto* on future constitutional amendments. British India cannot agree to be placed in Princely strait-jackets.

Watch these talks!

RECONSTRUCTION OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

II*

THE Central Provinces scheme of Reconstruction of Local Self-Government involves the setting up of replicas of provincial government in each district and it will mean the establishment of small district secretariats, a district appointments department and district finance departments. Obviously the result will be an increase in administrative personnel and increased complexity of administrative machinery. The amount of voluntary public work forthcoming will also have to increase considerably. The extent of the increase in personnel thus neces-

sitated is made clear by the note on p. 17, which shows that, according to this scheme, instead of one Inspector of Schools with 2 or 3 assistants for each division, there will have to be an inspector or assistant inspector per district. The number of higher officers will have to be increased in the same proportion for all departments. Instead of the standing committee of a D. L. B. there is proposed to be a small cabinet modelled on the provincial cabinet and a band of departmental secretaries. This, of course, will not dispense with any official machinery at the centre, which will continue to remain intact for most of the present purposes. All this is necessary in order to provide for what is called decentralization of general administration. We cannot clearly visualise what are expected to

* The first article on this subject appeared in the issue of 7th April.

be the beneficial results of the proposed type of decentralization. No economy can certainly result therefrom. The proposed change will, on the whole, mean more expense; as while it might mean the possibility of retrenching some clerical staff, it will, as pointed out above, lead to an increase in the number of higher officials. Will it increase efficiency? It is not clear how it can do so. For, the only important change effected by the system will be that of giving the present cadre of district officials two sets of masters: the provincial government and the district government. The sphere of action of almost all important officials will fall within the spheres of influence of both these governments. The calibre of district officials or of their subordinate staff will not change; only the system of supervising their work will become more complicated than before. This is more likely to lead to increased inefficiency than otherwise. The chances of increased inefficiency will be further increased if the recruitment of the staffs of departments is carried out separately for each district. This will be a retrograde step. To-day one of the ways suggested for increasing the efficiency of the administrative staffs of local bodies is to recruit their superior staff in one provincial cadre. It is pleaded that this will attract better men to the service and also make their position somewhat more secure. In the circumstances the transfer of appointments and control in departments, at present manned on a provincial basis, to a district authority cannot be favoured unless the compensating advantages are overwhelmingly large.

Each department, we are told, will be split into two branches: (i) Provincial and (ii) District. For what is called the "District side" of each department—the exact connotation of the term "District side" is nowhere made clear—the district authorities will be autonomous, with general supervision from the Provincial Government. The district official staff would be subordinate to the District Council so far as the "District side" is concerned. But with regard to Provincial matters the District Council would have no more than advisory powers. But even with regard to Provincial matters, there shall be no interference from the Provincial Government in case of agreement between the District Executive Committee and the District official. Thus we have, in the deciding of provincial matters, three voices, those of the Provincial Government, the District Executive Committee and the District official, a majority evidently determining each issue. This is a curious system to suggest. Its absurdity is realised most fully when one reads the list of the subjects contemplated to be transferred to the District administration. They include such items as Census, Criminal Tribes, Railway Police or Unemployment Insurance. This is just a random sample. The chaos resulting from

each district authority being able to decide its own policy in such matters can well be imagined. We know of no country where matters of this or analogous nature are transferred for administration to local bodies or decisions regarding these placed under their discretion.

The dualism of the scheme is undoubtedly its worst feature. The details of the system of recruitment of officials under the scheme are not given, but whoever the appointing authority, all the more important officials will serve two masters. They will have to deal with and be subordinate to both the provincial and district authorities. No arrangement could so certainly ensure administrative waste and disorder. It is entirely one matter to place the services of the provincial expert staff for consultation and advice at the disposal of the local bodies and quite another to make the district staff subordinate to them for certain purposes. Dualism will be fatal to efficiency. It will in addition lead to constant friction. It is obvious that, so far at least as the superior staff is concerned, powers of transfer, etc. will rest entirely in the hands of the provincial authority. The district staff will not be in the position of those officials whose services are at present sometimes lent to the local bodies. For, if the local bodies do not desire to continue the services of a provincial officer, today he reverts to his original position in the government services and the local body can appoint anyone it likes to fill his place. But under the scheme under discussion the local body cannot transfer or send back any district officer with whom it is not in agreement and there is no guarantee that the provincial government will always see eye to eye in this matter with local bodies.

It is further obvious that the framers of scheme are of opinion that there is a plentiful supply of competent public workers available in each district in the Central Provinces. This assumption is implicit in the scheme. For, what the scheme amounts to is a distribution of a considerable part of the work performed at present by the provincial cabinet into the hands of a small executive committee for each district. We cannot share the optimism of the framers of the scheme. We find it impossible to believe that there will be forthcoming in each district men to do the heavy work falling to the members of a District Executive Committee in an honorary capacity, men who are also capable enough to control and guide the work of district officers. Surely our present local bodies could never have fallen into the state in which they have fallen if there had been such a plentiful supply of capable and public-spirited public workers.

(To be concluded.)

D. R. GADGIL

ANGLO-ITALIAN PACT.

THE British Prime Minister can apparently yield to none in paying lip-service to great ideals. In defining the foreign policy of Great Britain in the House of Commons on 24th March he pledged

his country's support to the principle of collective security and in doing so went so far as to discountenance regional pacts within the framework of the League of Nations. He had in mind probably the

suggestion that Mr. Churchill had made on an earlier occasion of forming, while the League of Nations is too cumbersome a machinery to work as a whole, a "grand alliance" of nations true to the League and intended to counter the lightning strokes of predatory countries like Germany and Italy. Mr. Churchill said then :

If a number of States were assembled around Great Britain and France in a solemn treaty for mutual defence against aggression; if they had their forces marshalled in what you may call a grand alliance; if they had their staff arrangements concerted; if all this rested, as it can honourably rest, upon the Covenant of the League of Nations, agreeable with all the purposes and ideas of the League of Nations; if that were sustained, as it would be by the moral sense of the world; and if it were done in the year 1938—and, believe me, it may be the last chance there will be for doing it—then I say that you might even now arrest this approaching war. Then perhaps the curse which overhangs Europe would pass away. Then perhaps the ferocious passions which now grip a great people (Germans) would turn inwards and not outwards in an internal rather than an external explosion, and mankind would perhaps be spared the deadly ordeal which we have been sagging and sliding month by month.

Later he developed this point and advocated the creation of a Danubian block of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Greece and Turkey, all which countries containing 75 million people are menaced and are deciding "whether they will rally, as they would desire to do, to the standards of civilisation which still fly from Geneva, or whether they will be forced to throw in their lot and adopt the system and the doctrines of the Nazi powers." Why not attach them, he asked, to the Geneva standard rather than let them fall one after another to the dictators? This group of powers, he said, would be as it were mandatories of the League and the guardians of civilisation.

One would have thought that this was a good idea, but it was not good enough for Mr. Chamberlain. He was too ardent and devoted a champion of the League to accept it. "However completely," he said, "we encase such a proposal as that in the Covenant of the League, however wholeheartedly the League may be prepared to give its sanction and approval to such a subject, as a matter of fact it does not differ from the old alliances of pre-war days, which we thought we had abandoned in favour of something better." This savours of power politics, and Mr. Chamberlain would have none of it. The powers might join together upon the basis of the Covenant and for the effective fulfilment of the Covenant; they might also secure the approval of the League. Nonetheless such a combination is taboo to Mr. Chamberlain. He also proclaimed that not only was peace a British objective but peace founded upon justice. How noble these sentiments! But consider in what way he carried them out in arranging a pact with Italy. His horror of the establishment of exclusive groups of nations was so great that he would not let England join with France and the threatened countries in the Danubian region for the purpose of assembling deterrents against aggression, but he has no scruples in forming a pact with an aggressor country itself. He wants to secure not mere peace, but, what is greater than

peace, viz. freedom and justice, but his way of securing peace for Great Britain is by destroying the freedom of Abyssinia and Spain and handing them over for justice to dictators bent upon despoiling them. There was a choice for Great Britain between two broad lines of policy. Sir Archibald Sinclair put the alternatives in clear terms. He remarked :

On the one hand, we may buy a few years of peace at the cost of the people of Spain and of Abyssinia, and at the cost of abandoning the effort to organise security on the basis of equal justice for all nations and of surrendering strategic positions, or of enabling the Italian Government to establish strategic positions, which would be of vital importance in war and would greatly strengthen its diplomacy in peace. Or, on the other hand, we can organise a defensive system which would be able to resist aggression and thus avert war, provided, at the same time, we make it clear that we are willing to contribute to the satisfaction of genuine national grievances of other countries on the basis of disarmament and third-party judgment. This last is the only possible peace policy—the only policy which preserves the foundations of international law and order upon which alone peace can be secured, not for ourselves only, but for our children and children's children. It is the only policy to which we can rally the small countries of Europe, now frightened as much by the vacillation and irresolution of the great democracies as by the growing power and ruthlessness of the dictators.

Mr. Chamberlain has chosen the other policy—a policy of buying peace for England by giving Mussolini what it was not Mr. Chamberlain's to give, Abyssinia and Spain, and leaving the small countries of Europe to come under the sway of the other dictator. The Prime Minister has evidently come to the conclusion that he cannot save England without dishonour.

The first sacrifice is that of Abyssinia. Italy's position in Abyssinia is to be "regularised." What a pleasant name for a dishonourable bargain! The whole of the proceedings ever since the dropping of sanctions against Italy, in which again it should be remembered Great Britain took the lead, have gone on the basis that Italy has made a conquest of Abyssinia, that Abyssinia as an independent nation was a corpse which Mr. Chamberlain said was only awaiting burial. The abandonment of sanctions was followed by a *de facto* recognition, and the *de facto* recognition is now to be followed by a *de jure* recognition. But the fact of the matter is that Abyssinia is not yet conquered; only a fraction of it is. But the Abyssinians are still offering stern resistance—the Emperor through diplomatic channels and the people on the field of battle. The latest news is that the whole of North-Western Abyssinia is under Abyssinian control. Mr. Attlee said in the Commons on 21st February, "Abyssinia is less conquered to-day than it was a year ago." This is borne out by all the evidence available. Sir John Harris, no politician but a humanitarian, speaking recently at the League of Nations Union in Glasgow, said that it is "a mistake to believe that Mussolini has got away with his Abyssinian exploit". Not only has Italy got only a portion of Abyssinia in her possession; but she finds it exceedingly difficult to hold that portion, what with the brave resistance of the Abyssinians and what the enormous cost it has to bear—Sir John Harris

computes it at not less than £20 millions per year. While Abyssinia is still offering resistance, Great Britain takes the first move in saluting the invader before the invasion is complete. Is it not the duty of a country which professes adherence to the doctrine of collective security at least not to make the independence of another country a pawn in its political game with the vain object of underwriting its own security? Did Mr. Chamberlain have no qualms of conscience at all? He had, but he could overcome them without much difficulty. As he explained, the formal recognition of the Abyssinian conquest would be "morally justified if it was found to be a factor, and an essential factor, in a general appeasement." Which means in plain language that if peace in the Mediterranean could not be obtained except by throwing this sop to Cerberus, the sop might as well be thrown. The iniquity of this proceeding is not palliated by the fact that even Mr. Eden, who was overthrown from the Foreign Office at Mussolini's dictation, was of the same view. Mr. Chamberlain described Mr. Eden's view as follows: "We in this country were bound to act as loyal members of the League, but he (Mr. Eden) added that it seemed to him that the attitude of the League and especially that of the Mediterranean powers would no doubt be considerably influenced by the fact, if fact it came to be, that we and the Italian Government had come to an agreement which was a contribution to the general appeasement." Abyssinian independence could be sacrificed, both Eden and Chamberlain agreed, to Mediterranean peace. Only Sir Archibald Sinclair struck, not the right note, but a morally arguable note, on this question in the House of Commons debate. He said, recognition of Italian conquest of Abyssinia "can be justified only, if it is done, by discussion through the League of Nations, and if the League of Nations is satisfied that the interest of the natives of Abyssinia themselves are safeguarded in the agreement which may be ratified. Surely, it would not be morally justifiable for the Western powers to come to an agreement at the expense of the people of Abyssinia." The agreement, in so far as it is known, contains no safeguards for the Abyssinians, but the League will ratify it inasmuch as the Mediterranean powers, which have such a great pull with the League, are to be the beneficiaries at the cost of Abyssinia's freedom.

The Republican Government of Spain is next to be sacrificed. Mr. Chamberlain, of course, maintained that if Italy does not carry out the British formula for the evacuation of foreign combatants from Spain—a formula which it has accepted—but commits further infringements of the non-intervention agreement by sending more men or material, the negotiations about the pact would not proceed, and now he maintains that the pact, which has already been negotiated, would not come into effect. But ample evidence has been forthcoming to prove that not only German but reinforcements have gone to the Spanish rebels since the talks commenced. All that is now secured in the agreement is that Italy will start making proportional evacuation of her

"volunteers" when the Non-Intervention Committee decides upon general evacuation—and the Committee it almost looks as if it never meets when it is necessary—and undertakes that "if evacuation is not completed by the close of the Spanish War, all the remaining Italian volunteers will forthwith leave the Spanish territory and all Italian war material will simultaneously be withdrawn." The rebel army has already reached the sea, Franco has proclaimed his victory, and the negotiators had to take into account a contingency that the Republic might disappear before Italian troops are withdrawn! Italy further declares that "she has no territorial or political aims and seeks no privileged economic position in Spain, the Balearic Islands, the Spanish possessions overseas and Spanish zone in Morocco and has no intention of keeping any armed forces in these territories." And Mr. Chamberlain has blind faith in these assurances; he apparently believes that Italy which plotted the rebellion will do nothing to exploit the success of the rebellion. The danger to England and France from a rebel victory was very succinctly pointed out the other day by the *Economist* as follows:

If this Spanish adventure (of the Fascists and the Nazis) succeeds the consequences are far-reaching. The Balearic Islands command the maritime route between France and French North Africa; the resuscitation of the Pyrenees (which Louis XIV thought he had abolished!) threatens a third of France's European frontiers—already threatened on the Rhine and the Alps. The command of Spanish Morocco and Andalusia transfers from British to Italo-German hands the control of the Western gate of the Mediterranean. Naval bases at Corunna and Vigo menace British trade routes.

But it would be best to see how a blue-blooded Conservative looks at the matter. Mr. Harold Nicolson observed in the House of Commons on 16th March:

I believe with hon. Members opposite (Labour and Liberal members) that that effect will be very grave indeed and I am afraid that I cannot fully agree with the remark of the Prime Minister that what is important is that Germany and Italy do not wish to control the country. I quite agree that they have no such desire. They do not want to control it. Germany wants only to control the mineral deposits of the north; and Italy wishes to control both sides of the Straits of Gibraltar. That is where "control" lies. . . . It is not a question of German or Italian administrations or authorities being installed in Spain. It is not a question of the Gestapo being installed in Seville. It is a question of a few technicians, a few gun-emplacements at such places as Terifa Point or Apes Hill. These are places where they will not come in contact with the Spanish people but where they will come into military contact with the British Navy. It is being optimistic to rely upon that extreme nationalism of the Spanish character (which is one of their greatest forces) to assume the absolute impossibility of the establishment at vital strategic points of Italian and German batteries and submarine bases. It is sheer optimism to imagine that this will not occur.

It is very difficult for me to understand the feeling among the Members on some of the benches on this side of the House that this Spain, this country for which we have fought so often and so triumphantly, which for 300 years has been a vital British interest, this country where we beat Napoleon, can now be regarded as something as of no strategic importance and that, without any real pain or agony of soul, hon. Members on this side of the House should really see, seriously see (for that is what they will

see) Gibraltar, the control of the Straits, the whole of the Mediterranean, the whole of what we have fought for generation after generation, slipping into Mussolini's hands. I find it very difficult to understand how a purely political emotion can blind them to the traditions of 300 years of British policy and how they can see what the right hon. Member for Calthness (Sir A. Sinclair) called "the very life-line of our Empire" exposed to this disguised infiltration. The Spanish situation, I repeat, is a great danger; but it is also a great opportunity. If we can be united with France on this question, we can display an overwhelming and incontestable affirmation of strength.

Mr. Nicolson spoke from a purely imperialist point of view, but in this case the imperialist view corresponds with the international view, and yet imperialists in Great Britain are at present engaged in sacrificing the interests of both the British Empire and of international peace and collective security. For the provisions in the pact arrived at with Italy intended to ensure peace for Great Britain will be ineffective for the purpose.

There was no need for Great Britain at all to make an agreement with the Italian dictator just when he was finding the power and resources of Italy at a low ebb and a retribution against his aggression seemed imminent. Mr. Churchill said on this point:

The dictator Powers of Europe are striding on from strength to strength and from stroke to stroke, and the parliamentary democracies are retreating abashed and confused. On the other hand, behind this fine facade, there was every sign that the Italian dictator, at any rate, was in a very difficult position: the industrious, amiable Italian people long over-strained; everything in the country eaten up in order to augment the magnificence of the State; taxes enormous; finances broken; officials abounding; all kinds of indispensable raw materials practically unobtainable across the exchange; Abyssinia a curse, a corpse bound on the back of the killer; Libya and Spain; perhaps 400,000 men overseas, all to be maintained by a continuous drain on the hard-driven, ground-down people of Italy. There was a picture. One would have thought that these corrective processes upon external arrogance and ambition might have been allowed to run their course for a while; or, otherwise, how are the healing processes of human society to come into play?

I believe myself that we might have left this scene alone for a time. I think the Italian dictator would soon have been compelled to bring many of his troops home from Libya, and some, at any rate, of his troops home from Spain, where they have given little satisfaction either to himself or to General Franco. We know that large numbers of disappointed people who have gone to Abyssinia in the hope of some Eldorado will be soon coming back to Italy, disillusioned. Many questionings were arising in Italian bosoms which were natural and legitimate and could not be suppressed or ignored. All this was in the interest of peace, and also, I might add, what is an even greater cause than peace, freedom. After all, it is sometimes wise to allow natural processes to work, and for crimes and follies to be paid in coin from their own mint. The internal condition of Italy is certainly causing their dictator grave anxiety. He stood in need of an external success. It is quite easy to understand how Signor Mussolini should have instructed Count Grandi, if he did so instruct him — I am not quite clear — to encourage talks with Great Britain. But it is less easy to understand I venture to submit — and I am endeavouring to argue this in a manner not calculated to cause heat of any kind — why we should have hurried so eagerly to the rescue. Here was a case where we ought to have allowed time to play its part.

Review.

A FIVE—YEAR PLAN.

NATION BUILDING. A FIVE—YEAR PLAN FOR THE PROVINCES. By M. VISVESVARAYA. (Bangalore Press, Bangalore City.) 1937. 20cm., 76p.

THIS small brochure contains an exposition, from the author's point of view, of the scope and structure of a Provincial Five-Year Plan. "Economic planning for a Province will be a scheme...for raising the income, standard of living and natural prosperity of its people, by making the most sensible use of its resources and man-power." A small committee composed of high officials, experts, and businessmen would make proposals for such a plan for each Province. The details pertaining to the following items, among others, should be included in the estimates of the plan:—(1) Establishment of heavy industries, such as the manufacture of machinery; (2) Spread of cottage industries; (3) Provision of Banking and credit facilities and adequate tariff protection to industries; and (4) Universal mass education. The organisation to work out this plan should include (1) a Development Department with a Minister at its head; (2) a Provincial Economic Council to help the Department in making further plans and to supervise; (3) an elected District Body in each District to make an economic survey and to bring about the expected increase in production in the locality; and (4) an elected Village Council in each village, to "appoint committees for doing constructive work such as development of agriculture, industries, sanitation, military training."

The all-India organisation made up of central Provincial and Local Economic Councils, working in close association with Central and Provincial Development Departments, will be, to quote from Sir Visvesvaraya's *Planned Economy for India*, "some one interested in the economic progress of the people, some agency to study their deficiencies and wants, some thinking centre to mould their thoughts and shape their future destinies." (Page 6). It may be doubted whether the Indian people will follow faithfully the leadership of this 'thinking centre.' The execution of a plan would require either government control over the whole field covered by the plan, or a voluntary acceptance, by the people of every task that is allotted to them by the plan. In view of the prevailing ignorance, pathetic sense of contentment and lack of civic sense among the masses, this latter requirement has little chance of being fulfilled. Sir Visvesvaraya's scheme, however, provides for sufficient control of the Provincial Governments over the execution of the plan. Under the existing economic order, economic activities are largely controlled by those who supply capital. The Governments can obtain this control by borrowing money and using it prudently "for all productive public works, for productive business enterprises and for affording credit facilities for promoting rural enterprise in agriculture and cottage and small scale industries," (*Nation Building*, p. 56). The Development Budget involving borrowing and investment on a vast scale is thus a vital part of the scheme essential for its success. Its importance from this point of view, however, has not been sufficiently emphasised in the book under review—it is pointed out, for instance, that the actual amount required for these objects will be small—, perhaps in order that "timid people" should not be scared away.

"As regards the cost, the writer has suggested in a separate publication, the raising, for the Bombay Presidency, of a loan of Rs. 50 crores spread over ten years to provide the necessary capital for industries, productive public works, and other progressive activities. To the extent that the loan might be raised within the Province itself, there will be the satisfaction that the people will be paying interest to themselves." (p. 58). But, to the extent to which capital is provided out of loans, the inequality of the distribution of wealth will tend to increase. At least to offset this tendency, if not to deliberately equalise incomes, a substantial proportion of the capital should be provided from taxes on the richer classes in the community. Sir Visvesvaraya's scheme confines its attention to production and to the adjustment of production to consumption; but it does not pay heed to the improvement in the distribution of wealth on which the prosperity and welfare of the people largely depends.

As the author says in the foreword, "The change from Dependency rule to the Autonomy in the Provinces is a big fact. The consequential changes in the various spheres of the country's life have got to be big too." The author has done well in drawing the attention of the country to the need for planned economy. It is not enough that administrators, politicians and leaders of thought should read this book; organisations suggested in it should be set up without undue delay.

P. J. JAGIRDAR.

SHORT NOTICES.

SOCIAL REFORM ANNUAL, 1938. (The Bombay Presidency Social Reform Association, Bombay 4.) 1938. 22cm. 160p. Re. 1-4-0.

THIS is in many ways an admirable publication. First of a proposed series—may it never end!—the *Annual* aims at reviewing the social reform movement in this country. The need of such a periodic review bringing together facts and figures about the activities of individuals and associations working in the cause of reform cannot be too strongly emphasised. Indeed, the idea of social reform has taken such deep root in the minds of enlightened men and women all over the country that the possibility of co-ordinating their scattered efforts deserves clearly to be considered. The Bombay Presidency Social Reform Association is to be congratulated on having taken the first step in that direction.

Besides much useful information about reform work in many places and through various organizations, this year's *Annual* also includes six articles on different aspects of social reform written by such distinguished persons as Diwan Bahadur Har Bilas Sarda and Sir Govind Madgaonkar. All of them make interesting reading no less to the layman than to the active reformer. In his foreword Mr. S. S. Patkar draws attention to the vast scope of social reform and points out how it has come to possess a restricted meaning in this country. Dealing with that restricted aspect of the movement the *Social Reform Annual* will also serve to show what a large ground still remains to be covered by the reformer. Three articles deal with the general problem of reform. Sir Govind Madgaonkar, writing about its slow pace and the cause, finds in the absence of the scientific spirit, knowledge and habit the clue to the failure of men like Tilak to appreciate the importance of social reform. Prof. Naik points out 'the hard corners and the crucial test' of social reform and Mr. Acharya suggests 'the real methods of approach' to it.

Diwan Bahadur H. B. Sarda and Mr. B. N. Gokhale deal with the position of women, the former making an impassioned appeal for their emancipation from traditional subjection.

All these make an appeal and sound a warning. The appeal is to the indifferent to think about the many evils successfully masquerading as religion or tradition in our society and strive to remedy them. The warning is to the over-zealous enthusiast like the young man from the University against the slippery path of reform and the hardships attending upon the reformer. But the articles, at any rate some of them, also illustrate how even to the enlightened among us social reform still stands for reform in a very limited field of social intercourse. The suggested contrast between the social reformer and the socialist in Prof. Naik's article, for instance, is rather exaggerated. If the fullest development of individual personality is the aim of all reform, that ideal is brought nearer at least as much by economic equality as by a reform of the marriage laws or by the disappearance of untouchability. And if the appeal of the socialist is less spiritual than that of the social reformer that by no means makes economic equality less important to individual welfare than social or religious equality. Indeed, if history has any lesson for the social reformer it is in the importance of the economic factor which more than any other has helped or hindered many a desirable reform. Nor is it correct to say that the socialist neglects the individual. For how would that square with his emphasis on equality?

That, however, does not make the *Social Reform Annual* any less useful. It is to be hoped that the Editors will continue to give space for an exchange of views on important questions connected with social reform in their subsequent issues. The reports of the work of reform organizations will also, we trust, be enlarged so as to embrace all important centres of social reform not only in this presidency but in other provinces as well. A good beginning has already been made in this respect. Much will, of course, depend on public support; with the first issue before us we have no hesitation in recommending the *Annual* for that support in the fullest measure.

S. V. K.

HOW IS THE EMPIRE ? By F. PERCY ROE. (Pitman) 1936. 20cm. 294p. 6/-.

THIS book is written by a Captain of the British Army Educational Corps having a robust faith in the mission of the British Empire in the world. His unhesitating and unqualified answer to the question which forms the title of his book is, therefore, "all is well with the Empire". He believes that there are in the world to-day "three great, almost incalculable, forces at work. They are nationalism, bolshevism, and Christianity" (p. 102). Of these the first is "uninterested in colonial expansion," the second is a "destructive force" and "the greatest chance of resistance against these two forces is the retention of an inviolable British Empire which is generally admitted to be the greatest cohesive force in world affairs to-day." This is the keynote in which the entire thesis is developed by the writer with reference to all aspects of the internal and external relations of the Empire which he describes as a "Commonwealth Fellowship". He believes that the objective of this "League of British Nations within the Covenant of the League of Nations" (p. 27) is the Christian ideal of 'peace on earth and goodwill among men.' In the realisation of this, the writer hopes, "The British Commonwealth and the United States combined could lead the world." (p. 285). Though, on the whole, the author's outlook is liberal in the treatment of Imperial problems, his attitude towards India in particular, and coloured

peoples in general, is one of patronising trusteeship. "The stormy petrel and evil genius of Indian politics" is, of course, "The Mahatma Mr. M. K. Gandhi" (p. 154), and "the path of one of the greatest advances towards autonomous government in the history of the world has been fouled by the wicked and deliberate exploitation of the uneducated Indian's ignorance of facts and lack of balanced thought, on the part of a resolute and noisy minority," (to wit the Indian National Congress). "If the measures of self-government about to be inaugurated fail, it may well be that their failure will lie at the door of a purely Indian cause—that of communal irreconcilabilities." (pp. 158-9). Yet the British have nobly and heroically struggled to fulfil their mission in India! "The police and the Army have the unenviable task of keeping the peace between the clash of two religious peoples, living together but bitterly resenting the juxtaposition. In this connexion the work and impartiality of British personnel in the law courts, the administration, the police, and the Army have won the admiration of the whole world and the essentially honest and dispassionate examination by American investigators (Miss Mayo or Dr. Sunderland?) has paid it the greatest tribute" (p. 160) He is not quite sure whether a Hindu or Muslim Home Minister will quell a Hindu or Muslim riot with the impartiality which "is taken for granted" in a British officer, but is disposed not to prejudge the issues: "the Ministers must be given the opportunity, for if the administration of law and order were withheld, the grant of self-government would be a mockery." (p. 167) Finally, nobles oblige, and in nothing has the essential greatness of the English race been shown more clearly than in the question of Indian constitutional reform, not as an isolated act of concession compelled by Indian self-determinist forces, but as part of a piece, part of a traditional belief that every man white, brown, or black, is entitled to live a free life at such time as he is capable of ordering his own affairs without detriment to the Imperial community in which he lives, and to the greater peace and good government of the British Commonwealth of Nations." (pp. 173-4).

S. R. SHARMA.

Correspondence.

INDORE ADMINISTRATION.

THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—Among the editorial comments in your issue of March 31 under the heading "Indore" you have made several statements and given publicity to several conclusions based on your reading of the Administration Report of the Holkar State for 1936, many of which are, unfortunately, entirely untrue, without foundation and misleading to an extent as to be entirely inconsistent with the reputation of your paper for reliability of its facts and fairness of its criticism. I feel sure that, in order to do justice to Indore to which your comments are calculated to do harm, you will kindly publish this letter in extenso in your next issue with suitable comments which, I hope, will be frankly apologetic.

The amount that the Ruler received in 1931-32 was a little over Rs. 11 lakhs and in 1935-36 a little under Rs. 11 lakhs. His Highness assumed full powers in 1930 and, as compared to most other leading States of Indore's size and importance, it is well-known that His Highness has been extremely sparing in touching the State income for his personal needs and has only been taking as much as is really necessary for the discharge of his responsibilities in a befitting manner. In fact, it is for this and similar

other qualities of which unmistakable proof has been given by him in more than one way since the inauguration of his rule that he is so beloved by his people.

The other expenditure you refer to as connected with the Palace has nothing to do with the Ruler personally and consists of certain obligations to other members of the Ruling family as, for instance, to His Highness the ex-Maharaja since his abdication.

The Household and Kankhanas that you refer to as "swallowing a little over Rs. 2½ lakhs" have nothing to do with the Palace. The Household is purely a State Department in charge of State guest houses, responsible for reception of State guests, maintenance of stables and for conduct of ceremonies, many of which have been cut down to the barest minimum. Utmost economy is practised in the administration of this Department consistently with a level of efficiency that has to be maintained.

You refer to the expenditure of Rs. 90,000 on gardens and of Rs. 50,000 on motor cars and repairs shop as a "recent innovation," and you conclude that "it is difficult to believe that no part of the expenditure shown under these two heads had anything to do with the Palace" and you further attempt not to "overshoot the mark" by saying that "Rs. 40,000 had some connection with the Maharaja and his family". Such comments are never calculated to do anybody any good and particularly the reputation of your paper for accuracy and fairness. If you had cared to refer to pages 41 and 51 of the report for 1930 and to pages 34 and 39 of the report for 1933 you would have found that expenditure under these two heads has been mentioned there under a different arrangement but with perfect clearness. You could easily have ascertained and would have been told that the reality in regard to gardens is that most of them are public gardens, the most important of which is the Biscoe Park in the City, apart from fruit and vegetable gardens and experimental farms as also gardens of the Secretariat building and the Yeshwant Club. Comparatively very little has been spent on gardens of Government buildings and Palaces. For His Highness' personal gardens attached to the Manikbagh Palace in which he stays, the expenditure is actually met by His Highness from his privy purse and as much as Rs. 18,500 was spent on this account by His Highness personally in the year 1935-36. As regards the Motor Cars Department, this is a regular State Department maintained and run in the most economical manner for purposes of meeting the requirements of the State for motor cars and lorries for various official and departmental purposes, which have nothing to do with His Highness' private purposes. His Highness has a small private garage of his own, which is maintained at his own cost.

These facts could have been very easily available to you had you taken greater care either in the study of the Administration Report of 1936 or shown greater keenness on accuracy before rushing to the press with unwarranted conclusions. I regret to have to write to you so strongly as I have done, but I feel sure, in view of the serious departure made from journalistic decorum in this case by your paper, you will have the fairness to publish this rebuttal.

You refer to the policy of the State in regard to education and abkari. His Highness and his Government are fully alive to the need for reform and constant progress in these spheres. The question of the introduction of compulsory education in the State is seriously under consideration and it is contemplated to minimise, before resorting to compulsion, the several sources of wastage in primary education that

are common all over India. The establishment of village libraries, organisation of rural uplift work through assignment to teachers of specific items of social service, the appointment of uplift sub-inspectors to supervise and enthuse village school masters in this direction, opening of village games clubs attached to schools under the control of school masters for village young men, the introduction of adult gatherings in evenings under teachers for discourses of various types, are some of the steps already initiated by the Department of Education of His Highness' Government, and there is evidence of the development of a favourable attitude towards education in rural Indore, which alone, it is believed, will minimise lapse and wastage of educational effort as also raise and revise the mode and standard of living in the villages.

Upon the question of prohibition also His Highness and his Government have been bestowing much thought. The central policy is to discourage the habit of drink without interfering at once with what many consider a matter of personal liberty based on human nature, sudden and complete opposition to which may not fully secure the purpose in view. Meanwhile, experiments in prohibition elsewhere are being most carefully watched and studied.—Yours, etc.

H. C. DHANDA.

Publicity Office,
Indore,
15th April.

[We gladly make room for the above letter of Capt. Dhanda of the Publicity Office of the Holkar State. We would say at once that we unreservedly withdraw and apologise for the errors that he has pointed out. Nothing could be further from our intention than to indulge in unfair criticism. But we beg to be allowed to add at the same time, not in palliation but in explanation of our criticism, that at no place did we make an assertion about any of the things on which the Publicity Officer from his intimate knowledge has thrown light. One has often to extricate, in the report of a State, the expenditure on the ruler and his family from the expenditure on several

departments in which it is partly merged. In following this method we were careful to state, lest the reader be misled, that this was a matter for inference, for which no corroboration was available. And to bring out the fact more forcibly that, in dealing with departments like the Household and Karkhans, we were proceeding on a hypothetical basis, we deliberately left out the expenditure on these departments from palace expenditure in stating our conclusion at the end and put the ratio of palace expenses to total income at the lower figure of 19 per cent., the accuracy of which our correspondent has not challenged. He gives us additional information, which is not found in the body of the report, that of the total palace expenses of Rs. 20,85,559 in 1935-36 the personal expenses of the ruler were a little over Rs. 11 lakhs. We had no means of knowing it. Anyhow the fact remains that nearly one-fifth of the taxpayer's money is spent upon the upkeep of the ruler and the ruler's family, which, every reasonable person must admit, is an unconscionably high proportion. But even the ruler's personal expenses, for which the figures are now supplied, bear a ratio of 9 per cent. to the total revenue, which compares unfavourably with other advanced States. The proportion of the whole palace expenditure, including the expenses of the ruler and his family, to total income varies in Mysore, Travancore and Cochin between 6 and 7 per cent., while in Indore the proportion of the ruler's expenditure alone is at least 2 per cent. more, which clearly proves that the Publicity Officer's praise is a little too lavish.—Ed., S. o. I.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

- A SHORT HISTORY OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION FROM 1905 to the Present Day. Vol. I—From 1905 to Feb. 1917; Vol. II—From Feb. 1917 to the present day. By R. PAGE ARNOT. (The New People's Library, Vols. IV and VI.) (Gollancz.) 1937. 19cm. 96p. 1/6 each volume.
- HORIZONS. By V. N. BHUSHAN. (Author, Professor of English, Wadia College, Poona.) 1937. 25cm. 31p. Re. 1.
- INDUSTRIAL WELFARE IN MADRAS. (Binny & Co., Madras.) 25cm. 23p.

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